Teaching and Learning Through the Holocaust

Thinking About the Unthinkable

Edited by
Anthony Pellegrino
Jeffrey Parker

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Editors
Anthony Pellegrino
University of Tennessee System
Knoxville, TN, USA

Jeffrey Parker
Levine Institute for Holocaust Education
Washington, DC, USA

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To my wife, Karen and children, Acadia and Cole. Thank you for your love, patience, and understanding. It means more than I can say.
To Anthony for initially proposing this and making it a reality, much gratitude.

—Jeffrey Parker

I dedicate this work to my amazing wife, Erica and my children, Emmett, Michael, and Alec. And a special thank you to Jeff for pushing this project and always coming with important questions.

—Anthony Pellegrino

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Rebecca Dupas, Paul Salmons, and Jake Newsome were there for formative conversations and unique insights. Jenny Rich for responding to texts and way too deep conversations before the sun had even risen. To my students, for over two decades you let me know that there was a need for talking and teaching about the Holocaust in the classroom. You posed such powerful questions and had insights that made me want to be a better teacher and learn more so that I could meet your needs. To my mother, who although you may not have understood my compulsion to study some of the darkest chapters of human history, you always supported me and listened. And finally, thank you is not enough to encompass the gratitude I feel for my wife Karen, and children, Acadia and Cole. Your willingness to listen during long walks with the dogs, not roll your eyes at the dinner table, give me time to think and write when needed, and encourage me when stuck are incredible gifts.

For me (Anthony), Holocaust education has been an important part of my career as an educator. From my earliest position working with incarcerated people where I had the opportunity to explore ways race and racism manifested in different ways throughout history, to more recent work helping prospective teachers leverage disciplinary literacy practices using primary source texts, each experience has allowed for deeper understanding of the Holocaust and Holocaust education. Each turn has also led to more questions about approaches and practices. Getting the opportunity to work and learn in various capacities at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) has fed the desire to continue digging. And thankfully meeting Jeff through USHMM has allowed me to continue to ask questions that are important to me and find ways to express ideas about them. Jeff has not only shared his vast knowledge, he has also been an ardent friend and collaborator who captures our thoughts in ways that extend the conversation and keep us grounded simultaneously. So, thank you for working with me on this project.

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Finally, my biggest supporter is my wife, Erica. Without her, I am certain that I would not have the tenacity to engage in this work. Thank you for always being there…with unconditional love and support.

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Notes on Contributors

Alex d'Erizans is Associate Professor of History at the Borough of Manhattan Community College, CUNY. As a scholar of modern Europe, with a focus on German, Russian, and military history, he wrestles with the physical and psychological challenges and displacements, as well as reconfigurations and reimaginings of grass-roots identities, resulting from utopian projects of transformation. His recent publications include "From a Vibrant City to a Warzone": Shostakovich's 7th Symphony as a Means to Foster Historical Understanding through Empathy." *The Journal of Social Studies Research* 42(4): 327–343; "Securing the Garden and Longings for Heimat in postwar Hanover, 1945–1948." *The Historical Journal* 58(1): 183–215.

Matthew Hensley is a Ph.D. candidate studying and researching social science education at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. He currently works with the Department of Theory and Practice in Teacher Education at UTK and supervises preservice social studies teachers' clinical experiences. His professional experience includes teaching middle and high school social studies and working as a K-12 museum educator. He is entranced by all things social studies. His research and teaching interests include alternative best practices in teaching and learning social studies, experiential learning, and exploring educational technology to enrich learning for teachers and students.

Heather Matthews is a Doctoral candidate in the Department of Theory & Practice in Teacher Education at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Her research interests have focused on children's and young adult literature and exploring diverse representations through literacy practices.

Jeffrey Parker works in Education Initiatives in the Levine Institute for Holocaust Education at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum as an education Program Coordinator. Before joining the Museum, he taught high school English in the Finger Lakes region of New York State for over 20 years and is currently completing doctoral work in Teaching and Curriculum at the University of Rochester, where the main focus of his research has been in the area of Holocaust Education.

Tiffany Mitchell Patterson, Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor of Secondary Social Studies at West Virginia University in the Department of Curriculum & Instruction/Literacy Studies. Prior to WVU, she taught middle school social studies for 10 years in Washington, D.C., and Arlington, Virginia. She earned her doctorate in multilingual/multicultural education and education policy from George Mason University. Her research interests include racial and social justice in education, education activism, critical civic education, and teaching Black and underrepresented narratives in social studies. Advocacy, activism, intersectionality, and anti-racist/bias education lie at the core of her research and teacher practice. Education is her revolution.

Anthony Pellegrino is Associate Professor in the Department of Theory and Research at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Prior to his work in higher education, he worked in K-12 classrooms and in public school administration for a decade. His research interests include student learning of difficult history and counternarratives in history/social studies education, as well as the experiences of preservice educators in clinical practice.

Gina Pfeiffer received her Masters in Holocaust and Genocide Studies Education from Rowan University, where she is currently in an Education Masters program in order to receive her teaching certification. Her research has focused on how to implement technology in Holocaust education and how to best engage twenty-first-century students in the study of the past.

Jennifer Rich, Ed.D. is the Executive Director of the Rowan Center for the Study of the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights at Rowan University in Glassboro, New Jersey. She also directs the Master of Arts in Holocaust and Genocide Education and is an assistant professor of Sociology. She has written several articles on issues concerning Holocaust education and published *Keepers of Memory: The Holocaust and Transgenerational Identity.*

Darby Riley is a Doctoral student of Engineering Education in Rowan University's Experiential Engineering Education (ExEEd) Department. Her research focuses on diversity and inclusion in engineering education, particularly for disabled students.

Cayla Ritz is a Doctoral student in the Department of Experiential Engineering Education at Rowan University in Glassboro, NJ. Her research interests have focused on the intersection of interdisciplinary studies and engineering education, with a heavy focus in Holocaust and genocide studies.

Noelle Smith has taught high school history for 12 years, serving as an academic coach, and now grateful to support a team of dynamic humanities teachers as their assistant principal. She never tires of pedagogical conversations, rich literature, and historic banter. She remains grateful to be Tennessee Holocaust Educational Fellow through the Tennessee Holocaust Commission and is honored to serve on the TN Council for the Social Studies Board. Having had the opportunity to study at Yad Vashem with Echoes and Reflections and previously tour Holocaust-related sites in Poland make Holocaust education a vibrant fiber in her life's tapestry.

Steven Steigerwalt is a recent graduate from Rowan University's Departments of History and Holocaust and Genocide Education. His research interests have focused on European History and contemporary practices in Holocaust and Genocide education.

Lindsey Stillman is a recent graduate from the Arizona State University Master's Program in World War Studies and currently teaches 12th grade English and History in San Diego, California. Her research stemmed from a grant provided by the Phoenix Holocaust Association to help guide future Holocaust Education Mandates to be effectively implemented in the classroom.

Dr. Deborah Wooten is Professor of Literacy Studies at the University of Tennessee. She has been honored to serve on book award committees such as the Notable Books for a Global Society and Outstanding International Honor List. Her research interests include creating strategies for students to use with high quality diverse children's literature while fostering them to read and want to read. She has also published articles and chapters through a variety of venues. She is the lead editor for her most recent book, *Children's Literature in the Reading Program: Engaging Young Readers in the 21st Century* (5th edition).

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction: Thinking About the Unthinkable

Anthony Pellegrino and Jeffrey Parker

After liberation, German critical theorist Theodor Adorno, in his now famous radio address (later published as "Education after Auschwitz"), declared that, "The premier demand upon all education is that Auschwitz not happen again. Its priority before any other requirements is such that I believe I need not and should not justify it" (Adorno, 1998, p. 191). Adorno offered that the Holocaust fundamentally changed the way young people ought to learn and be taught. No longer could education ignore the barbarism that occurred throughout the Holocaust. No longer could one even learn basic structures of language, science, history, or mathematics without recognizing the conditions under which Auschwitz occurred. The urgency of Adorno's message stands at odds with schooling

A. Pellegrino (✉)
University of Tennessee System, Knoxville, TN, USA
e-mail: apelleg2@utk.edu

J. Parker
Levine Institute for Holocaust Education, Washington, DC, USA
e-mail: jtparker@ushmm.org

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as we currently experience it, with onerous curricular requirements, disciplinary compartmentalization, and standardized assessments designed to neatly measure student learning. Adorno's radical suggestion is that any and all education should embrace a critical exploration of society and the systems it creates as a fundamental precondition to addressing compassion, equity, and inclusion. And it is from this position that we present this volume on teaching and learning through the Holocaust.

To us, the notion of leveraging the ways understanding the complexities of the Holocaust means that we have the opportunity and obligation to better understand not only the past, but use that understanding to better know ourselves and the society we create. In this work, teaching *through* the Holocaust means that we materially shift the way we think about Holocaust education; not as merely a consequential time in history, but as a lens through which we see the past and the present. Learning *about* the Holocaust is static, composed of facts and figures; learning *from* the Holocaust suggests particular, predetermined lessons; learning *through* the Holocaust connotes the potential for deep understanding, confronting hard questions about human behavior, and internalization of personal relevance that can guide how students interpret their worlds. As Wineburg noted "history holds the potential, only partially realized, to humanize us in ways offered by few other areas of the curriculum" (Wineburg, 2001, p. 5), and we attempt to argue that few other periods in history can animate that potential like study of the Holocaust. From that orientation, we present this book to reexamine how teaching and learning about the Holocaust must at once remain as a significant historical event to be explored consciously and intentionally, and an occasion for students to draw relevant conclusions about their world through a rigorous study of how and why the Holocaust took place. Taken together, these objectives may seem discordant, but we believe these are, in fact, complementary and reflect a more nuanced and vital approach for education.

Defining Holocaust Education

While seemingly straightforward, "Holocaust education" is difficult to define.Baum (1996) wrote that the "phrase 'Holocaust Education' is almost perverse in contradiction. 'Holocaust' and 'education' seem to pull in different directions, one pointing to the utter devastation of human values, the other insisting on their possibility" (p. 44). Eckmann

and Stevick (2017) asked which is the primary focus: the topic of the Holocaust, or the practice of education? The authors went on to write that the questions that surround Holocaust education are "…profound questions regarding the pedagogical relationship between teachers and students, between established knowledge and questioning and between the possibility of learning from scholars or textbooks and experiencing an autonomous way of discovering knowledge and values on one's own" (p. 300). Holocaust education, while it can be deeply meaningful and personal, requires that educators make hard decisions about balancing appropriate pedagogies that will help students learn, deepen their knowledge of this difficult content, and deal with hard questions about morals and ethics.

The moral imperative Adorno implied marks Holocaust education as both existing outside of and subsuming other content areas, becoming "…a topic to which both professors and students attach special prestige and importance" (Karn, 2012, p. 3). DavidLindquist (2011) proposed that it is impossible to overstate the importance of studying the Holocaust. From their research, Totten and Feinberg (2001) posited that critical gaps in both knowledge and experience, which affect how people view the world, are the result if the Holocaust is ignored in school. For these reasons, many teachers who choose to or are obliged to take on the task of teaching about the Holocaust feel that "…teaching the Holocaust is a qualitatively different experience than teaching other topics… [but] presents special opportunities" (Ambrosewicz-Jacobs et al., 2017, p. 198).

In our work as educators working in various spaces, we have found that those special opportunities have come when we are mindful of the significance of the Holocaust to our history and the ways in which studying it can offer insights into the world in which our students live. As educators, we naturally want to share information and engage students with experiences that will allow them to understand complex issues like the Holocaust. Nevertheless, we are conflicted with a sense of how to teach the fundamental conditions that led to the "systematic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of six million Jews by the Nazi regime and its allies and collaborators" (USHMM, 2017) without trivializing, dehumanizing, or rationalizing the individual and collective stories through which we learn. Likewise, we hope that by examining the Holocaust in the ways presented by the authors in this volume, we can help students understand the serious nature of the topic, recognize the conditions that

led to the barbarism of the Holocaust, and see themselves in a different light for having a deeper understanding of the Holocaust, its historical antecedents, and ramifications. Some questions we address include: What makes teaching about the Holocaust unique? What makes it such a challenging topic to teach? How can teaching about and learning through the Holocaust help us reflect on the society in which we currently live? As we write this, a social media controversy is brewing as a trend on the popular platform Tik Tok includes users portraying themselves as "victims" of the Holocaust. Holocaust education groups as well as commemorative organizations such as the Auschwitz Memorial have condemned the trend, but the larger point is that better Holocaust education is essential to help students grapple with this history in ways that are true to the past experiences of those persecuted in the Holocaust and that call attention to the continued relevance its legacy holds.

Teaching about and trying to facilitate learning from the Holocaust has never been an easy venture. Teachers regularly have to contend with not having enough time, the demands of standardized testing, administrators and parents questioning the necessity of Holocaust education, and attending to the everyday content and skills of their discipline. In recent years, the challenges to and associated with Holocaust education have increased dramatically. Research on the role of education has shifted from knowledge acquisition to inquiry-based approaches while high stakes testing has continued apace in both policy and practice. As a result, finding time for a meaningful study of the Holocaust has become more and more difficult.

Paradoxically, there has been a greater emphasis placed on including Holocaust education in school curricula. Since 2017, nine states have adopted Holocaust education mandates, bringing the total (as of 2021) to 17 states which require some form of Holocaust education. The mandates often have lofty goals reflecting concerns around teaching to increase tolerance and inclusivity to addressing the fragility of democratic systems and combatting genocide more broadly. Yet, the mandates often leave out language which promotes critical examination of how and why the Holocaust occurred and frequently ignore important concepts such as antisemitism and the historical refugee crisis spawned by events leading up to the Holocaust.

Complicating this more is the increased political polarization, exacerbated by social media, in which we find ourselves a part. These influences often manifest through simplistic comparisons, trying to illustrate what

are perceived as connections and parallels between current society and the events of the Holocaust. Too often, these comparisons have little basis in fact or historical accuracy and serve to obfuscate, rather than clarifying the past or the present.

Nevertheless, many teachers identify that teaching about the Holocaust is vital enough that they are willing to both address the consistent along with evolving issues and find innovative, meaningful ways to fit teaching about and learning from the Holocaust into their classrooms. This book cannot answer the many questions that surround Holocaust education; instead, we hope to be able to broaden the conversation and provide guidance for educators and all who are looking for ways to address this complex and difficult history in a more contemporary, relevant manner.

Where many books that focus on the teaching of the Holocaust present the history, this volume instead closely examines the relationships between theory, research, and practice. To accomplish these goals, we provide 12 chapters from historians, scholars, and practitioners on the frameworks and research relevant as well as the practical applications of resources and pedagogies for Holocaust education. Chapter 1, for example, provides a preview to the rest of the chapters through an interview with experts in Holocaust education. This chapter emerged from a panel discussion with teachers and scholars who talked about their own research and practices as well as the ways they see Holocaust education having the most impact. The questions we asked this panel coincide with the subsequent chapters in the book and, therefore, provide a primer on many of the topics they and other authors cover. In Chapter 2, Lindsey Stillman examines the language of Holocaust education mandates, what the authors of those mandates hope to accomplish, and the questions that remain unanswered. Jennifer Rich then reflects on what students are able to take from a study of history and how the pressure to investigate so much in short time periods obfuscates, rather than making clear what we can and should learn. Chapter 4 challenges educators to dive deeply into National Socialism as a means to better understand the nature and crooked path through which the Holocaust unfolded. Chapter author Alex d'Erizans calls on us to reimagine National Socialism as a worldview that encompassed progress and triumph while simultaneously ushering in genocide on a massive scale. The cognitive dissonance that emerges from this effort allows us to better comprehend acts and behaviors that are so often unfathomable. Following this, Jeff Parker, in Chapter 5, then focuses

the historical look at the Holocaust itself and traces efforts of Holocaust education through the lens of John Dewey's progressive education approach. From this perspective, the chapter lays out a clear purpose for teaching and learning through the Holocaust and allows us to envision ways to make connections between Holocaust education and the democratic values we seek to incorporate into our classrooms. Finally, Steven Steigerwalt and Gina Pfeiffer critically examine what secondary textbooks contain, attempt to convey, and sometimes misrepresent when presenting the Holocaust in classrooms. This chapter asks teachers to consider what is being presented to students and suggests ways to add context that may be missing from the brief overviews that are presented.

The second section of the book asks readers to reconsider the traditional expectations and methods of instruction which have coalesced around teaching and learning about the Holocaust. Critical race scholar, Tiffany Mitchell Patterson smartly calls on educators to courageously engage in the "pre-work" necessary to teach the Holocaust. This chapter offers specific questions for reflection and challenges us to think deeply about our own biases and perspectives to better approach this topic with young people. Jennifer Rich returns with a look into Holocaust education with preservice teachers. Specifically, this chapter explores Rich's work with prospective teachers on the challenges they feel in teaching the Holocaust and Rich's efforts to forge a largely uncharted path of Holocaust education, which draws upon disciplinary thinking frameworks and historical thinking practices to support teacher development. Bringing a unique lens, Darby Riley and Cayla Ritz then bring their perspectives of being students deeply enmeshed in STEM. Their experiences caused both dissonance and enlightenment as they wrestled with applying disciplinary thinking in a new context while working on a virtual representation of the Warsaw Ghetto. Matthew Hensley and Noelle Smith then apply a pragmatic lens, laying out the merging of digital tools with Holocaust education in a manner that is both respectful of the past and engaging for students. Professor Deb Wooten and doctoral candidate Heather Matthews collaborate on the next chapter to actualize many of the practices espoused by Jeff through a focus on children's and young adult literature. In their chapter, Wooten and Matthews showcase selected texts and share ways these resources can be leveraged in the service of Holocaust education that is both meaningful and relevant.

Finally, the editors close with an argument for teaching through the Holocaust, bringing together the concerns and opportunities highlighted

by the authors and then, providing some practical recommendations. In the end, we hope this collection of chapters from this diverse group of scholars and educators offers a wide-ranging, yet connected group of ideas, held together by the importance of Holocaust education and the power that teaching and learning through it can offer.

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PART I

Setting the Educational Context

CHAPTER 2

A Conversation About Holocaust Education

Alex d'Erizans, Corey Harbaugh, Kimberly Klett, Jeffrey Parker, and Anthony Pellegrino

"At crucial junctures, every individual makes decisions, and… every decision is individual"
—Raul Hilberg

A. d'Erizans
Borough of Manhattan Community College, City University of New York, New York, NY, USA
e-mail: aderizans@bmcc.cuny.edu

C. Harbaugh
Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Paw Paw County Public Schools, Paw Paw, MI, USA

K. Klett
Teacher, Dobson High School, Mesa, AZ, USA
e-mail: klklett@mpsaz.org

J. Parker
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, DC, USA
e-mail: jtparker@ushmm.org

A. Pellegrino (✉)
University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN, USA
e-mail: apellegrino02@gmail.com

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As we began thinking about this book, we knew we wanted to draw upon myriad voices in Holocaust education to provide readers important information on research and practices that can ultimately impact student learning. Paramount in our minds too was the fact that teachers make decisions about how they frame Holocaust education, the pedagogies they employ, and the resources they select not only through the lens of their disciplines but for personal reasons as well. One of the ways we thought to better understand how these two elements were affecting Holocaust education was to arrange a meeting with individuals working in different spaces in and around the field. In the discussion, we'd ask those individuals to talk about their roles and share their perspectives—ideally allowing an audience to better understand how multifaceted Holocaust education is and the different approaches experts take in how they come to think and learn about the Holocaust. We decided that we would invite four distinct voices for a moderated panel discussion.

At the time of the panel, Corey Harbaugh was Director of Curriculum and Instruction at Paw Paw Public Schools in Michigan. He had taught high school English for a number of years before moving into an administrative role. He been recognized widely for his work in Holocaust education. Kim Klett was in her 29th year teaching English at Dobson High School in Mesa, AZ. She was teaching AP English Literature and a year-long Holocaust Literature course. Alex d'Erizans was associate professor of history at the Borough of Manhattan Community College in New York. His scholarship includes Holocaust education as well as the experiences of Germans during the twentieth century. Jeff Parker was a museum education program coordinator, focusing on work with college methods professors and teacher candidates. He had taught secondary English for over twenty years and was completing postgraduate work investigating the intersections of education and the teaching of the Holocaust. Anthony Pellegrino moderated the discussion. He was associate professor of social science education at the University of Tennessee and had been involved in the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum's Holocaust Institute for Teachers Educators as a participant and as a consultant in its reorganization.

We hoped the discussion would be an opportunity for these individuals to share their experiences and perspectives across disciplines in a way that informed an audience and also mirrored the chapters in this volume as an advanced organizer of sorts. As such, we included questions related to the origins of Holocaust education, the trajectory of research, and practices related to teaching and learning *through* the Holocaust.

To make this happen, we reached out to the National Council for History Education. Specifically, Anthony, asked Sarah Drake Brown, who was, at the time, the organization's Board Chair and his former doctoral advisor as Florida State University, to see if she thought a panel discussion on Holocaust education could be part of the conference. Graciously, she offered to help, and with the support of others in the organization, we were scheduled. But, alas, this conference was scheduled for March 2020, and amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the conference was moved online. Thankfully, our participants agreed to this new format and we held our discussion with a small, virtual audience later in the spring of 2020.

Essentially, this chapter is a running transcript of that conversation. We have revised some questions and responses for length and clarity while trying to maintain the context and message from these experts. We have also relocated some comments to fit better within the organization of the chapter and the volume as a whole. We believe the exchanges between these people were useful representations of the various perspectives and experiences they bring to their work and Holocaust education more broadly.

In the conversation, we explored topics ranging from the origins of Holocaust studies and how the research has changed to education practices that ultimately impact the way students understand the Holocaust as history and a topic relevant to their lives. To begin, we asked about the beginnings of Holocaust education and the changes that have come to pass. Alex, the historian on the panel, got us started by first addressing how the study of National Socialism has evolved and informed Holocaust education. He approached his response from the premise that understanding National Socialism as a purposeful and all-encompassing worldview held by millions at the time may be uncomfortable, but is necessary to make sense of the complex and crooked path that led to the Holocaust.

The Intersections Between National Socialism and Holocaust Education

Alex: In the past generation or so, there has increasingly been an emphasis when investigating National Socialism to look at the importance placed upon ideology—indeed the culture of National Socialism. (Before the 1960s, historians often) zeroed in on the perpetrators themselves. Even

before (World War II) totalitarian theories of power and dominance essentially determined the discussion of National Socialism. Seeing National Socialism as essentially this gigantic behemoth of a government that imposed its will on a population (was the dominant narrative).

(By) the 1960s, and the rise of social history, there is increasingly an emphasis on structures; institutions themselves and how they shaped (the people). (In this view of the time), competition between various institutions within the Nazi bureaucracy led to a radicalization of policy. And, increasingly, anti-Jewish policies emerged from that bureaucracy.

In the nineteen eighties, historians began to focus more on the history of everyday life and the idea where, even though Germans might have participated and cooperated with the regime, they also sought to maintain their own autonomous spaces of existence. That is to say, they, perhaps, opportunistically engaged in what the Nazis wanted them to engage in, but pretty much they wanted to live their own lives. They wanted to be left alone.

From there, we see a shift that has really dominated the historiography since, and this (reflected) a trend from the 1970s which gave rise to what one might classify today as identity politics. It is the idea that each grouping in society and the historical subjects therein have a reality of their own. They construct a world within which they operate and within which there are norms, values, and ethics. This movement in history was certainly linked to politically what was going on in terms of different groups vying for their own historical narratives in America and also abroad.

Coming in 1996 was the publication of seminal works (including) (Hitler's) Willing Executioners by Daniel Goldhagen. The significance of that work is very controversial because Goldhagen focused on the perpetrators themselves. He asserted that they participated in the vision of National Socialism opportunistically. They did so because maybe they wanted to rise in their careers. Or they did so because of social pressures. But what Goldhagen was pointing toward was the notion that those who engaged in these atrocities, those who kill(ed) Jews, did so because they wanted to. In other words, they actually believed in the vision. (They believed) in what they were doing, and this was profound. And so finally I come back to where I started on this in which the historical research led to the study of the culture and the world within which the Nazis operated. And I should say that this moves beyond just a mere sort of notion of belief. It gets that again the very reality is the very notion of past,

present, and future within which the National Socialists believed that they were operating. National Socialists saw as their destinies sought in terms of where they have been, where they are, and where they are going.

Kim: If I can just go back for a second to what Alex was saying. I think this goes with the question (about what) research has brought out. For example, when the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) released a statement that there were a lot more camps and ghettos, than we had previously thought—the new figure being approximately forty two thousand five hundred—to me as a teacher that was mind boggling because that just added so much more complexity to the issue. And so, I love the fact that as this new research emerges, it makes us more fluid in the classroom. We have to keep up with that research and figure out "okay, now how are we going to teach with this new information?" So, I think that's really important. As far as being a classroom teacher, I think it has affected me in making me look at that research more closely. I think it makes me more empathetic as a teacher because we have to think about how our students are going to receive this information emotionally. What might the reaction be to it? What do I need to be prepared for with those reactions? And that's carried out into my other classes as well. So, I think that's a good thing.

Jeff brought Alex and Kim's ideas together through the lens of a museum educator.

Jeff: …(This work is about) trying to bring it back to those basic questions of how and *why* the Holocaust happened and how research and resources can surface those in the classroom in ways that make it understandable and relevant to students.

One of the exciting recent developments is a renewed focus on the United States' role in World War II and the Holocaust because a lot of (U.S.) students are able to dig into that. Both the physical exhibit at the museum and the online exhibit do a superlative job of asking people to consider what's going on in the world (in 1933, for example). Instead of starting out with "you already know what happened in the Holocaust,"

it's bringing them forward and ask(ing) "how were the actions of historical agents reasonable responses in this time period?" And so, it's always trying to bring together not just the content but considering how those can be brought into the classroom as well.

The value in bringing these voices together for this discussion was evident in the way Alex responded to Kim and Jeff's comments about research affecting their work.

> Alex: You know, oftentimes other historians, quite frankly, don't have discussions (like this). We discuss the history but not necessarily its impact directly in the classroom itself. I think that one of the ways that sort of information could be imparted is through interdisciplinary work between historians and social studies educators.

Talking Across Our Disciplines Through Policy and Practice

From the cross-disciplinary discussions that were emerging in the conversation, we wanted to discern the ways teachers are aware of the changes in Holocaust education and how they respond to those changes in their practice.

With these objectives in mind, three issues that significantly impact Holocaust education surfaced in the discussion: the number of states that mandate some form of Holocaust education and then, by extension, what students need to know about the Holocaust, and what it means to teach about the Holocaust effectively. Corey, a former classroom teacher and current administrator, weighed in on these intertwined and complex issues:

> Corey: I'm going to come at this first by thinking about the work that I did as part of the 15-person Governor's Council here in Michigan. So, in 2016, we passed a mandate and said, "in Michigan, schools will teach Holocaust education." And of course, we had the Common Core curriculum as well as a resource. But from the beginning, we struggled with the question: What does it mean to provide a baseline of knowledge for students in the state of Michigan in Holocaust

> education? What does a person who's literate in Holocaust history (understand)? What knowledge does that student have and how do we present that knowledge as effectively as possible? So that was at the root of our struggle.

As part of that conversation, we talked about "what does it mean to be Holocaust literate in southeast Michigan where there are Holocaust institutions and where cultural memory is held in Jewish communities versus rural Michigan (where I live and teach) or in the Upper Peninsula which is so remote—12 to 14 h away from southeast Michigan?" Building off of that, what does it mean to create a curriculum that covers or gives a baseline? And what we found is that the target continues to move as knowledge comes in.

Most schools in Michigan, like most schools in many states, are rural (which often means) there's one ninth grade history teacher who teaches world history and there's one 11th grade teacher who teaches U.S. history. We couldn't assume that there was diverse, deep content knowledge in these schools. So, we had to provide that. In designing the education (resources), what we came back to was that we have to give folks a cognitive construct—an academic construct—so that any new learning that they might encounter on their own or that would be taught, they had a place to hang that information.

What we ended up using was the "Stages of Genocide" as the construct because our mandate also includes a requirement that we teach about genocide. And it got us asking questions about: "what do teachers know—experienced teachers who were trained on content and pedagogy twenty five years ago or more?" "What do new teachers to the classroom know?" "What do 12th, 10th, or 8th graders know? And, what do they NEED (emphasis added) to know?".

Getting to Work to Support Learners

The questions that Corey identified and that the Governor's Council struggled with emblemize long-standing challenges within the field of Holocaust education, knowing that most teachers do not have an extensive background in the history of the Holocaust. Since the majority are self-taught and choose to teach about the Holocaust, what can we reasonably expect students to know and be able to do with their Holocaust education?

Jeff: What Corey brings up is really important because it begs questions like "what can the Holocaust or a study of the Holocaust teach us about the nature of education?" When we talk about Holocaust education, it challenges us to ask questions that so many other topics don't. (And) what's being taught in different places can diverge wildly. When considering the abundance of resources and how those resources can create different lenses for a study of the Holocaust, we automatically want to ask, "OK. So how do we get this into the classroom?" But then the question comes up, "is this something that students need to know?" Teachers have time constraints and pragmatic concerns and we have to be arbiters of that consideration.

We do know—partly thanks to some of Corey's research, a few studies, and other anecdotal publications—that the majority of explicit, multi-day Holocaust education is going on in English classes in the United States, which from a disciplinary stance is asking fundamentally different questions than history or social studies classes are asking. And then you're always thinking about the intersection of a teacher's discipline, their rationale for wanting to teach about the Holocaust—or in states that mandate Holocaust education—being required to teach about the Holocaust. And then, how do those intersect with the methods that are being employed and the resources that are being used as well as the length of time that a teacher has? And then at the other end, what is the interpretation—how are the students understanding this and applying it to their everyday lives?

When trying to create resources, institutions have to consider, "Where does this fit?" and "What does this offer a teacher that has a day to teach about this?".

Some of the research indicates that the average history teacher has just a little over three days they're spending on the Holocaust. But at the same time, we know that there are teachers that are spending—like Kim—a full year to be teaching about the Holocaust, justice, and genocide.

Then, at the other end of the spectrum, there are English teachers who have little background in the history of the Holocaust that are responding to a mandate by saying "OK, let's analyze how Elie Wiesel uses the word 'fire' in the testimony *Night* and the rhetorical use of that word. Technically, they are meeting the mandate. And so, it becomes really big questions of "how can the teaching of proper context be encouraged?".

And nobody can say, with certainty, "you should be doing it this way!" because if the five of us here were to be asked "what are is a reasonable outcome for a course on the Holocaust?" I think we would get five different answers. Then, it comes to questions of "what can we support?" "What seems to be appropriate?" And "does that look different depending on where this is being taught?".

If a teacher is teaching *Night*, how much history is necessary for that teacher to be presenting? How much do they, and the students, need to know? A lot of Wiesel's experiences aren't until 1944. How much of the precursors need to be brought into it? What kind of lenses are necessary? And so, they've become really complicated questions as Corey alluded to when you think about the mandate in Michigan. What is a student in Marquette bringing into the classroom? And then the other side, what do you want them taking out of the classroom?

Consequential Variables

Amid these entwined questions about historiography, pedagogy, and curricular mandates, several studies suggest that teachers believe there is something very unique about Holocaust education (e.g., Ambrosewicz-Jacobs et al., 2017). As Jeff noted, there is not a long list of topics that fold in the moral ethical questions that teaching about the Holocaust genocide and social justice do, but its very complexity is an evident challenge for teachers and students.

Jeff: And unfortunately, we know from some of the writing about education in general that students are not well prepared to deal with these questions in the classroom. When we think about the enormous cognitive load that this brings to students, we have to wonder how much they are actually able to take away from a topic that holds such gravity. We know that some students are dealing with an empty stomach and seeing violence in their homes and their communities—those other, very real issues that they have to attend to in their real lives. Even students who have stable home lives and relationships are surrounded by so many other distractions it can be difficult to find relevancy in something that happened decades ago; for many of them, September 11 (referring to the terrorist actions in

2001) is ancient history. So not a great answer but there are some things that we're trying to think about and trying to tease out…

Anthony: One of the pieces that is striking is the perspectives and the extent to which that it challenges us to think about teaching and learning with the end in mind. How well does this particular topic lend itself to that? That is one of the consistent struggles faced by all teachers particularly early service and teachers who are new to teaching the Holocaust.

Corey: As an administrator, we tried to answer that question and we came up with an answer that seemed reasonable. Perfect? Probably not. But what we did was we created a four-part sort of a four-year Holocaust scope and sequence that was built around where students were developmentally both academically and also psychologically and socially in terms of their maturity starting in seventh grade with the reading of Anne Frank. Then, that was replaced by another memoir, Bondi's Brother: A Survivor Testimony, that really is appropriate for a seventh grade reader. And moving up through this four-part series. By the time students got to twelfth grade and the Night unit that was when we finally went into what we call "Inside the Wire." And what we really built was a scope and sequence around an outcome that tried to answer, "what does it mean to do justice to Holocaust education?" And our answer was that at each step we're meeting the students where they are in terms of their cognitive readiness and their maturity readiness and giving them an experience of content that is developmentally appropriate. And when we're done with that stage, at the end of it, there isn't this feeling like "OK, Holocaust…been there done that. I learned that," but that they understand that there's more to learn and as an outcome of Holocaust education the students know that they have new questions. They know that there's new learning to come. And when they encounter a book or a film or something on television, they go at it with this accumulated knowledge and wondering, "What am I ready to learn next?" That became the goal of our design at the

end of each unit: Students understand "I still have more to learn. I'm not fatigued by it. I'm not traumatized by it. I know that as I grow as a student, I will encounter new topics that I'll be ready for. And then at the end when I graduate and go out into the world and I encounter this in my adult life I will also have questions that I want to bring to it." And that was what we felt would do justice to this topic.

Anthony: I mean, that's just a beautiful way to orient learning in general and using this topic of Holocaust education as a means to express that is profound. Thanks for that. I think we all appreciate it. That's something that I would hope to capture somehow and bring that forward to all my pre-service teachers.

Relevancy and Student Voice in Holocaust Education

Anthony: I wonder if I could ask Kim about some general reactions your students have had to learning about the Holocaust, particularly given the complexities of the topic; the way it touches on morals and ethics and things that are just very challenging for us to think about. How do your students generally react to it? What's been surprising to you? What have you learned from it?

Kim: I'm really lucky—with my class it's an English elective and so [the students] choose to be there. So, they already have some level of interest for the most part. I'll get the odd kid who will say "well it's the only class that fit my schedule." I've been teaching it since 2001. I've seen a drastic change in the dynamics of our school and the kids that I'm getting, but they've always said that it makes them appreciate their own lives more. If they haven't faced hardships themselves, they realize now that other people have. I don't have a set curriculum because it changes every year. It depends on the kids and it depends on what resources I have available. In Phoenix, we have a pretty active Holocaust community of survivors, second and third generation survivors, as well

as teachers who are really interested. And so, we get a lot of programs. We just had the Holocaust by Bullets (see Patrick Desbois) exhibit here for example. I added a lot more of that [material] so that my students were prepared to see that exhibit and to learn about it. And that made them look at things with a different lens because now they're looking as witnesses and asking, "what did children do during that time?".

Last year, we had a very different performance come—an exhibit from the Violins of Hope. And again, that gave them a very different lens for my kids who are into music. They loved it because they [Violins of Hope] came to our school and the students were able to play on some of the instruments and they just really took that on a different level. So, you know, it's so different every year, every semester with what we have and what makes it click for them in a very different way. I think it is rewarding to see how they take it differently in ways that they might react based on their experiences. And that's how we all come to history is based on our own experiences and how we relate to that.

Jeff: Kim—what you bring up is super interesting and it drives us kind of toward our questions of relevancy in the classroom. There are kids that come from all over and have a wide array of life experiences. We think about the socioeconomics across the United States. … the five of us here, we're all pretty lucky in that we've been able to teach and think about the Holocaust and education deeply. But then, when we're in classrooms and we are talking about the Holocaust or preparing resources for students or we're thinking about the research as well as some of those questions of relevancy. We have to ask, "What about this is going to resonate with groups of students that may come from very different backgrounds; African-American students or students that are growing up in poverty; students that come from super conservative backgrounds or, for another example, in Arizona there is a large Native American population. What about this history and what we can learn from it that is relevant to their lives?".

Anthony: So, Corey having worked both as a teacher and as an administrator and thinking about the mandate in Michigan and some of the resources around that, I just wonder if you could speak to some of those issues of relevancy?

Corey: Wow—so many thoughts and connections. So, I was for most of my career, in a school district 98 percent white. Ninety nine percent Christian. I moved several years ago to a neighboring district, which was more than 50 percent Latino. And what I found right away was that students needed a different grounding in the history. Jeff, you and I have talked about this that there is a different response initially when the survivor speaking in the clip looks like an aunt or a grandma versus when it looks like somebody who comes from a part of the world where I don't have my cultural roots or linguistic roots. And so, I became interested in that.

I'm thinking about the diversity of the state of Michigan which has large urban areas and rural areas and suburban. We've got the best and worst of America smushed into the state here. For example, when folks who live in Dearborn bring up conversations and classroom discussions around post-Holocaust formation the state of Israel, they have to do that with incredible sensitivity to the cultural local cultural context when their students—many of whom, about 30 percent, are first language Arabic speakers and who are Muslim—have a very different context that they bring to that classroom discussion. So, all of those issues around relevancy were part of our challenge. Luckily, the way that we came around that is rooted in best practice and where social studies instruction is going and that is an inquiry, seeing student questions as declarations of both their knowledge and their readiness to learn. And if student questions of inquiry drives our instruction, then it is the students that are helping make the content relevant. So that's the way we answer that question in our state mandate efforts. And luckily that really matches with what Common Core is doing and the 3C project.

Putting Ideas into Practice

Anthony: There was one question that we talked about before we started that you all were interested in. So, I'm going

to ask each of you: How do you try to get research—and maybe add to that most effective practices—into the hands of K-12 students, teachers, museum educators, and colleagues? Jeff, perhaps we could start with you. I know that your work is so closely connected with teachers and then bringing it into work with their students. So, what's something that you find useful that you might be able to share with us.

Jeff: Sure. It's always trying to bring it back to those real basic questions of how and why the Holocaust happened and if resources help us make it understandable to students. If they are, then it's generally stuff that we want to adopt and create resources around. While that seems pretty straightforward, there's so much out there—what's really going to help answer these questions about human nature, about how this could have occurred in the twentieth century and the implications that it has for not just then, but today as well as considering historical thinking, because as educators we always have to think about what skills are being rolled into this as well. There is always a tension between pedagogy and content; Holocaust education asks us to balance on a very fine wire between seeing the Holocaust as a tool that fits into a curriculum to focus on skill development and abandoning disciplinary thinking in order to focus on the enormity of the Holocaust.

Anthony: Fantastic. Thank you. Kim, how about you. Anything you'd like to add to that?

Kim: I'm also a teacher trainer, so I'm always trying to think from both perspectives. I think about how it looked in my classroom and how it was designed. I'm in Phoenix. I don't get my kids to D.C. unfortunately, but I can take them on the website. And so, trying to find good ways using the museum's materials to have my students access that but not just access it and say "oh here's some statistics and facts" but how, again, they make it relevant to their lives. So, I love what Jeff is saying about "what were people in my town doing at this time and what was the American sentiment?" It helps in bringing it a little closer to home. It's also asking, "What can I do in the time that I have and

what's going to be the most effective?" So, using something like the Museum's timeline lesson can be so effective and get so much across in a short period of time.

Anthony: Thank you, we appreciate that. Alex, how about you. Anything you'd like to add to that about bringing research into the hands of practitioners K-12 students?

Alex: I think first of all I have to say that I'm grateful to be a part of this conversation and just hearing your perspective in terms of how does one grapple with different populations within the classroom when relating information about the Holocaust. That makes me think about how siloed history and other fields are from each other. Going through a history graduate program is about sort of zeroing in on the history and not necessarily zeroing in on the populace to which you are teaching or imparting this knowledge. So, to all of you, thank you. Other historians don't have discussions about (this). We discuss the history but not necessarily its impact directly in the classroom itself. I think that one of the ways that sort of information could be imparted is through interdisciplinary work between historians and between social studies educators. This type of work is seldom seen and not necessarily encouraged all the time. I'm at an institution that does encourage explicitly interdisciplinary work. I think institutions need to foster this sort of development; this sort of interchange of ideas which eventually will then be articulated in conference spaces within publications and at museums.

I think at first, people just need to approach each other. They need to extend the hands of cooperative work. And then to move from there. So, I think it comes from individuals, but it also comes from institutions, and it comes from quite frankly through changes to the ways we are trained in our disciplines and how we choose to grow as scholars.

Anthony: Really great. Thank you. Corey, how about you?

Corey: So, briefly I'll say this is not just a challenge of course with Holocaust education—this is my daily work as a curriculum and instruction administrator. There has been an incredible amount of research recently on the effect of trauma on the readiness of students to learn and their ability

to learn. And there's great research and there's material. So, as a curriculum administrator I'm trying to get that information out to teachers to change their practice and inform their practice. Change doesn't happen in classrooms quickly even though there's this really compelling research that can change the way we teach every single kid. Getting that out and getting teachers to implement that as well as to internalize that is really tough work. So, when it comes to something that's a very specialized area of study within all of history, the challenge is even greater. There are content specialists in every school that are going to gravitate toward that. We hope there are state networks and there are conferences and things where the research can inform the content or pedagogical practice. But the question is how do you change the system? That's really tough work.

I think Alex put his hand on it for me both at the level of those who are going to lead and create new constructs but also all the way back to the classroom. I'm encouraged by what I see with the movement of professional learning communities. That's really happening. Teachers are the best teachers of other teachers. When teachers share effective practice, and when teachers share good ideas, powerful materials that work well effectively in their classrooms, that's when the system starts to shift in a school. When that history teacher says, "I have to share what happened with that English teacher" and the English teacher says "wow, I introduced this bit of context for *Night* and my kids were engaged differently." So, in community with one another that's to me where the research will have impact and start to make a change.

Anthony: Well thank you all. This has been really enlightening. We didn't get through nearly the questions that we wanted to, but I love the way we brought it full circle. You helped us think about how we can work with each other across disciplines. And what we've generally learned from it about our own practice and about our own field. So, this has been just incredible. We heard that from every one of you that

you were able to take something away from this conversation that maybe you hadn't considered before. So, thanks so much for that.

Thus concludes the essence of this virtual conversation we had with these experts. As you see, we covered a lot of ground in this discussion. Alex, Kim, Jeff, and Corey presented a complex, yet hopeful future where teachers have the time and inclination to keep up with the historical and pedagogical research being done in the field. They also homed in on challenges teachers and researchers have in putting research into practice given policy and practical constraints teachers face. They agreed, however, that drawing upon various experts in curriculum, history, and pedagogy through robust collaborative efforts is an important step to ensure learners experience Holocaust education that is both true to the events and relevant to their lives. These ideas will be explored further by these and other scholars in subsequent chapters in this volume.

The opinions of the speakers expressed in this conversation belong to those individuals and do not reflect the views of the institutions with which they currently are or have been affiliated.

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CHAPTER 3

Mandates on Holocaust and Genocide Education in the United States

Lindsey Stillman

Introduction

A 2020 telephone polling study commissioned by the Claims Conference: Jewish Material Claims Against Germany showed "significant gaps in knowledge about the Holocaust" among all Americans and particularly among Millennials. A large portion of the population in the United States under the age of 35 is unaware of key events that transpired, such as names of well-known camps and those culpable for the genocidal atrocities.[1] These findings echo a 2019 Pew Research Center survey based on multiple choice questions which showed that younger Americans and

[1] Holocaust Knowledge Awareness Study. (2018). Retrieved November, 2020, from https://www.claimscon.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Holocaust-Knowledge-Awareness-Study_Executive-Summary-2018.pdf.

L. Stillman (✉)
Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ, USA
e-mail: lstillm@asu.edu

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particularly "teens display lower levels of knowledge about the Holocaust than their elders do."[2]

This growing lack of Holocaust awareness coincides with a rise in hate crimes across the United States. The heinous attack on the Pittsburgh Tree-of-Life-Synagogue in 2018 is but one example of such increasing violence. According to the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), between 2019 and 2020 alone there were more than 10,000 reported incidents of antisemitism in the United States.[3] Others are targets of violence as well. Concern about anti-Black, anti-Asian, anti-Muslim, and other forms of violence also explains the need to include different forms of discrimination and other genocides in the curriculum.

This report studied the 21 states that have passed legislation mandating Holocaust education in some capacity. Of these, 16 also included teaching other genocides such as the Armenian Genocide. The report offers a timeline and an investigation of the motivations for such legislation, demonstrating a renewed urgency to pass Holocaust bills since 2018. What is more, the report explores differences in such legislation in three dimensions, which all influence the impact of such bills:

- the strength of mandates as expressed in the wording, its embeddedness in state standards, and the inclusion of other genocides,
- the creation of taskforces and commissions to assist school districts in teaching the Holocaust, train teachers, and hold districts accountable in whether and how well they teach the Holocaust, and
- funding (or lack thereof) allocated to such taskforces and commissions.

Research Methods

This report relies on two main sources of information. First, the author used all publicly available information on 21 states that introduced bills with mandates ranging from "requiring" to "strongly encouraging"

[2] What Americans know about the Holocaust (2020, May 30). Retrieved November, 2020, from https://www.pewforum.org/2020/01/22/what-americans-know-about-the-holocaust/.

[3] ADL H.E.A.T. MAP. (2020). Retrieved November, 2020, from https://www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resource-knowledge-base/adl-heat-map.

Holocaust education. States using weaker language such as "welcoming" Holocaust education were excluded[4] as they did not directly require Holocaust education. From the legislative texts, key vocabulary and further provisions on funding and taskforces/commissions were identified and correlated with state standards. A list of these bills and state standards as pdf links is included in Appendix A.

These texts, however, say little about the actual implementation of their goals, potential shortcomings, or successes. In a second step, this information was supplemented with interviews with key stakeholders in 17 out of 21 states depending on their availability. The interviews were conducted between November 2020 and May 2021 over email, over the phone, or sometimes both. These stakeholders were identified among members of taskforces/commissions and professionals in the field such as teachers, staff at museums, university professors, and Department of Education officials. Names were generated through reference, research, and connections and were contacted via email and phone. A list of the interview partners with affiliations is included as Appendix 2, and quotes from these interactions are highlighted in *cursive* in the report.

The data compiled in this report is muddied by proverbial moving goalposts and murky reporting. During the writing of this report, Wisconsin and Arizona, for example, passed legislation and North Carolina[5] may well have passed a bill by the time this report meets its readers. This report is a still life also with respect to legislative texts

[4] There is no universally agreed metric of such bills. Echoes and Reflections, for example, uses a different methodology to assess the strength of legislation distinguishing between Holocaust education requirements and "permissive status" that mentions but does not require Holocaust education. However, permissive status also entails very different commitments to Holocaust education. This category ranges from welcoming "the Alabama State Department of Education's stated commitment to ensuring Alabama students have access to quality Holocaust education" to strongly encouraging "to include in its curriculum instruction on the events of the period in modern world history known as the Holocaust" (Washington). Interactive map. (2020). Retrieved November, 2020, from https://echoesandreflections.org/interactive-map/. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum groups these mandates again differently to identify 19 different states that require Holocaust education. Where Holocaust Education is Required in the US. (2020). Retrieved November, 2020, from https://www.ushmm.org/teach/fundamentals/where-holocaust-education-is-required-in-the-us.

[5] Education on the Holocaust and Genocide, H.R., 69, 115C-81.57, 2021, https://www.ncleg.gov/Sessions/2021/Bills/House/PDF/H69v1.pdf.

and corresponding standards that are constantly updated. New Jersey[6] and Florida,[7] for example, updated their 1994 bills in 2013 and 2020, respectively. Taskforces and commissions also frequently change. They are often unofficially formed, and changes, sometimes even their existence, may not show up on state Department of Education websites. As this report shows, their impact is enormous nonetheless. Official funding is rare—only three states (Florida, New Jersey, and Colorado) have allocated modest funds. Persons interviewed for this report, however, stressed that private funding and in-kind contributions from museums, universities, and communities as well as countless hours of volunteer work somewhat disguise this shortcoming. While the report highlights the presence of these efforts, it cannot quantify them.

Holocaust Education Bills: Why and Why Now?

There are 21 states that have passed legislation that requires or strongly encourages Holocaust education be taught in public schools. The earliest Holocaust education legislation was passed in 1994 in New Jersey and Florida followed suit shortly thereafter. A majority of such bills (12), however, have been put in place since 2018. Table 3.1 shows each state that has Holocaust education legislation and the date when they were enacted.

The proliferation of Holocaust education bills in recent years is a response to contemporary challenges. In particular, interview partners mentioned as their motivations combatting rising anti-Semitism and prejudice, fostering civic virtues at a time of intense polarization, creating awareness for the Holocaust as public knowledge recedes, and preserving the memory of the events as more and more survivors pass away.

Often antisemitic instances are the focal point behind the desire for new or updated legislation. A 2020 update to Florida's 1994 bill, for example, mandates "instruction related to antisemitism" echoed by a Pennsylvania bill from 2014 that strongly encourages teaching

[6] 2013 new Jersey Revised statutes:: Title 18A - Education:: Sect. 18A:4A-2 - New JERSEY Commission on HOLOCAUST EDUCATION. (2013). Retrieved November, 2020, from https://law.justia.com/codes/new-jersey/2013/title-18a/section-18a-4a-2/.

[7] Educational Instruction of Historical Events, H.R., 1213, 2020-88, 2020, https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2020/1213/BillText/er/PDF.

Table 3.1 Mandate States and Adoption Dates

State	*Date*
New Jersey	3/1994
Florida	4/1994 (updated 1/2020)
California	2/2001
Illinois	8/2005
Virginia	3/2009
Indiana	3/2014
Pennsylvania*	6/2014
Michigan	5/2016
New York	4/2017
Kentucky	4/2018
Rhode Island	5/2018
Connecticut	5/2018
Texas*	6/2019
Washington*	7/2019
Delaware	6/2020
Oregon	7/2020
Colorado	7/2020
New Hampshire	7/2020
Wisconsin	4/2021
Arkansas	4/2021
Arizona	7/2021

*These states' bills do not mandate Holocaust education; rather, it is highly encouraged

"antisemitism, racism and the abridgment of civil rights."[8] In July of 2021, Arizona Governor Doug Ducey (R) released a press statement citing antisemitic incidences across the state "in Queen Creek, Chandler and (…) at the Chabad on River Synagogue in Tucson" as reason for this legislation.[9] Bills also often invoke that "teaching the lessons learned from the Holocaust and other genocides helps cultivate the spirit

[8] Florida: Educational Instruction of Historical Events, H.R., 1213, 2020-88, 2020, https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2020/1213/BillText/er/PDF. Pennsylvania: Public School Code of 1949-Holocaust, Genocide and Human Rights Violations Instruction, H.R., 1424, 2014, https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/li/uconsCheck.cfm?yr=2014&sessInd=0&act=70.

[9] Office of the Arizona Governor. (2021, July 09). Governor Ducey Signs Holocaust Education Bill. Retrieved August 1, 2021, from https://azgovernor.gov/governor/news/2021/07/governor-ducey-signs-holocaust-education-bill.

of human resilience, courage, heroism, and tolerance."[10] In addition to rising anti-Semitism and cultivating civic virtues, other efforts cite the lack of students' knowledge of the Holocaust. Sharon Greenwald, an author and interview partner for this report who lobbied Texas lawmakers to pass a Holocaust education bill, noted as inspiration, Rhonda Fink-Whitman's video interviews with Pennsylvania public school graduates in 2013. Fink-Whitman's video interviews (which, should be stated, were edited to reveal striking differences) revealed how little students knew about the Holocaust.[11] Finally, some bills specifically reference the need to "preserve the memories of survivors of genocide and provide opportunities for students to discuss and honor survivors' cultural legacies" (Oregon 01/2020 and verbatim Delaware 06/2020).[12] Today's bills are thus embedded in well-publicized contexts, especially rising anti-Semitism and violence against other minorities, lack of students' knowledge, and the need to preserve the testimony of survivors, whose numbers are dwindling.

The urgency connected to these contemporary issues not only sped up the proliferation of Holocaust education bills in recent years, it also increased the speed with which they moved through the process. Once the bills were introduced in state legislatures, it took anywhere between a few months to over a year for them to be passed. States whose mandates took less than six months include Oregon, Washington, Florida (to update its existing mandate), Texas, Kentucky, and Connecticut. Colorado, Illinois, California, Delaware, and New Hampshire took between six and 12 months, while New York, Michigan, and Pennsylvania all took more than one year. Wisconsin and Arizona are outliers, as the legislative process was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

[10] An Act to Amend Title 14 of the Delaware Code Relating to Holocaust and Genocide Education, H.R., 318, 150, 2020,https://legis.delaware.gov/json/BillDetail/GenerateHtmlDocumentEngrossment?engrossmentId=23978&docTypeId=6.

[11] Fink-Whitman, R. (Director). (2013, September 27). *94 Maidens-The Mandate Video* [Video file]. Retrieved August 1, 2021, from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4V4bmm6yJMw.

[12] Oregon: A Bill for an Act, S., 664, 2020, https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2019R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/SB664/Introduced.

Delaware: An Act to Amend Title 14 of the Delaware Code Relating to Holocaust and Genocide Education, H.R., 318, 150, 2020,
https://legis.delaware.gov/json/BillDetail/GenerateHtmlDocumentEngrossment?engrossmentId=23978&docTypeId=6.

This recent proliferation and pace of passage of such bills can also be attributed to support from institutions such as museums, universities and community groups, increased funding, hiring lobbyists, and moderation of goals. Several respondents mentioned the support of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum nationally, local universities and museums such as the Oregon Jewish Museum, and Jewish and other communities as vital for the passage of such bills. Without dedicated and overwhelmingly unpaid individuals in such organizations, these bills would not be on the books today. Equally important was that these individuals managed to acquire funding and with that political experience. Nelson Hersh, who serves on the board of the Holocaust Memorial Center in Farmington, Maine, for example, pointed to the impact of individual philanthropy that funded not only content experts but also a lobbyist to ensure passage of the bill. With political know-how also came a prioritization and moderation of goals. Sharon Greenwald from Texas mentioned in an email that legislation bypassing teaching Holocaust education as essential curriculum under the Texas Education Code and instead establishing a separate statute under the Texas Education Code mandating one week of Holocaust instruction for all Texas school districts in all grade levels "*allowed for 100 percent bipartisan support and swift passage of SB 1828. The clear pro with this approach was phenomenally quick passage. The clear cons with this approach are no direct public funding and no structured task force to ensure success as of this date*." She expressed hope that the Federal Never Again Education Act, enacted to allow the United States Holocaust Museum to fund and expand its education programs and education materials uniformly to US schools, would make state funding less essential.[13]

In short, we have Holocaust education bills today because we need them to address contemporary challenges, especially antisemitism, and because their proponents became experienced operators in building coalitions, fundraising, political lobbying, and limiting themselves to attainable goals. Beyond just passing the mandates, it is crucial that the legislation is actually implemented effectively in schools. In the next section, the mandates are analyzed for their strengths and weaknesses.

[13] Never Again Education Act, H.R., 943, 116, 2020, https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/943/text.

Strength of Holocaust Education Bills

In the absence of one clear measure of a bill's strength, data from our content analysis of legislative language revealed three factors that influence the impact of such legislation:

- the strength of the mandate to teach the Holocaust in the bills' wording,
- the bills' embeddedness in school standards and guidance through state Departments of Education or Superintendents of Public Instruction, and
- the inclusion of other genocides and the potential collaboration with other interest groups.

Confronted with obvious concerns such as rising anti-Semitism and pressured by increasingly experienced groups, lawmakers were willing to endow bills with robust language. The states' legislation uses verbs such as "must include," "mandate," and "require" to strengthen their bills. Even weaker wording such as, "shall include," "provide," or "ensure," still offer a stiffer mandate than "shall incorporate" or "strongly encourage" used in Pennsylvania and Washington. Table 3.2 below highlights the language used in each of the mandates, varying in levels of strength based on which vocabulary was chosen.

Lawmakers in some states offered not only strong wording, but also explicitly linked the bill to state standards and precise instructions on when and how often the Holocaust be taught. Oregon's bill from July 2020, for example, "requires school districts to provide instruction about the Holocaust and genocide beginning with the 2020–2021 school year."[14] The bill also specifies design principles for such instructions that the Oregon Department of Education then directly translated into its standards for different grade levels.[15] The law then calls on the department to work with organizations "whose primary purpose is Holocaust

[14] A Bill for an Act, S., 664, 2020, https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2019R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/SB664/Introduced.

[15] *664 Grade Level Guidance*. Oregon Department of Education. (n.d.). Retrieved November 18, 2020, from https://www.oregon.gov/ode/educator-resources/standards/socialsciences/Documents/664%20grade%20level%20guidance%20Web%20accessible%20(002).pdf.

Table 3.2 Mandate Language used Per State

States that use:	*Name of State(s)*
"Must include"	New Jersey
"Mandating"	Texas
"Requires"	California
	Colorado
	Florida
	Oregon
	Rhode Island
"Shall include"	Connecticut
	Indiana
	Illinois
	Kentucky
	Arizona
"Shall provide"	Delaware
"Shall ensure"	Michigan
	New Hampshire
	New York
"Shall select/distribute"	Virginia
"Shall be"	Arkansas
"Incorporate"	Wisconsin
"Strongly encouraged"	Pennsylvania
	Washington

and genocide studies." Amit Kobrowski from the Oregon Department of Education in an email particularly flagged the Oregon Jewish Museum and its Center for Holocaust Education as partners "*helping teachers who are on the early adopter path on the Learning Concepts identified in the bill*."

Oregon is not alone in issuing such a detailed mandate, incorporating it in its state standards, and fostering partnerships with outside partners. Michigan also clearly identified when and in which subject the Holocaust and other genocides be taught. School districts were asked to ensure that the "social studies curriculum for grades 8 to 12 include age- and grade-appropriate instruction about genocide, including, but not limited to, the Holocaust and the Armenian Genocide."[16]

[16] The Revised School Code, S., 4493, 2016, https://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/2015-2016/billconcurred/House/pdf/2015-HCB-4493.pdf.

Such clear mandates stand in contrast to states such as Connecticut[17] and Pennsylvania,[18] which felt that by not emphasizing a particular age group, their bills were easier to pass. As a result, school districts had little guidance on how and when to introduce the topic. As Michael Bloom, the Executive Director of the Jewish Federation Association of Connecticut, noted, the lack of guidance frustrated school principals who were scrambling to insert the topic in a variety of subjects. This made worse already existing pressures on teachers to teach too many subjects with too little time.

In Washington, a weaker bill that only "strongly encouraged" middle and high schools to include the Holocaust in its curriculum not surprisingly failed to make a specific connection to the state standards altogether.[19] To their credit, however, lawmakers were specific in other areas to offer guidance to school districts. For example, they adopted a close approximation of the USHMM definition of the Holocaust in the bill as "the systemic, German state-sponsored persecution and murder of Jews and other innocent victims by the Nazi regime and its collaborators between the years 1933 and 1945."[20] They also charged the superintendent of public instruction to create teaching resources in conjunction with the Holocaust Center for Humanity in Seattle. This helped the center to raise funds for a staff position in Holocaust education. Still, as Paul Regelbrugge from the center wrote in an email, *"progress in our 'strongly encouraged' work regarding Holocaust education*" is difficult as "*an awful lot of districts (…) don't even respond to our many emails and other targeted outreach efforts*."

[17] An Act Concerning the Inclusion of Holocaust and Genocide Education and Awareness in the Social Studies Curriculum, S., 452, 18-24, 2018, https://www.cga.ct.gov/2018/ACT/pa/pdf/2018PA-00024-R00SB-00452-PA.pdf.

[18] Public School Code of 1949-Holocaust, Genocide and Human Rights Violations Instruction, H.R., 1424, 2014, https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/li/uconsCheck.cfm?yr=2014&sessInd=0&act=70.

[19] *Washington State K-12 Learning Standards for Social Studies*. Washington State Department of Education. (n.d.). Retrieved November 18, 2020, from https://www.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/public/socialstudies/standards/OSPI_SocStudies_Standards_2019.pdf.

[20] An Act Relating to Holocaust Education, S., 5612, 66, 2019, http://lawfilesext.leg.wa.gov/biennium/2019-20/Pdf/Bills/Senate%20Passed%20Legislature/5612-S.PL.pdf?q=20201118212309.

This sentiment regarding mandate language and its policy implementation was echoed numerous times. Josey Fisher, the Director of the Holocaust Oral History Archive at Gratz College in Pennsylvania, said, for example, "*Having a mandate means nothing unless teachers know what they're doing*." Bills therefore have to be connected to standards and be flanked by guidelines and supervision through Departments of Education or Superintendents at the state and district levels. Although Washington and Pennsylvania have weaker language in their bills, states with stronger mandates struggle with the same problem. As Millie Jasper, Executive Director at the Holocaust and Human Rights Education Center in White Plains, NY, mentioned "*(It is) very good for the state of New York to say they have a mandate but that's it. (… It was actually) New York state education department that mandated that there be Holocaust, genocide, and human rights education.*"

By including mandates to teach the Holocaust and other genocides, bills reviewed for this study largely avoided competition between different groups and opened doors for other supporters of the bill to join.[21] This was quite intentional. A person involved in Holocaust education in Oregon that did not want to be identified for this study wrote that they were "*advocating to call it a genocide mandate not Holocaust and genocide. The Holocaust is an example of a genocide and should not be pulled out as separate. (…) our bill was that it was genocide inclusive and requires teachers to educate on genocides beyond the Holocaust. The name is misleading—but this was a battle I wasn't going to win*." Even if they were unsuccessful in getting a bill solely focused on genocide, Oregon is one of 16 states studied in this report, whose bills reference the Holocaust and other genocides. Only five (Arkansas, Florida, Indiana, New York, and Texas) focus only on the Holocaust, albeit often with reference to broad issues such as Human Rights. Josey Fisher of Pennsylvania mentioned "*Specific districts in the state needed to focus on broader issues or issues that are connected to their populations*" thus enabling broader coalitions to include other issues in such legislation. Some bills go so

[21] Competition between different victim groups has sometimes hampered commemorative efforts in diverse settings, for example, at Buchenwald and Mittelbau Dora Foundation that commemorates the Nazi concentration camps and the Soviet/East German internment camp at the same site. Bill Niven, *The Buchenwald Child. Truth, Fiction, and Propaganda* (Rochester: Camden House 2007), p. 203.

far to identify specific genocides to be taught,[22] while most leave this to state standards, which, for example, in Connecticut's case list "human rights violations in the modern world (e.g., Armenian genocide, Nanking Massacre, Holocaust, Amritsar Massacre, Chinese Cultural Revolution, Syrian Civil War)." Connecticut also asks students to "evaluate the role of the United States during the Holocaust."[23] Although some bills and standards explicitly point to the United Nations definition of Genocide,[24] others just list atrocities without clear reference to this definition. In either case, no bill or state standard anywhere mandates how much time should be devoted to other genocides or offers pathways to the comparative study of genocides.[25]

No one factor alone governs the strengths of Holocaust education bills. Yet, endowing bills with strong language, linking them to state standards and public school administrations with specific instructions on when and how to teach it in different grade levels makes the mandates stronger. Together, these measures give outsize weight to such bills and garner more support relative to those efforts that lack any one of these components.

Taskforces and Commissions

Passing strong bills does not guarantee implementation, even if bills are embedded in state standards and enforced by state Departments of Education and Superintendents. For some states, the legislative process therefore included the creation of a statewide taskforce or commission to support their respective Departments of Education, Superintendents, and school districts. Florida, Illinois, Michigan, and New Jersey are such

[22] For example, California: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1OqcDkrHkQLlpnzmTp0b0BfFl4fv43nh6utWPWMRYrPA/edit#.

[23] Connecticut Elementary and Secondary Social Studies Frameworks. (2015, February). Retrieved November 19, 2020, from https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Social-Studies/ssframeworks.pdf.

[24] For example, Kentucky: An Act Relating to Instruction on the Holocaust and Other Acts of Genocide, H.R., 128, 2018, https://apps.legislature.ky.gov/recorddocuments/bill/18RS/hb128/bill.pdf.

[25] Kluessien, K., & Ramos, C. (2016, October). A Matter of Comparison: The Holocaust, Genocides, and Crimes Against Humanity. Retrieved August 1, 2021, from https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/sites/default/files/a_matter_of_comparison_web_0.pdf.

states with Holocaust education bills and official taskforces or commissions. Florida and New Jersey even include state funding allocated for these efforts. Other states with Holocaust education legislation saw the creation of volunteer-based taskforces and commissions often encouraged by their respective Departments of Education, but without a legislative act for their creation. This is the case in Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Texas. Of these states, only Colorado receives modest funding as outlined in the mandate. Lastly, some states without or with pending legislation have created taskforces to bolster Holocaust education in their states. Even as the funding and status of these taskforces and commissions differ greatly, overall, their primary function is:

- to assist school districts in including the Holocaust in their curricula,
- to train teachers, and
- to hold districts accountable in whether and how well they enforce Holocaust education legislation in their states.

New Jersey has the most comprehensive commission relative to other states with taskforces and commissions based on funding, established centers, and organization of teacher education. The commission, signed into law in 2013, is allocated $159,000 annually, which pays the salaries of its two leaders and general operating costs. The commission's focus includes educating teachers and districts while holding them accountable to enforce the bill's charge. The commission currently has 25 members. In addition, according to the New Jersey Commission, there are also 30 resource centers throughout New Jersey dedicated to training teachers, college students, and educating the public about the Holocaust. Each of these resource centers has its own funding mostly through private donors and foundations. For their teacher training efforts, they mostly work with national organizations such as the Anti-Defamation League, Facing History and Ourselves, and others. Many are associated with local museums, universities, and colleges. This decentralized structure has many advantages in reaching different parts of the state, but it makes communication and coordination difficult.[26] Helen Kirschbaum works

[26] (New Jersey Holocaust Commission, Personal Communication, April 28, 2021).

for one of these resource centers as the Director of the Goodwin Education Center at the Esther Raab Holocaust Museum in Cherry Hill, NJ. She mentioned that there is a lack of communication between different centers and with declining funding of the commission, "*they have less to offer to the centers each year.*" This means that despite the creation of a commission and its endowment with funds, there is "*no way to hold high schools accountable*" as the commission does "*not know which districts are even teaching about the Holocaust.*"

Florida was also early to pass legislation, create an official taskforce on Holocaust education under the Commissioner of Education, and endow it with funds albeit through annual appropriation and not in perpetuity as in New Jersey.[27] According to Mallory McGovern, the Florida's Program Coordinator at the Commissioner's Task Force on Holocaust Education, there are also resource centers around the state. Their primary charge is "*to provide access to resources and professional development for Florida teachers. Some of these sites are connected to universities, but not all.*" The taskforce issues a call for applications to give funding to "*school districts, designated sites, other community organizations whose proposed activities are aligned with the mission.*"[28] While the taskforce's reach and organization seem admirable, similar problems as in New Jersey also plague Florida. Barbara Goldstein, a former chair of Florida's taskforce, mentioned in an email, "*More state outreach to educators is needed for teacher training.*" Mallory McGovern added, "*accountability and monitoring tend to fall on the school districts as far as assessing the long-term impact.*"

States with smaller taskforces and commissions and no funding are even more challenged to serve their missions. Illinois currently has a commission of 17 members, whereas Michigan has narrowed its commission from 15 members to three. Given these challenging circumstances, these states build coalitions to offer as much teacher training and follow up as possible. Michigan's Governor's Council on Genocide and Holocaust Education, for example, issued detailed recommendations already in 2017 on teacher training and other issues, yet this was only possible

[27] Solodev. (2021). Commissioner of Education's Task force on Holocaust Education. Retrieved August 1, 2021, from https://www.fldoe.org/holocausteducation/.

[28] Commissioner's Task Force on Holocaust Education Project Based Funding Application. (2021). Retrieved August 1, 2021, from https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/19868/urlt/fundingappholocaust.pdf.

due to private funding.[29] New Hampshire too has an unfunded taskforce made up of invested volunteer parties that include the Catholic Diocese, school district Superintendents, the Anti-Defamation League, Holocaust survivors, legislators, and an affiliation with Keene State College. In the same spirit of pooling resources, the Rhode Island Holocaust and Genocide Education Coalition involves the Holocaust Center, the Armenian Genocide Project, and the Jewish Federation flanked by two universities. As Marty Cooper, a member of Rhode Island's coalition, wrote in an email, "*the coalition, has become a clearinghouse in assisting teachers with finding/getting resources, including finding survivors of the Holocaust or other genocides to speak at schools*." As in the case of funded taskforces in New Jersey and Florida, these efforts are having an impact. Esther Kalajian, Rhode Island co-chair of the Genocide Education Project and member of the coalition, mentioned, "*students are having a meaningful dialogue amongst themselves*" about the Holocaust. This "*would not have happened prior to the legislation*" and the coalition that sprung from it. Yet, implementation and oversight over Holocaust curriculum remain difficult in Rhode Island and everywhere else. As Marty Cooper of Rhode Island Holocaust and Genocide Coalition wrote, "*It is not possible, currently, to hold anyone accountable. The Department of Education, at this time, does not have the ability to oversee 'curriculum requirements'* per se."

There is very little consistency between the different states' taskforces or commissions, as all vary in legislative support, partnerships, numbers of members, and even meeting times. They are much more consistent in terms of what they hope to achieve—inserting Holocaust education curriculum in schools, training teachers on content and effective pedagogies around teaching the Holocaust, and holding districts accountable in enforcing the legislative mandates on Holocaust education. Even New Jersey and Florida as states with old, strong mandates embedded in state standards and funded taskforces struggle to meet these goals. Relying on their networks and using national curricula provided by the Anti-Defamation League and others, taskforces therefore focus on teacher training as the most attainable and perhaps most important goal. They clearly achieve much with little, but inconsistent funding makes it difficult to ensure that training is recurring each year and continuous for individual

[29] Governor's Council on Genocide and Holocaust Education. (2017). Retrieved August 1, 2021, from https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/GCGHE-annual-report-2017--2-5_640616_7.pdf.

teachers over their careers. A comprehensive study of implementation and accountability remains elusive everywhere. As Elaine Culbertson, the Chair of the Pennsylvania Holocaust Education Council, lamented in a phone interview, "*districts would self-report (with no proof) if they were teaching the Holocaust (…) if there was one course that included one thing about the Holocaust they could say 'yes'.*" This is indicative of the larger problem of how to effectively, and continuously, ensure that the Holocaust is being taught in schools.

Funding for Taskforces and Commissions

Taskforces and commissions work hard to implement Holocaust education as mandated in their states' bills. Yet, few legislatures are willing to fund them. Knowing this, many proponents of Holocaust education bills avoided any reference to funding just get them passed, even if that meant having to fundraise for these efforts themselves. Michael Bloom, Executive Director of the Jewish Federation Association of Connecticut, for example made, this point in a phone interview, (We) "*did that on purpose to make it easier to pass, but it means the state wasn't giving money to create a curriculum.*"

New Jersey is a notable exception; it is one of the few states that provide funding with an annual allocation of $159,000 in perpetuity.[30] Florida and Colorado also provide annual funding for Holocaust education, $100,000[31] and $11,998, respectively.[32] Clearly, these funds are not commensurate with what the taskforces and commissions are charged with. Individuals interviewed for this report are keenly aware that the lack of funding jeopardizes the bills' intentions on the whole. As Amanda Coven, Director of Education at Oregon's Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education, wrote in an email, "*Unfortunately, there are still teachers across the state that are unaware of the mandate. Without funding, there is no way to guarantee that teachers and administrators receive quality professional development that prepare them for its implementation.*"

[30] (New Jersey Holocaust Commission, Personal Communication, April 28, 2021).

[31] (B. Goldstein, Personal Communication, December 7, 2020).

[32] Final Fiscal Note: HOLOCAUST AND GENOCIDE STUDIES IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS. (2020, August 27). Retrieved August 1, 2021, from https://leg.colorado.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2020A/bills/fn/2020a_hb1336_f1.pdf.

Mostly travel and meeting reimbursement and substitute teacher cost.

As a result of modest or no state funding, all taskforces and commissions rely on philanthropy from private donors and in-kind donations from museums, community groups, and higher education institutions. These contributions cannot be quantified, but literally no interview partner did not have something good to say about their partners and their contributions. Many interview partners also mention using resources from national organizations such as the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Anti-Defamation League, Echoes and Reflections, and Facing History and Ourselves to start or support already existing teacher training. In the absence of well-researched resources on other genocides, it will be a difficult task for taskforces and commissions to provide teachers with quality materials on these atrocities. Lastly, volunteers, many of whom are retirees, provide a large part of the labor in all of these endeavors.

Arizona's Efforts

Arizona got a lot of things right, which resulted in the passing of its long-awaited bill in July 2021. The key to success was that the bill's proponents, notably Phoenix Holocaust Association, pursued a two-tiered approach pushing for legislation as well as building coalitions and infrastructure in support of Holocaust education. The legislative effort, led by Representative Alma Hernandez (D) as primary sponsor and with the support of House Speaker Rusty Bowers (R), succeeded as a bipartisan effort. Key individuals, such as Michael Beller, provided behind the scenes strategizing, coordinating, and lobbying for the bill. Phoenix Holocaust Association also built partnerships and infrastructure needed for Holocaust and genocide education by establishing close ties with the Arizona Department of Education. In fact, when the legislative effort was stalled in early 2020 due to delays caused by the pandemic, the drive for the mandate was kept alive by passage of Arizona Board of Education rules in October 2020. Mirroring the stalled bill's text, these rules "require students to receive instruction in the Holocaust and other genocides at least once in either grade seven or grade eight and at least once in high school in their social studies courses."[33] These rules triggered the creation of a taskforce led by Phoenix Holocaust Association bringing together

[33] Arizona Holocaust and Genocide Education Resources. (2021). Retrieved August 1, 2021, from https://www.azed.gov/standards-practices/holocaust-and-genocide.

teachers, administrators, and representatives from a host of institutions around the state, including from all three public universities in Arizona. The taskforce created a toolkit on the website of the Arizona Department of Education to immediately provide teachers with quality materials on the Holocaust and other genocides thus enhancing and pooling the many existing teacher training efforts in our state. This two-pronged approach created the very link between legislative efforts and state standards as expressed by the Department of Education that this report identified as vital. It also built the infrastructure that followed, but did not accompany, the legislative efforts in other states.

The bill's text is short, but relatively strong for the three reasons discussed in this report. The wording of the mandate is unambiguous, making it a requirement "that students be taught about the Holocaust and other genocides." It also specifies that such instruction needs to take place "at least twice between the seventh and twelfth grades." What is more, the bill directly references the Arizona Department of Education rules, thus embedding it in state standards and Department of Education rules. Lastly, it includes other genocides opening up the possibility to include a host of organizations representing the diversity of our state.[34]

The bill and corresponding infrastructure are in place, but Arizona's work is far from done. As in other states, the bill deliberately evaded the issue of funding, and the taskforce relies solely on volunteer work and private donations. There is no shortage of good will in our state, but intensifying the taskforce's efforts to become a larger, coordinating body for resource centers around the state will require greater funding. To this effect, the taskforce might consider:

- creating bylaws governing, for example, the election process and potential term limits for taskforce members,
- lobbying for the allocation of funds from the state as well as acquiring more funds from private donations and grants,
- developing strategies together with the Department of Education to assess the implementation and quality of instruction on the Holocaust and other genocides in Arizona,

[34] AZ- HB2241. (2021). Retrieved August 1, 2021, from https://www.billtrack50.com/BillDetail/1270214.

- identifying existing resource centers from around our state at museums, archives, community organizations, universities, and community colleges,
- acting as a clearing house, continue to pool materials from resource centers, especially with respect to teacher training that is both online and in person,
- helping resource centers enhance and tailor existing high-quality Holocaust materials from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and other national organizations to include the stories of Arizona survivors, and
- helping resource centers to create materials to enable teachers to cover other genocides and showcase Arizona's relation to survivors of these genocides.

Conclusion

Lawmakers all over the United States have introduced bills on Holocaust education. Since New Jersey and Florida passed the first bills in 1994, this trend has accelerated. Of the 21 states with legislation requiring or encouraging Holocaust education, 12 have passed such bills since 2018 with Wisconsin, Arkansas, and Arizona as the latest additions in 2021. The proliferation of these bills demonstrates concern about rising anti-Semitism, students' lack of knowledge as well as a belief that teaching the Holocaust is a necessary foundation for fostering ethics and empathy in a democratic society. Florida's 1994 bill already established that Holocaust education is "encouraging tolerance of diversity in a pluralistic society and (…) nurturing and protecting democratic values and institutions."[35] The purpose of this research is to collect data from states that have already established mandates in order to assess their process in creating and passing the mandate, reasoning behind the need to have a mandate for Holocaust education, and the effectiveness of its implementation. These shared concerns notwithstanding, Holocaust education bills vary greatly in three interlinked dimensions as studied in this report:

- strength of the bills,

[35] *Florida's Holocaust Mandate*. Holocaust Resources. (2011). Retrieved November 2020, from https://www.holocaustresources.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/FL-HolocaustMandate.pdf.

- corresponding taskforces/commissions to build resource centers, and
- allocated funding (if any).

As a recap, this report relies on the wording of the bills and associated state standards. This data is complemented by phone or email interviews conducted between November 2020 and May 2021 with key stakeholders in 17 of the 21 states. Central findings of this report include:

- Effectively implemented bills include unambiguous mandates embedded in state standards and are endowed with specific instructions on when and how to teach the Holocaust in different grade levels.
- Taskforces/commissions are established to be the transmission vehicles between the transmission between the bill, states' Departments of Education, and schools. These bodies should perform three tasks.
    (1) provide professional development that is both recurring each year and continuous for individual teachers, create resources for teachers, and hold schools accountable by conducting periodic evaluations of the bill's implementation.
    (2) develop curricula for middle and high schools integrated in state standards and establish a set amount of time (and number of lessons) that the Holocaust and other genocides must be taught, and
    (3) establish transparent governing rules such as term limits, appointment/election of chairperson, and diversity requirements for taskforces/commissions as well as liaise existing resources at universities, colleges, and museums.
- Even though taskforces and commissions receive substantial donations from individuals and in-kind contributions from museums, universities, and communities, they typically lack sufficient funding. Only three states attached modest funding to their bills. As a result, taskforces in their current form fall short, especially in assessing how well the bills' mandates are implemented in schools.

The political will to pass Holocaust education bills is laudable. Yet, the failure to endow the bills with funds and to empower task-forces/commissions substantially hampers these efforts. What started as a research project in order to support the passing of a mandate in Arizona has grown to demonstrate the true effectiveness of Holocaust Education Mandates in the United States. Moving forward, states should reflect on the findings in this report before creating and implementing new bills so that they can ensure that any laws that are passed will actually be effectively implemented in the classroom.

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*note: does not include the terms "Holocaust" or "Genocide"

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CHAPTER 4

The Problem with Hard Histories

Jennifer Rich

One critical role of schools is to engage the next generations in the hard work of actualizing the basic human rights of peace and equality. In order to do this, teachers must endeavor to foster in students a belief in *intrinsic equality*, the fundamental assumption that the good in every human being is intrinsically equal to that of any other (Dahl, 1998, p. 65). To help students better understand, and adopt a stance of, intrinsic equality, schools must engage them in frank, challenging class discussions of hard histories, defined here as complex, troubling historical events and periods (Mansbridge, 1991). However, as this chapter argues, when teachers use multiple histories to teach similar concepts, rather than taking a deep dive into one, it often leads to these histories being ineffectively taught.

The most recent survey done by the Claims Conference, which seeks justice for Jewish victims of Nazi persecution, (2020) supports the idea that surface-level coverage of hard histories is inadequate. This study, the first to survey Millennials and members of Generation Z across the United States in depth, found a troubling lack of basic Holocaust knowledge. Findings from this research include:

J. Rich (✉)
Rowan University, Glassboro, NJ, USA
e-mail: richj@rowan.edu

A. Pellegrino and J. Parker (eds.), *Teaching and Learning Through the Holocaust*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-72636-2_4

- 63% did not know that six million Jews were murdered; 36% thought that "two million or fewer Jews" were killed.
- 48% could not name a single camp or ghetto.
- 11% believe Jews caused the Holocaust.
- 30% had seen Nazi symbols on social media or in their community.

This study makes clear that there is a disconnect about what constitutes "knowledge" of the Holocaust. Does knowledge connote remembering specific facts or the deeper interpretation and meaning making process? What is the balance between knowing the *who, what, where*, and *when* and wrestling with the more complex questions of *how* and *why*? When education relies too much of a focus on granular knowledge, students struggle to internalize broad understandings. They are unable to make meaning from the past, nor accurately interpret it. The result is that research, such as that cited above, presents a skewed picture of what students are actually learning; by trying to teach multiple histories which have several common points of intersection, rather than deeply exploring one and examining the complexities, it compounds the issue.

If teaching straightforward facts about multiple hard histories provides limited learning outcomes, variant strategies ought to be considered. Engaging in discussions of hard histories, especially when there are people in the group with variant views, builds political tolerance, creates an informed citizenry, and may ultimately result in better policy decisions in the future (Hess, 2009). This does not mean that "alternate facts" are acceptable, but different ideas about policy, for example, are. Talk among individuals with different views, sometimes referred to as *cross-cutting talk*, familiarizes people with legitimate rationales for opposing views and normalizes debate (Mutz, 2006). This sort of talk happens very infrequently in society because of an aversion to conflict, making it hard to integrate these conversations into schools (Hess & McAvoy, 2015). Schools, however, are good sites for this type of work because there are opportunities to engage in these hard conversations within existing curricula, there are teachers who are (or can become) skilled at teaching students to participate, and there is ideological diversity.

Many teachers see the rhetoric around hard histories, such as complex American histories or the Holocaust, as a threat to democracy and as a barrier to these sorts of sensitive conversations, but also as indicators of why schools must overcome these challenges (Hess, 2002; Hess & Posselt, 2002; Hess & Ganzler, 2007). They see difficult discussions as

an authentic aspect of education, as well as a way to teach specific skills of researching, listening, and speaking. Additionally, challenging conversations teach social-emotional and cultural content that is not found on standardized tests, something that is increasingly minimized as schools focus on career readiness.

Educators *want* to engage in complicated conversations about social (in)justice and hard histories in classrooms, but they are confronted by numerous impediments. Classrooms are unique spaces—there is clearly a power differential between teacher and students. Teachers may challenge the ideas, values, and beliefs that students are learning at home, which creates an ethical dilemma for the teacher, and for the students who are being introduced to new ideas. There is a real fear of anger from parents and administrators when socio-historical issues are discussed in classrooms. Teachers ought to consider their rationale for bringing such topics into the classroom so they can answer hard questions about what they are trying to accomplish, and how they will engage in the necessary conversations.

How, then, should teachers proceed? Talking about hard histories that center race, religion, or politics in the classroom can feel like the educational equivalent of lighting a forest fire. Raising any of these issues in public schools can be seen as questioning all that is good about America. With minimal emphasis on the struggles and successes of *all* people, students leave high school and enter the "real world" with a skewed understanding of just what that world looks like. By teaching students in all grades about a variety of lived experiences, even if they are difficult to grapple with, teachers enable students to grow more empathetic and understanding toward the struggles faced by others today. This does not only mean adding more diverse authors to summer reading, it means transforming the way education looks in this country. By adding more content related to history that is painful and challenging, as well as content that highlights the successes of historically marginalized groups, students will have a more empathetic and equitable understanding of contemporary social relationships.

There are, sadly, any number of histories that fit the description of "hard." This book, of course, focuses on the Holocaust. Slavery and other genocides, for example, are also undertaught or taught ineffectively in schools, and encourage similar outcomes to a study of the Holocaust. David Blight wrote in the Southern Poverty Law Center report on teaching American slavery (Shuster, 2018, p. 7),

> The point is not to teach American history as a chronicle of shame and oppression. Far from it. The point is to tell American history as a story of real human beings, of power, of vast economic and geographical expansion, of great achievements as well as great dispossession, of human brutality and humane reform.

This idea can be expanded to consider one rationale for teaching any complex, dark history. We do not teach history as a "chronicle of shame and oppression," but instead to tell the story of human beings who inflict "human brutality and humane reform."

One of the most common questions students ask when they learn about hard histories is "how can people do that?" (Costello, 2018), and this provides another rationale for teaching about these pasts; teachers can explore the origins of what so many consider "evil" actions, and help young people consider the duality of individuals. This often draws dotted lines to current global affairs, which can help students connect with the past. Ibram Kendi (2018) wrote that "when our reality is too ugly, we deny reality. It is too painful to look at. Reality is too hard to accept." It is not a leap to suggest that if we cannot look at our reality, we cannot teach it, or engage students in the difficult conversations needed to confront the past and build a better future.

American College Students and Hard Historical Knowledge

As an academic who studies and teaches Holocaust and genocide education, I wanted to better understand whether or not the lack of content knowledge that young people have about the Holocaust is unique to that event (see Chapter 8 in this volume). To that end, I gave a brief, open-ended survey to seventy-five undergraduate students in New Jersey. These young people all went through public school education in the state, the first in the country to enact a Holocaust and genocide education mandate. The students ranged from freshmen to seniors and represent a range of disciplines, including Engineering, Political Science, Psychology, Communications, Marketing, Sociology, and History. The survey asked:

1. What do you know about:
    a. Slavery in America?
    b. The Trail of Tears?

c. The Holocaust?
d. Genocide?

2. Is America a systemically racist country?
3. Does genocide still occur today?
4. (How) did you learn about the events listed above?

The answers to the first set of questions were similar to one another. For example, just under half of the students answered by saying that "slavery was a bad time in American history," "the Trail of Tears was a bad way that Indians were treated," "the Holocaust was sad and tragic," and "there have been a lot of bad genocides in the world." Responses that were counted as accurate varied between histories, of course; for example, an example of an accurate response about the Holocaust is "the Holocaust was the mass killing of Jews and other groups in Europe, that started in Germany"; an accurate response about genocide is "there have been many genocides, which is the murder or a group of people, from Armenia to Rwanda to Darfur."

Responses to the question about the Holocaust echo earlier studies conducted in New Jersey with a similar population, as well as national and international studies investigating Holocaust content knowledge (Rich, 2019; Foster et al., 2016; Claims Conference, 2018; Claims Conference, 2020). Thirty-four students responded with answers that were too vague to be correct. These answers included "the Holocaust was sad," "something that happened that shouldn't have," "people in Europe were killed," and "part of World War II." This survey, however, also yielded more directly antisemitic responses, including "the Holocaust happened because the Jews killed Jesus," "Jews were treated badly but didn't help each other to survive," and "history says that Jews were killed in gas chambers but there is no historical evidence of this."

Students tended to embrace a uniquely "American" perspective on slavery, explaining it as justified, or ultimately stopped by Americans. Sample responses include "a system used all over the world that America stopped," "America used an idea from Europe and all over the world to have slaves, but then realized it was wrong and so fought to free them," and "slavery was a practice that impacted everyone in every country, and America fought the Civil War to stop it." These students put America in a hero role, essentially expressing the idea that Americans might have enslaved people, but everyone did it, and America stopped it.

The responses reflect a fairly traditional narrative of America as the "good guys," using its moral and physical might to improve the world.

Another set of responses about slavery points toward an economic perspective on the practice of slavery; some went so far as to justify slavery as an economic driver of the development of the United States. These responses included "when black people were used to build and America," and "slavery was when slaves planted cotton in the south which helped the economy and allowed this country to grow." Some of these responses are factually correct, especially those that focus on economic drivers behind slavery, but they also show a deep lack of understanding about the brutality and horrors of slavery.

This lack of knowledge about slavery echoes the ground-breaking 2018 study released by the Southern Poverty Law Center that reported results of their investigation into how slavery is taught (Shuster et al., 2018). The key findings of this study included:

- Only 8% of high school seniors surveyed can identify slavery as the central cause of the Civil War.
- Two-thirds of high school seniors don't know that it took a constitutional amendment to formally end slavery.
- Fewer than 1 in 4 students can correctly identify how provisions in the Constitution gave advantages to slaveholders.
- Fifty-eight percent of teachers find their textbooks inadequate.
- 40% of teachers believe their state offers insufficient support for teaching about slavery.

On the whole, students knew very little about the Trail of Tears. Those who did not respond with a version of "this was very bad," or "a sad thing in American history," answered in one of two ways. Many answered that "I think this has to do with Indians, but I'm not sure what it is," or "I learned about this in school but don't remember anything." More troubling, though, were the responses that justified this period in history as necessary, or even appropriate. Students responded with "as America grew with white Americans, the Indians needed to find other space, and they moved across the country," "while I don't think it is a good thing to force people from their homes, without this we would not be the great country we are today," and "Indians were not willing to share their land with Americans, and needed to be moved to allow for advancement." As

with the responses about slavery, these suggest a level of inherent racialized attitudes, a lack of historical empathy, and either no knowledge of, or no concern with, the cruelty inflicted upon Indigenous Peoples.

Public schools across the United States do not provide an accurate, thorough, or complete education about Native American history (Diamond, 2019). One critical study of how Native American history and culture is taught in schools concluded that, "by ignoring the dark episodes of the destruction of Indians in their cultures, historians in effect denied that these ever happened" (Fixico, 1998, p. 86). Rather than facing these "dark episodes," studies of textbooks reveal narratives filled with stereotypes and negative depictions of Indigenous Peoples (Fleming, 2006; Loewen, 2007, 2010; Marino, 2011; Sanchez, 2001). One study of textbooks used in Nebraska found that the narratives about Indigenous Peoples were "devoid of historical and cultural accuracy and empathy" (Shear et al., 2015, p. 72). The textbooks portrayed Indigenous Peoples as lazy and violent (Moore & Clark, 2004). A 2014 study of California textbooks found that they were inaccurate to the point of potentially leading students to perceive Indigenous Peoples "as being the cause of their own demise by attacking miners" (Trafzer & Lorimer, 2014, p. 78).

Approximately one-third of students were able to define genocide correctly. For an answer to count as correct, the student needed to include phrases that said or meant "deliberate murder," "national or ethnic group," and "goal of destroying said group"; students did not need to explain genocide as a category of war crime, or use a legal definition. While approximately one-third of students were able to define genocide correctly, twenty students responded with some version of "I know what genocide is but I don't know how to explain it," and just over one-third responded with answers that were too vague to count as correct. These included "people who kill a lot of people do genocide," "Like the Holocaust, maybe," and "murder."

Other students responded to this question by listing genocides that they knew of. Fifty students listed only the Holocaust, or said that they did not know of any genocides at all. Eleven students knew of more than one genocide, and common responses included the Holocaust, Armenia, Cambodia, and Rwanda. The remaining students answered incorrectly, echoing the earlier New Jersey study (Rich, 2019), with "things like what happened in Waco," and "serial killers."

Racism and antisemitism were on display in many of the responses to the first set of questions, and this became more evident when analyzing

the second set of responses. When asked if America is a systemically racist country, approximately three-quarters of students said that it is not. Typical answers included, "America is not a systemically racist country, but there may be some racist people," "saying that America is systemically racist is a liberal talking point, nothing else," "America was built so that people have equal chances, and that means black people too," and "the mainstream media says it is, but our generation is color blind."

There was a genuine lack of knowledge about genocide, with sixty-one students saying that genocide no longer takes place. One student explained "the Holocaust happened and everyone says never again." Another offered that "there is war and stuff, but genocide like in the Holocaust was over with the second world war." Even students who knew about genocide in Darfur and Rwanda did not realize that these occurred after the Holocaust had ended.

There were a range of responses to the question that asked if, or how, students learned about slavery, the Trail of Tears, the Holocaust, and genocide. Over fifty students said that they learned about these events in middle or high school history classes through reading textbooks and listening to teacher lectures. Twelve students admitted that they don't remember learning about these subjects, or "only learned a little, I think." The others shared what one called "creative ways" that they learned about these hard histories. These included a class full of students being instructed to stand or sit in a small amount of space to simulate both/either the space that enslaved peoples and/or Jewish victims of the Holocaust were confined to at different points in their histories, and writing diary entries from the perspective of a fictional enslaved person or child during the Holocaust.

These "creative ways" of teaching are reminiscent of a number of recent stories about teaching slavery that have reached local, state, and even national news. For example, a fifth-grader was "sold" at a mock slave auction in a New Jersey school (Mazza, 2017); Georgia students were encouraged to dress in Civil War-era costumes, and a white student dressed as a plantation owner told a 10-year-old black student, "you are my slave" (Martin, 2017); a California teacher staged a classroom simulation of conditions on a slaver's ship to provide a "unique learning experience" (Branigin, 2017); and a fourth-grader checked with his mother when his English homework asked him to "give three 'good' reasons for slavery" (Lemoine, 2018).

Reconsidering the Role of Hard Histories

One way to interpret the survey results above is that, put simply, it is challenging for teachers to accurately and appropriately teach about hard histories. In American history, there is arguably no more challenging subject to teach than slavery and its legacy. Race, more generally, is difficult to talk about. This ought not to be a controversial topic in public schools. In America, however, there is very little more political or politicized than race. It is seen today in inequitable incarceration rates, the lasting effects of separate but equal and redlining, and the legacy of Jim Crow (Alexander, 2012; Kendi, 2017; Rothstein, 2018). When white people are asked about race and racism in America, however, the answer tends to run toward all or some combination of "I'm not racist… I have a Black friend… I like rap music… white privilege is just a myth anyway; my life is hard and skin color has nothing to do with it… if Black people worked harder, they would be fine…" (extemporaneous notes from focus groups with students, October 2020).

Young people in America might begin with lessons about racial equality in the lower grades, but these ideas don't make a lasting impression. Instead, they are written off as "sweet" lessons that occur in February, the shortest month of the year, and Black History Month. What young people miss when they are taught about Martin Luther King, Jr., Harriet Tubman, and Rosa Parks in February is an honest, accurate, and nuanced discussion of America's dark history with race. This history informs current politics and policy, and can be taught in school just like any other subject.

Despite what students in the survey discussed in this chapter suggest, racism *is* a systemic societal problem in the United States (Alexander, 2012; Coates, 2015; Kendi, 2017; Rothstein, 2018). The very first step to redressing racism comes from admitting it (still) exists. Not only do students struggle to admit that racism is alive and well in America, but they also have a hard time considering the racist origins of the United States. We can't begin to change our system if we don't acknowledge that it is deeply flawed.

After acknowledging that America has a problem confronting its racist history, teaching about racism and racist laws are the next crucial steps. It is hard for students to understand two narratives about America almost simultaneously: the standard narrative about the greatness and goodness of the United States, and a different narrative that the United States

committed horrible crimes against enslaved and Indigenous Peoples. What is important is to teach the full picture of America's past, not only the version that makes Americans the "good guys." Eddie Glaude, Jr. explained that "disremembering blots out horrible loss, but it also distorts who the characters take themselves to be… It is this sense of the word that strikes me at this particular moment. Disremembering is active forgetting" (2016, p. 47). In other words, "disremembering," or ignoring, a part of our country's history changes the entire story.

Holding the different narratives of America's past next to one another is complicated. For example, many of our first sixteen presidents were slaveholders or sympathizers; I argue that young people should learn this. They can learn that Thomas Jefferson was an enslaver, *and* that he was the brilliant mind behind the Declaration of Independence. People today are imperfect, and so were America's founding fathers. This is not too much for young people to grapple with.

The abolition of slavery might have legally freed enslaved peoples, but America's racist system was not dismantled. The consequences of slavery and Jim Crow laws can be seen in current race relations in America. Public schools, despite desegregation, are still largely segregated. Neighborhoods are, as well, because of red lining and white flight (Rothstein, 2018). In the larger current national conversation, there are vitriolic debates, and there was a violent confrontation in Charlottesville, Virginia, in 2017, about monuments to the Confederacy that were built in the 1950s and 1960s, and whether or not they should be taken down. Black men are four times more likely to be incarcerated per capita than white men, perpetuating voter suppression and income inequality. Racism is very real today, and this stems from America's racist past.

A second, and vitally important, way to think about the survey results shared here is that well-intentioned teachers simply do not have time to teach multiple hard histories well, particularly when these subjects do not appear on standardized exams. In anecdotal research conducted after this survey, teachers explained that they would rather touch on multiple complicated histories than leave one out. One high school history teacher shared:

> these moments in history are personal to some of the kids, so I'd never want to have my class think I don't care. I just don't have time for everything I have to cover, so spending more time on topics that aren't on the tests doesn't help my students. But I try to at least talk about these things.

This sentiment was echoed by many that I spoke with— teachers who want their students to grapple with complex pasts, but who feel hamstrung by the time that is available to them within the school year.

The notion of *wanting* to teach multiple hard histories is made more complicated by teachers' (perhaps perceived) lack of content knowledge. I spoke with just over twenty high school teachers, and eighteen expressed insecurity in what they know about slavery, Indigenous history, the Holocaust, and genocide. One English teacher explained that he "would really like to include novels that teach about this stuff, but they aren't already in the curriculum, and I don't know where to start." A history teacher said,

> Gosh, I wish I knew enough to teach about all of this well, but I don't. I know I don't. I didn't learn it when I went to school, or in my teacher prep programs… and I'm not sure where to go to learn now, or even if I had time if I could figure it out!

In one interpretation, the hesitation these teachers feel is positive; they know what they don't know, and want to be certain that they are teaching accurate and appropriate content. In another light, however, it is evident just how much the educational system needs to change for excellent teaching about hard histories to become mainstream.

When asked why they teach hard histories at all, the overwhelming consensus was that when students learn about subjects like slavery, the Trail of Tears, and the Holocaust, they "become better people," and they "will become upstanders if they need to be." However, the research presented in this chapter suggests that simply touching on multiple histories in order to achieve the same broad goals does just the opposite. Rather than encouraging students to show empathy, stand up for others, or even retain historically accurate information, this approach leaves them with vague, emotional, and inaccurate understandings of complicated pasts.

Conclusion

There are any number of rationales for teaching hard histories to students of all ages. This chapter argues, however, that a deep dive into one history is more effective than quick passes across many. Learning *about* the Holocaust, slavery, the history of Indigenous Peoples, and genocide all have

equal and inherent value. Learning *about* these histories, though, means learning the facts of the past, and how one historical event led to another. Learning *from*, or *through*, these histories is what teachers value more. They want students to take away broad lessons about humanity, and make connections between "then" and "now." In order to help students work to create a more just future, to act to create lasting and meaningful social change, it is imperative that teachers focus on one complex history as case study. In this way, time can be devoted to uncovering nuance, big questions can be asked and explored, and connections to other hard histories can be made.

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CHAPTER 5

Fathoming National Socialism and the Holocaust: Historical Empathy and Holocaust Pedagogies

Alex d'Erizans

Introduction

In seeking effective ways to address the entangled origins of the Holocaust, this chapter reimagines traditional Shoah (Garber & Zuckerman, 1989; Patterson, 2009)[1] teaching practices in K-12 classrooms through a study of National Socialism as an ideologically resonant culture that

[1] This chapter will employ both the term Holocaust and Shoah in referring to the Nazi "Final Solution." The etymological meaning of the former (originally from Greek extraction) is "something wholly burnt up," in a religious context. Referring to genocide, the press harnessed the term Holocaust to describe the various state-sponsored massacres against the Armenians by the Ottoman Turks at the end of the nineteenth, as well as at the beginning of the twentieth, century. After the Second World War, the Holocaust came into use as an appropriate term to describe the Jewish genocide, particularly since

A. d'Erizans (✉)
Borough of Manhattan Community College, CUNY, New York City, NY, USA
e-mail: aderizans@bmcc.cuny.edu

University of New York, New York City, NY, USA

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aligned with, as well as mobilized, a politically astute and critical populace. The piece endeavors to take very seriously the story the Nazis told about themselves, the powerfully sophisticated and logical way in which they conceptualized a novel past, present, and future, as well as the determined manner in which National Socialists sought to realize their own epic story. This chapter contends that one could only fully understand the violent tendencies of the Nazis toward the Jews by examining closely the world within which the National Socialists found themselves, as well as the one they sought to construct. Such a classroom approach will equip students to reflect upon, as well as engage carefully and comprehensively with, the Holocaust in a way that minimizes presentism and enhances a vigorously empathetic understanding of the past, an approach integral for any fruitful historical inquiry.

Thus far, traditional Holocaust K-12 teaching practices have tended to present Nazism as resulting from a multitude of historical factors extending back to antiquity, the middle ages, and the early modern era, dating to the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, resulting from the First World War, arising throughout the period of the Weimar republic, endemic to the years of the Third Reich, and emerging during the Second World War. Teachers have highlighted, above all, the historical origins, as well as manifestations, of European antisemitism, both its pre-modern Christian and modern racist conceptualizations, for understanding Nazism. Modern ideas of nationalism and Social Darwinism emerge as potent contributors, as well, to National Socialism. Regarding more short-term factors, the bitterness, disorientation, and anger of the German people due to military defeat in the First World War, the humiliating Treaty of Versailles, and the tumultuous Weimar years provide the integral backdrop to Nazi electoral success in establishing the Third Reich

the latter entailed not only mass shootings, but the incineration of Nazi victims at the death camps throughout German-occupied Europe as well. Some commentators prefer the biblical Hebrew term, Shoah, instead, when discussing the Nazi assault against the Jews. Lacking the theological or sacrificial connotations of Holocaust, Shoah means simply "devastation, desolation, or ruin that affect man, nature, and land." For an exploration of the terms, see Zev Garber and Bruce Zuckerman, "Why do we call the Holocaust 'the Holocaust'? An inquiry into the psychology of labels," *Modern Judaism 9* (1989): 197–211, as well as David Patterson, "Holocaust or Shoah: the Greek category versus Jewish thought," in *Maven in blue jeans; A festschrift in honor of Zev Garber* (ed. Stephen L. Jacobs; Shofar Supplements in Jewish Studies; West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2009), 336-345.

(Marks, 2007; Riley, 2001; Riley & Totten, 2002; Short, 1998; Short & Reed, 2004; Wickam, 2019). While detailing the explicit and implicit agreement, indeed enthusiastic support, of Germans for Nazism (Marks, 2007; Short et al., 2007; Pagaard, 2005), Shoah educators present the latter often as unprepared to confront the moral and emotional societal challenges facing them, and/or as passive, traumatized objects of a Nazi system that manipulated or poisoned them into becoming perpetrators of violence against the Jews (Boersema & Schimmel, 2008; Karn, 2012; Lindquist, 2011). When arriving at a discussion of the latter, teachers and scholars detail the specific run-up of exclusionary, and ultimately eliminationist, policies and events within Nazi Germany and throughout German-occupied Europe culminating in the Holocaust. Shoah educators have focused, in addition, on heroic acts of resistance, by Jews and gentiles alike, living in the Third Reich and, subsequently, within the empire the Nazis established during the Second World War (Acedo, 2010; Jennings, 2010; Nowell & Poindexter, 2019; Riley & Totten, 2002; Shostak, 2017, 2018).

While the above factors are all often quite useful in a discussion of Nazism and the Holocaust, this chapter argues that Shoah education scholars and teachers frequently do not place them comprehensively enough within a contextual framework that considers National Socialism as a coherent worldview, indeed culture, in its own right, with an internal reason and ethics utterly meaningful for the tale many intentional, thoughtful, and active Germans wished to tell about themselves. Only by conceiving of National Socialism as such a robust and formidable vision of urgent revolutionary transformation, rather than merely as a volatile mixture of a diverse array of ideas, past and present, responding to a chaotic world, could one comprehend truly the genesis, as well as trajectory, of the Holocaust. Only by exploring the world on Nazi terms, the threatened and besieged one National Socialists believed themselves to be inhabiting, as well as the hopeful and dynamic one they sought to bring into view, could students place into comprehensible context the fervent hateful, destructive energy of, and radicalized policies culminating in, the Holocaust.

Such an inquiry will equip students to engage with the Holocaust in a way that enhances a vigorously empathetic understanding of historical subjects, critical for any careful study of history, by eschewing presentism, which could lead to assuming a judgmental posture vis-à-vis the past.

To be empathetic regarding the past, students must strive to contextualize assiduously the past, acknowledge humbly the humanity of historical actors, and realize that the latter thought and behaved in ways which were viably and logically moral within coherently constructed and experienced lifeworlds (Endacott & Brooks, 2013). Rather than placing the Holocaust within an ethical context of good vs. evil, so as to instrumentalize history in order to foster humane and responsible global citizenship for our own contemporary world, as well as potentially trivializing the past by inviting past and contemporary comparisons, historical empathy enables students to seriously give meaning to past subjects' own beliefs and actions on the latter's own terms, and to understand the nuance and complexity of human behavior across time and space (Ashby & Lee, 1987; Barton & Levistik, 2004; Endacott & Pelekanos, 2015; Husbands et al., 2011; Yeager & Foster, 2001). Only by exploring empathetically the ways in which more and more Germans came to assume congenial and active roles in forging the Nazi revolution can one account for the complicity of so many Germans in the increasing radicalization of thought and action against the Jews which culminated in the Final Solution, during which "the Nazi worldview became in the large measure the world view" (Fritzsche, 1998, p. 230), making sense and providing clear directional markers for millions of perpetrators.

State of Holocaust Education

Traditional Shoah K-12 teaching practices have zeroed in on a variety of long- and short-term factors in accounting for National Socialism and the Holocaust. In seeking to elucidate Nazi beliefs, education scholars and teachers have emphasized, perhaps most of all, antisemitism. More specifically, traditional K-12 practices teaching the Holocaust have discussed the need to detail the historical origins and manifestations of European anti-Jewish hatreds, both its pre-modern Christian and modern racist articulations (Riley & Totten, 2002; Wickam, 2019). Traditional Shoah K-12 teaching practices have highlighted how antisemitism emerged before the Christian era, indicated the subsequent early Christian linking of Jews with the death of Christ, and explained how such a hateful view became fundamental to emerging Christian theology in late antiquity. Medieval and early modern mythology, emerging from the Church (and later Protestants as well), fueled and sustained such prejudice through

such notions as the infamous blood libel, and provided the religious justification for the creation of the first ghettos, as well as periodic eastern European pogroms and state expulsions. During the modern era, within intellectual and scientific elite circles, antisemitism remained virulent, but gentile Europeans increasingly perceived the Jews, primarily, as a racial, rather than a religious, group (Riley, 2001; Short, 1998). Antisemitism continued, from time to time, to be linked to Christianity, but the Jews did not suffer primarily because of religious beliefs. Instead, adopting racist (pseudo-scientific), nationalist, imperialist, colonial, and social Darwinian ideas, many Europeans conceived of the Jews as a new type of threat (González-Delgado, 2017; Short & Reed, 2004).

Antisemitism proved foundational for the Nazis, in regard to beliefs, but traditional Holocaust K-12 teaching practices have also often placed much weight upon the First World War and the interwar context, in enabling the Nazis to rise to prominence. Shoah education has emphasized, for example, that the National Socialists came to power due to a constellation of factors extending from the "twin psychological blows" (Short & Reed, 2004, p. 76) of the shameful defeat/surrender in the First World War and the demeaning Treaty of Versailles, as well as the tumultuous political polarization and division (e.g., rejection of parliamentary system, mutual hatred between socialists and communists) and economic convulsions of the Weimar years (Marks, 2007). Holocaust educators have noted how the National Socialists exploited such a combustible environment, for such maneuvering ultimately demonstrated "the possibility of racist demagogues garnering mass support for their dangerous and simplistic solutions to complex problems" (Short, 2003, p. 285) and the "people's longing for strong leadership and the charismatic qualities of Adolf Hitler" (Short, 1998, pp. 58–59). In their drive for power, the Nazis were able to offer and legitimize opportunities to fend off shameful feelings through their "promises to restore Germany's *honour*," their "grandiose claims to eventual world domination; and through idealizing Hitler and Germans as 'the master race'" (Marks, 2007, p. 267, italics in original). With regard to the Third Reich itself, traditional K-12 Shoah teaching practices have laid out an overview of the manner of National Socialist rule (Pagaard, 2005), zeroing in on, for example, the abolition of opposition political parties, the increasing coordination of the media, art, and leisure activities, the Wehrmacht oath of loyalty, and the replacement of labor organizations with the Nazi German Labor Front. Throughout, Holocaust teachers have sometimes harnessed the concept

of totalitarianism in order to explain theoretically the very nature of Nazi power and control (González-Delgado, 2017).

Even while acknowledging the often massive explicit or implicit support the Nazis garnered with regard to ideas, as well as the planning and execution of their rule, Shoah educators have often conceptualized Germans as an unsophisticated, duped, manipulated, naïve, and opportunistic citizenry. The latter emerges as embodying a traumatized people incapable of coping with the moral and emotional difficulties confronting them, and passive objects of a Nazi system of terror and seduction which managed to turn ordinary people into perpetrators (Boersema & Schimmel, 2008; Karn, 2012) of unprecedented violence. The success of the Nazi program, according to such an approach, "owed itself to the well-timed introduction and near constant reinforcement of a cognitive structure that squeezed acceptance and compliance out of a populace" within which "we encounter may individuals who were unable to anticipate the dangers of the emerging dictatorship because they failed to question key assumptions of their own era." The Germans' "impatience with the democratic process" mingled with a fervent belief that national survival hinged on the prospects for territorial conquest and a return to a position of global hegemony. Ultimately, many people were also "enticed" by language promoting the establishment of a community defined by race. Other Germans put economic recovery above protection for political and ethnic minorities (Karn, 2012, pp. 233, 231). People were often "infected" by Nazism (Lindquist, 2011, p. 27), or there emerged a "combination of shallow self-understanding and superficial political calculation among ordinary Germans." Either way, "Germans, who by virtue of their own choices, allowed themselves to be fastened in a system designed to achieve national revitalization and racial purification at any and all costs," even if that meant the Holocaust. Ultimately, then, the latter's "failure stemmed from a mixture of intellectual, national, and moral shortcomings" (Karn, 2012, pp. 231, 233).

Regarding the Nazi assault against Jews, specifically, Shoah educators have taken great pains to emphasize the need to outline, detail, as well as to connect, the particular exclusionary and eliminationalist policies, some extending back to the earliest days of the Third Reich. In this regard, Holocaust educators have sought to provide students a glimpse of the Holocaust's often improvised nature, as well as eventual massive and lethal scope. According to such a view, students must become familiarized

with, for example, the boycott of Jewish businesses and the book burnings that took place across Germany in the spring of 1933, the increasing exclusion from public life and expulsion from employment of Jews, the Nuremberg Laws of 1935, and *Kristallnacht* (Night of the Broken Glass) in late 1938. After the Second World War commences, teachers should emphasize, for example, the establishment of, and everyday life in, Jewish ghettos across Nazi-occupied Europe, the drawing up, and eventual unfeasibility of, the Madagascar Plan of 1940, the killings orchestrated by SS shooters as members of the *Einsatzgruppen* (special action groups) on the Eastern Front (particularly throughout Operation Barbarossa), the eventual logistical planning of the "Final Solution" that took place at the Wannsee Conference in January 1942, and the construction and operation of, as well as the transport of victims to, the death camps across Hitler's empire (Boersema & Schimmel, 2008; González-Delgado, 2017; Karn, 2012; Lindquist, 2011; Nowell & Poindexter, 2019; Short, 2003). In addition, Holocaust educators have sought to remind students of the extent to which the world responded inadequately to the plight of Jewish refugees (e.g., strict immigration restrictions, the failure of the Evian conference of 1938) in the pre-Second World War period. At every stage, traditional Holocaust K-12 teaching practices have endeavored to highlight, in particular, the Jewish perspective, noting the estimated number of injured and deaths at each stage (Lindquist, 2011). Shoah educators have stressed, nonetheless, that students must be reminded that, although directed principally against Jews, the Holocaust consumed the lives of other groups (e.g., the mentally ill, Roma, Sinti, homosexuals) as well (Riley & Totten, 2002; Short, 2015).

Amid such human devastation and neglect, Holocaust educators have sought to remind students to be cognizant of the fact that resistance did indeed sometimes take place. Such efforts by victims to thwart their own destruction included explicit examples (e.g., attempted escapes from ghettos and camps, the 1943 Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, the November 1944 destruction of crematorium No. 4 at Auschwitz), but also less pronounced, but just as meaningful, instances (e.g., mere struggles, successful and unsuccessful, to survive; the formation and maintenance of friendships within ghettos and camps; the maintenance of memories and connections to previously lived experiences through oral and written testimonies, as well as family and community heirlooms; the surreptitious production and distribution of political, spiritual, and educational materials). According to such a pedagogical approach, Holocaust teachers

should also emphasize gentile acts of resistance (e.g., the hiding of children, diplomatic maneuverings) (Acedo, 2010; Boersema & Schimmel, 2008; Duboys, 2008; Jennings, 2010; Nowell & Poindexter, 2019; Riley & Totten, 2002; Short, 1998, 2000, 2015; Shostak, 2017, 2018).

Ultimately, however, Shoah educators have noted, particularly in recent years, the need to demonstrate to students the widespread support for the planning and carrying out of Nazi actions against Jews. German responsibility has moved, then, from Hitler and a small cohort of dedicated and "mad" Nazis and SS men (Boschki et al., 2015; Carrier, et al., 2015) to include, for example, "the role of industrialists, bureaucrats, propagandists, police officers, train drivers, or church ministers, as well as soldiers" (Short et al., 1998, p. 39). Teachers must show "the millions of men and women, young and old, from within German society," "who were often enthusiastic members of the Nazi movement" (Marks, 2007, p. 271), and, through such revelations, demonstrate the central role played by individual Germans in bolstering the National Socialist regime, in word as well as deed (Pagaard, 2005). Educators have stressed that students must be made aware of the often enthusiastic support of German scientific and medical elites, as well as the active complicity, tepid resistance, or silence, of the Papacy, as well as Protestant churches, within and outside of Germany, to attacks against the Jews. Pertinent to this last point, teachers have elucidated the extensive active collaboration of government officials and ordinary individuals throughout occupied Europe, who, for a variety of ideological and opportunistic reasons, galvanized support for, and ultimately drove considerably, the execution of the "Final Solution" (Boersema & Schimmel, 2008; González-Delgado, 2017; Nowell & Poindexter, 2019; Short, 2003, 2015).

National Socialism Reimagined

While traditional K-12 teaching practices of the Shoah have emphasized a multitude of potentially relevant factors in accounting for the history of the Third Reich and the Holocaust, the coverage of Nazi Germany within K-12 classroom often remains "fragmented, or scattered" (Morgan, 2012, p. 9), without being placed within a wider, yet more focused and clarifying, logical and conceptual whole. Ever cognizant of the very real time constraint K-12 educators face in preparing for, as well as covering, an extremely ambitious curricula agenda, a factor which certainly might contribute to a lack of an integrated coherence when grappling with

National Socialism, this chapter recommends an educational approach that strives to alleviate the latter deficiency by conceiving National Socialists as active and astute historical agents championing a complex and all-encompassing worldview, indeed as inhabiting a meaningful and robust cultural reality. Only from such a vantage point do we believe that any deep understanding of the Holocaust to be possible. We must take seriously what Nazis said, proposed, and wrote, for National Socialism was not just "a bewildering profusion of words and ideas, but instead a carefully and coherently argued logos" (Chapoutot, 2018, p. 19). Such a view regarding Nazism and the Shoah would take into account most recent emerging scholarship on the history of the Third Reich, which acknowledges the often widespread and genuine appropriation of Nazi ideas and Nationalist Socialist visions of revolutionary change among a sophisticated German citizenry. Couched in shared cultural values, social networks, and political expectations extending back, most acutely, through the years of the Weimar Republic, the First World War, and the nineteenth century, Nazi blueprints for national reinvigoration resonated deeply with many ordinary Germans, harnessing the latter's cooperation, acceptance, and indeed, to a considerable degree, enthusiastic energies. Moving beyond earlier studies emphasizing the ultimately hollowness of the Nazi revolution, by either presenting the Third Reich as a top-down totalitarian terror state (Arendt, 1951; Aron, 1965; Bracher, 1971; Friedrich & Brzezinski, 1965; Rothfels, 1948), or as a society characterized by an everyday of secured nonpolitical, disengaged, or defiant normality (Allen, 1984; Crew, 1994; FORUM, 2009; Kershaw, 1983; Luedtke, 1995), recent work has increasingly shown how Nazi conceptualizations of the world became foundational guiding principles within the worldviews of countless Germans, profoundly shaping the beliefs, motivations, and actions of the latter (Cary, 2002; Fritzsche, 2008). To a greater extent than ever before, we need, then, to explore the ways in which the general public often willingly and animatedly participated and embraced Nazi notions of inclusion and exclusion in the drive to forge their embattled *Volksgemeinschaft* (national community). We must note how so many Germans often appropriated, in their own individualistic ways, National Socialist values and morals as their very own. One must delve into "the shared values and expectations, the ways of life and thought, historical memory and representations, that gave meaning and coherence to the Nazi experience and informed collective action" (Confino, 2005, pp. 303–304).

One needs to explore the ways in which the Nazis conceptualized themselves as ethically sound historical subjects (Koonz, 2003) and discover the "story Germans told themselves during the Third Reich about who they were, where they came from, how they arrived there, and where they were headed." Throughout, we must remember that "Nazis and other Germans behaved much as we do." We "tell stories about ourselves, individuals as well as national collectivities, in order to give our lives purpose and meaning." These narratives represent, to a significant degree, the "bedrock of our identity" (Confino, 2014, p. 5 (quotes); Boersema & Schimmel, 2008). In other words, National Socialists were quite simply people, who "have in common with all other humans…the fact that their lives took place within a universe of meaning and values" (Chapoutot, 2018, p. 6 (quote); Koonz, 2003).

Regarding the Holocaust to which the Nazis eventually committed themselves, then, we need to "bring to life" the "*Lebenswelt*" (lifeworld) and the "phenomenological reality" (Goldhagen, 1996, pp. 7, 21) of the perpetrators. While certainly pointing out the concrete limits, shortcomings, and disappointments the Nazis experienced in achieving their goals, recent work has reminded us of the often dramatic cultural realignments and changes the National Socialists spearheaded and oversaw, as well as loyalties they secured, in a relatively short, but explosive, period of time among ordinary people eager for, and enthused over, ambitious and forward-looking projects of national awakening. Only by exploring the ways in which more and more Germans came to assume congenial and active roles in the Nazi revolution, do we contend that one can truly account for the complicity of so many Germans in the Holocaust (Bartov, 2003; Cary, 2002; Confino, 2005; Dieckmann, 2011; Eley, 2013; Friedlaender, 1997; Fritzsche, 1998, 2008; Gellately, 2002; Goldhagen, 1996; Gerlach, 1999; Ingrao, 2015; Koonz, 2003; Marks, 2007; Matthaeus et al., 2003; Peukert, 1993; Pohl, 1997; Siemens, 2017; Wildt, 2014a, b). Any explanation of the Shoah that does not acknowledge the actors' "capacity to know and to judge, namely to understand and to have views about the significance and the morality of their actions," and that fails to consider the centrality of the perpetrators' beliefs and morals, cannot possibly be successful in revealing much about the genesis and execution of the "Final Solution" (Goldhagen, 1996, p. 134).

Forging the Nazi *Volksgemeinschaft*

To a large degree, National Socialism evolved out of a dynamic of hope and urgency in the modern era, particularly since 1914, in which war and revolution mobilized Germans for national projects of revitalization and renewal. The urgings for greater egalitarianism and societal cohesion in Germany throughout the decades leading up to the First World War (Kershaw, 2014) intensified substantially amid the wartime nationalism and strivings for an inclusive, nationalist unity of the First World War, as well as the social promises, new possibilities, and militant populism and utopian urgings of the Weimar republic (Betts, 2002; Browning, 2014; Kershaw, 2014; Raphael, 2014; Wildt, 2007; Wirsching, 2014). For many Germans living in the years before and after the National Socialists took power in 1933, the Nazis "had a tremendous merit of clearing a straight path through a confused world, with tangible and easily comprehensible guideposts" (Chapoutot, 2018, p. 13). The notion of *Volksgemeinschaft* the Nazis championed was, at its core, a "politics of promise" (Mergel, 2005, p. 97 (quote); Siemens, 2017; Umbach, 2015), fulfilling the above aspirations and expectations (Steber & Gotto, 2014; Wildt, 2014a, b). Even though the concept, *Volksgemeinschaft*, had become almost a ubiquitous slogan for all political parties in Weimar (Wildt, 2014a, b), the unique blend of nationalism, racism, and antisemitism made the Nazi vision particularly appealing to Germans, as members of a wider collectivity and as individuals, in its flexibly modern approach for grappling with past and present challenges, as well as offering attractive future solutions (Wildt, 2007, 2014a, b). In the end, Nazism's aspiration to rid Germany of regional, religious, and class divisions undermining the nation resonated powerfully with the German populace (Fritzsche, 2008; Stargardt, 2015), and the social promises of Nazism, implicit within the discourse of *Volksgemeinschaft*, captured Germans' imagination (Kundrus, 2014).

The *Volksgemeinschaft* proved remarkably dynamic in its conception. For National Socialists, the concept represented, at its core, a notion of the national community as a harmonious organic entity grounded eternally in nature (Bassin, 2005), one in which "ethnic origin was the ultimate point of reference" (Steber & Gotto, 2014, p. 2). Within such a framework, "blood, flesh, and 'race' were held out as a reference, as a beacon," and "such identity markers were shared by members of the same family, the same 'community,' the same 'race,'-members living and

dead, and those yet to be born" (Chapoutot, 2018, p. 13). The *Volksgemeinschaft* was never static, for although the German *Volk* (people) was timeless, the National Socialists believed that a living community around the *Volk* had yet to be realized, and that it was their duty to realize such a vision (Steber & Gotto, 2014, p. 7). Conditional along racial lines (Saldern, 2004; Siemens, 2017; Wildt, 2014a, b), the idea proved quite inclusive and flexible, and therefore quite effective, in garnering support from the German populace (Gellately, 1990, 2002; Imhoof, 2013). Sine race itself did not ever truly have a single, or even fixed, conception (Confino, 2014), and the term blood remained ambiguous (Stiller, 2012) throughout the history of the Third Reich, the above notions proved able to accommodate a multiplicity of viewpoints, and even individuals. Such fluid, and therefore durable, notions of identity, in other words, held great potential for mobilizing broad swathes of the population (Koonz, 2003).

Inclusive in conception, the Nazi *Volksgemeinschaft*, and National Socialism more generally, offered the German people a variety of ways of appropriation (Koonz, 2003). To a large degree, the regime "did not impose a demanding program of self-formation," for rather than "creating a climate of suspicion about people's inner attitudes as well as painstakingly self-scrutiny, as in Stalinist Russia," the Third Reich offered considerable flexibility in the actual appropriation and actualization of its ideology (Foellmer, 2010, p. 83 (quote); Steber, 2012). Indeed, we could conceive of Nazism "as a field of interrelated key concepts and meanings" which "permitted a richness of ideological variants" preconditioning its formidable ability to accommodate (Steber, 2012, p. 27 (quotes); Raphael, 2014). People found ways to experience Nazism on their own, and in their own ways, and the Third Reich provided a multiplicity of opportunities to do so (Stargardt, 2015; Steber & Gotto, 2014; Umbach, 2015). As individuals debated the notion and manner of becoming National Socialists, the outcomes varied individually, "but the *process* gave them an ideological inflection" (Fritzsche, 2008, p. 8, italics in original). The notion of the *Volksgemeinschaft* itself was, after all, quite vague, affording, even inviting, Germans to embrace the concept through individualized interpretations and ways of being most meaningful to them (Bajohr et al., 2009; Wildt, 2014a, b). Ultimately, then, the *Volksgemeinschaft* spoke of a type of experience enabling individuals to situate themselves within a given space that made sense subjectively (Koselleck, 1989). As a call to act, the concept served decisively as a continuously accelerating means of participatory self-empowerment, "granting license

to do whatever was deemed necessary to bring its own existence into being" (Keller, 2014, p. 229 (quote); Broszat, 1970; Wildt, 2014a, b).

While stressing community and racial comradeship (Chapoutot, 2018), Nazism provided quite attractive possibilities for individuals, both men and women, who ultimately were never meant to be subordinated to, or subsumed in, the collectivity (Foellmer, 2010). Indeed, although quite collective in conception and spirit, the *Volksgemeinschaft* was ultimately geared toward the individual (Foellmer, 2010; Steber & Gotto, 2014). In contrast to what the Nazis conceived as the shallow and materialistic classical liberal, the unthinking and brutish Bolshevik "robot," and the soulless and greedy capitalist "plutocrat," National Socialists argued that they strove for genuine individual self-betterment. National Socialism called on all Germans to creatively and uniquely seize the initiative and succeed, as autonomous, animated, and ultimately active agents of their own lives (Chapoutot, 2018; Foellmer, 2010). For many Germans, the Nazi championing of individual merits (Siemens, 2017) and achievement, combined with strivings for self-improvement, authenticity, heroism and the spiritual and material enjoyment of a better and freedom-filled life the Third Reich offered and encouraged (Foellmer, 2010), proved quite attractive. Many Germans embraced National Socialism as "self-conscious, deliberate subjects." Nazism "did not succeed through seduction, or paralysis or hypnosis" (Fritzsche, 2008, p. 12), but rather through a promise and expectation that Germans would "make politics their own" (Siemens, 2017, p. 338 (quote); Umbach, 2015). Ultimately, such confidence, assertiveness, and entitlement on the part of individuals would redound to the benefit of the collectivity, for such attitudes would ensure that the government remained ever responsive to the needs, frustrations, and aspirations of the people, and thereby secure a robust and lasting link between the *Volk* (nation) and its leadership (Foellmer, 2010).

On the collective, as well as the individual, levels, the Nazi *Volksgemeinschaft* epitomized largely "a real success story" (Kershaw, 2014, p. 30 (quote); Foellmer, 2010; Gellately, 1990). Once the Nazis assumed power in 1933, more and more people did feel a greater sense of equality as citizens of the Reich, as concerns and the weight of past status loomed less in the realm of everyday life. Indeed, for many German citizens, "social and political realities were increasingly interpreted through the lens of community rather than the lens of class" (Fritzsche, 2008, p. 17), and although the goal of genuine social egalitarianism remained elusive, "the sheer forcefulness of social welfare and other reconstruction work

strengthened the notion that national life could and would be remade" to constitute the anticipated *Volksgemeinschaft* (Fritzsche, 2008, p. 17 (quote); Broszat, 1970; Schoenbaum, 1997). In the daily experiences of many Germans, the concept maintained its stature as a worthwhile societal goal (Wildt, 2014a, b, p. 52), emerging as a vision "in which doors seemed all at once open, anything was possible, the sky was the limit," for the *Volksgemeinschaft* "offered prospects for action, possibilities that could be tried out, chances to undertake the previously unimaginable" (Kershaw, 2014, p. 34 (quote); Siemens, 2017).

The spirit of confident and hopeful experimentation, combined with a sense of urgency and danger, galvanized the willingness, indeed eagerness, of National Socialists to undertake radical and untested measures to bring about revolutionary change (Fritzsche, 2008). Ultimately, Nazism "imagined its society as in a perpetual state of war-readiness-the *Volk* must be kept alert and fit: 'decline' and 'decadence' must at all costs be forestalled" (Keller, 2014, p. 228), if necessary, even by the most brutal and uncompromising means. Most immediately, dreadful fears of another 1918 capitulation haunted, even obsessed, National Socialists (Fritzsche, 2008; Stargardt, 2015). In this "perilous hour," the Germanic race needed, therefore, "to act with a decisive violence" against its enemies, which would "make it possible for the Germans to fight the clock, which was running down against them" (Chapoutot, 2018, p. 407).

Combatting Enemies of the *Volk*

The state of emergency within which National Socialists found themselves, as they engaged rigorously in their besieged project of building their *Volksgemeinschaft*, entailed a struggle against enemies spanning millennia, a fight in which 1918 and Weimar represented only the most recent serious setbacks. Such a state of mind reminds us that the ever inclusive Nazi *Volksgemeinschaft* remained inextricably linked to the exclusion of perceived enemies. Nazi violence was itself politics, for it "not only made it possible to represent but also, above all, to experience the political, understood as the difference between friend and foe" (Wildt, 2014a, b, p. 268 (quote), 2007). While calling upon Germans to act as a self-conscious ethnic community bounded by profound notions of racial comradeship and racial struggle (Fritzsche, 2008, p. 6), Nazism envisioned that the only way to ensure the preservation of "worthy" lives was to eliminate, and eventually destroy utterly, "unworthy" lives (Bauman,

1991; Foellmer, 2010; Fritzsche, 2008; Longerich, 2012; Wirsching, 2014). By their very nature, such attacks against outsiders "crafted a sense of belonging and boundaries" (Confino, 2014, p. 81) and anticipated the very realization of the *Volksgemeinschaft* (Wildt, 2014a, b). This removal and elimination of perceived racial and political enemies epitomized perhaps the most profound way that Germans welcomed and experienced the Nazi *Volksgemeinschaft* (Herbert, 2014; Peukert, 1982; Sargardt, 2015; Wildt, 2014a, b).

The Nazis deemed the Jews as the most serious existential enemy of all. For the former, Jewish powers extended over centuries and across the world, and only a radical uprooting would cure the world (Confino, 2005, 2014). In order to comprehend the perceived dire threat Jews posed for National Socialists, one must engage the epic, tragic, and heroic tale the Nazis told about themselves, and their own place in the world. National Socialists sought, above all, to recapture the moment when they believed that the Germanic race was authentic, pure, harmoniously one with nature, and healthy in body, mind, and spirit. In order to experience Germanity at this point of primal and unadulterated birth, a "cognitive-moral revolution" (Goldhagen, 1996, p. 256) and drastic "revaluation of values" was necessary, "a radical cultural critique that made it possible to shake off norms that were hostile to life-norms that prophets with evil intentions, hate-filled revolutionaries, and unthinking humanists had imposed on Germans." The Nazis contended that monotheism, "foreign" control, and universalistic values, extending from, and promoted in, antiquity (e.g., Christianity, Roman law), the medieval and early modern periods (e.g., the Church, the bureaucratic and administrative state, the Enlightenment), and the modern era (e.g., the French Revolution), had all contributed to a thoroughly unnatural world. According to this view, throughout history, the Germanic race, whom Nazism boasted as the bearer of all culture and beauty, had therefore been "ripped from the interconnected quietude of its origins" and thrust into a bitter racial struggle, a millennia-long fight for which they had been debilitated and deprived of the very weaponry in mentality and consciousness necessary to defend itself, fight, survive, and ultimately to thrive (Chapoutot, 2018, p. 406). For National Socialists, the "parasitical" and "rootless" Jew, being ultimately the source of the above subversive ideas and historical developments, perpetrated this momentous sin against the Germanic people, nature, and humanity itself (Browning, 2014; Chapoutot, 2018). The Nazis believed that, in the end, Germans

must, through the forging of the *Volksgemeinschaft*, secure an existence in which "instinct dictated action, and nature, as was only right, wrote and enacted all law" (Chapoutot, 2018, p. 408). In order to accomplish this aim, one must "awaken the minds" of Germans to "awareness of 'the eternal'" (Clark, 2015, p. 174), enabling the latter to arm itself adequately to battle pitilessly according to the "laws dictated by blood, not those dictated by humans or by false gods." Winning this conflict would enable "the Germanic race to escape History and enter the triumphal, eschatological moment of its reign" (Chapoutot, 2018, pp. 19–20), and in so doing, plunge "into deep continuity with a remote past and a remote future" and establish an alternative modernity in line with natural law (Lekan, 2004, p. 155). The need on the part of National Socialists to secure the millennium for themselves by crafting a re-rooted and awakened race restored to its natural authenticity, to the earth, and to the purity of its own blood, then, "was not a flight of fancy, or a mere political slogan, it was an openly stated, carefully thought out, and very serious political program" (Chapoutot, 2018, p. 407 (quote); van der Laarse, 2015), integral for the very *Volksgemeinschaft* the Nazis sought to realize.

Nazi antisemitism, as it actually manifested itself throughout the years of the Third Reich, was quite novel, for it encompassed a modern biological racist discourse infused, implicitly or explicitly, and receiving considerable legitimacy from, centuries-old apocalyptic prejudices and redemptive imaginings (Confino, 2014). Solutions of "the Jewish problem" varied in Nazi Germany, from the spatial removal that dominated the years 1933–1939, to the notion of physical removal, and eventual extermination, during the Second World War (Bauer, 2015; Bauman, 1989; Confino, 2014). In its attacks against the Jew, as in other regards, Nazism epitomized "a work in progress of a culture to be built…a revolution of human imagination, consciousness and morality…." In the end, the Nazis did succeed in forging a cultural narrative that made a world without Jews make sense to Germans, and although this idea was not adopted by all, at a minimum, German citizens "were able to imagine it, to internalize it, to make it part of their vision" of their present, imagined past, and longed for future (Confino, 2014, p. 10 (quote); Wildt, 2014a, b).

With the grimmest of consequences for Jews within the Third Reich and throughout Europe, the story National Socialists told themselves "gave rise to a norm, which told people how to act, and why" (Chapoutot, 2018, p. 406). Since the Nazis "created reality more than reality created them" (Confino, 2005, p. 317), and their "consciousness

determined being" (Fritzsche, 2008, p. 15), National Socialists were more than willing, in an unprecedented manner, to transgress taboos in order to achieve their aims. With each action of violence National Socialists directed against Jews, new opportunities for action became conceivable, and therefore available (Wildt, 2014a, b). The resulting Holocaust would epitomize nothing short of "the first experiment in the total creation of a new humanity achieved by extermination, a humanity liberated from the shackles of its past," an event through which the Nazis rethought "anew the idea of human origins itself" (Confino, 2014, p. 16).

A Call for Historical Empathy

By taking seriously National Socialists, students will be better able to engage empathetically with them, and by doing so, attain a more fruitful comprehension of the past the Nazis inhabited and shaped (Colby, 2008; Dickinson et al., 1984; Field, 2001; Foster, 2001; Lee & Ashby, 2001; Riley, 2001). Empathy remains paramount, after all, for the forging of any historical meaning (Yaeger & Doppen, 2001; Yaeger & Foster, 2001). Endeavoring to achieve an empathetic understanding of the past entails an effort, as well as a humble willingness, to understand historical subjects on their own terms, according to the morals and ethics framing inspired thought and guiding meaningful action, and in line with the narratives they weaved about themselves, in relation to the past, present, and future. Only through the above exertions could we strive to make the thoughts and actions of past subjects come alive by linking with their minds and capturing their experiences (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Carr, 1961; Collingwood, 1946; Damianidou & Phtiaka, 2016; Detrick, 2017; Endacott, 2014; Goldie, 2000; Lim et al., 2011; Peters, 2015; Shemlit, 1984; Volk, 2012). Even more than that, we recognize the very real humanity of past actors (VanSledright, 2001), which ultimately requires, in the end, "a leap of faith, of imagining that someone is like you" (Hunt, 2007, p. 32 (quote); Lowenthal, 2000; VanSledright, 2001).

Through such an approach, "everything looks different, and we can begin to understand" (Lee, 1984, p. 97). Eschewing presentism, which could lead to a judgmental posture toward the past, empathy enables students to give acute sense, meaning, and purpose to historical subjects' own beliefs, actions, and indeed the latter's very lifeworlds (Ashby & Lee, 1987; Doppen, 2000; Endacott & Brooks, 2013; Endacott & Pelekanos, 2015; Foster, 2001; Husbands et al., 2011; Lindquist, 2010, 2011; Riley,

2001; Husbands et al., 2011; Yaeger & Foster, 2001; Yilmaz, 2007). Demonstrating historical empathy certainly does not demand sympathy, but it does call upon us to appreciate and acknowledge "a fellow human's life and path toward being his/her true self" (Detrick, 2017, p. 6).

Undermining Historical Empathy

Current Shoah teaching practices (e.g., Boersema & Schimmel, 2008; Bromley & Russel, 2010; Carrington & Short, 1997; Cowan & Maitles, 2007, 2010, 2015; Duboys, 2008; Gordon et al., 2004; Gross, 2013; Jedwab, 2010, 2015; Jennings, 2015; Korsen, 2019; Misco, 2009; Moison et al., 2015; Salmons, 2003; Short, 1998, 2000, 2003, 2015; Short & Reed, 2004; Stevick, 2007; von Driel, 2003) could undermine efforts to develop historical empathy by highlighting the need in classrooms to present the Holocaust within an ethical context of good vs. evil. Such an approach contends that educational institutions must act as sites of caring (Oliner & Oliner, 1988) lending ethical weight to the Holocaust (Bond, 2008; Carrier et al., 2015; Ellison, 2017; Lindquist, 2011, 2009/2010; Nowell & Poindexter, 2019; Russell, 2008; Salmons, 2001; van Driel & van Dijk, 2010). Cautioning against simplistic comparisons of past and present sufferings and contexts, as well as emphasizing the need to provide in-depth and detailed historical knowledge and background (Acedo, 2010; Bauer, 2010; Boix-Mansilla, 2000; Bond, 2008; Brown & Davies, 1998; Levesque, 2008; Misco, 2015; Nowell & Poindexter, 2019; Pellegrino, d'Erizans, & Adragna, 2017; Ragland & Rosenstein, 2014; Schlag & Waeckerlig, 2010; Seixas & Morton, 2013; Stevick & Gross, 2010), advocates for such a goal argue, nonetheless, that students should harness the past for improving their own worlds. More than ever, according to such an approach, teachers should be "ready to take their plans outside the realm of moral and political neutrality" (Karn, 2012, p. 224). Indeed, without prompting a change of outlook or striving for a cause, knowledge regarding the past is relatively without use (Boschki et al., 2015), even irresponsibly perilous (Karn, 2012, p. 225).

Emboldening current struggles for human rights, fighting against discrimination and prejudice, and fostering responsible citizenship emerge as particularly prominent ethical justifications within traditional Shoah K-12 teaching practices for teaching and learning about the Holocaust. Shoah educators should, according to such an approach, become "advocates for human rights" (Ellison, 2017, p. 8), assigning to their Holocaust

lessons the aim of sensitizing students to injustice, so that the latter will use such education to help cultivate and protect human rights. In the end, a study of the Holocaust must acquire, as a learning outcome, a universal morality (Acedo, 2010; Bond, 2008; Bromley & Russell, 2010; Eckmann, 2015; Fracapane, 2015; Harbaugh, 2015; Short, 1998; Short & Reed, 2004). Indeed, "the most compelling reason for studying the Holocaust" could very well be to "help secure the future against further violations of human rights," whether based on religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, or sexual orientation (Short, 1998, p. 13).

Such championing of human rights must ultimately, according to such a vantage point, be based upon Shoah K-12 teaching practices that aim at promoting such multicultural understanding. The Holocaust could, and should, therefore "encourage students to reflect critically on those aspects of their own cultures…that depict ethnic minorities in an unfavorable light and on the complications of such a depiction" (Short, 1998, p. 14 (quote); Cowan & Maitles, 2007, 2010; Landau, 1989; Rutland, 2015; Short & Carrington, 1991; Short & Reed, 2004). Through such an education, society could brace itself against "moral indifference" and the tendency to dehumanize minorities, and by doing so, justify potentially the latter's marginalization and suppression (Boersema & Schimmel, 2008, p. 57 (quote); González-Delgado, 2017; Jennings, 2010) through code words, symbols of hate, stereotyping, and scapegoating (Duboys, 2008; Cowan & Maitles, 2010; Short, 2003; Shostak, 20,172,018). One could then truly understand the necessity of forging an open and tolerant society capable of incorporating others on equal terms, and willing to recognize the strength of diversity (Jennings, 2015; Ortloff, 2015). Indeed, future genocides could perhaps even be prevented through the knowledge that students obtain by studying the Holocaust (Short, 2015).

By advocating for human rights and fighting against hate, Holocaust educators could ultimately foster social justice (Duboys, 2008; Jennings, 2015) and notions of good (Barton & Levstik, 2008; Eckmann, 2010; Perrotta & Bohan, 2018), caring (McBride et al., 2014), and responsible citizenship among their students (Bond, 2008; Cowan & Maitles, 2007, 2010; Linquist, 2009/2010; Schlag & Waeckerlig, 2010; Spalding & Garcia, 2008; Stambler, 2008; Stevick & Gross, 2010). Knowledge of Holocaust history serves uniquely as "a prerequisite for substantive education of moral choices and civic responsibilities" (Boersema & Schimmel, 2008, p. 59 (quote); Bond, 2008; Landau, 1989; Lindquist, 2008; Misco, 2009; Stevick, 2007), an integral "conduit to producing critically thinking

citizens of high moral and civic character" (Stambler, 2008, p. 51). Research in secondary schools (Ben-Peretz, 2003; Carrington & Short, 1997; Cowan & Maitles, 2010; Davies, 2000; Hextor, 2000; Schweber, 2003; Short, 1998; Totten, 2000) has revealed that knowledge regarding the Shoah may very well represent "the strongest predictor of citizenship values" (Starratt et al., 2017, p. 186). For the above reasons, teaching about the Shoah should not be limited to the mere transfer of knowledge, but rather placed within a lesson plan striving for social awareness and citizenship education (Milerski, 2010). Ultimately, educators must accept "the moral imperative" implicit in Holocaust education (Donnelly, 2006, p. 54).

Such (over)moralizing regarding traditional K-12 teaching practices of the Shoah, while quite laudable with regard to intentions for cultivating fruitful ground for more humane livable worlds today and in the future, could imperil efforts at striving for an empathetic understanding of the past in a variety of ways. In a general sense, moral judgments are without regard to context (Fracapane, 2015; Kinloch, 1998; Ragland & Rosenstein, 2014). To "indulge in the luxury of moral judgment" is not only "unhistorical," but "arrogant and presumptuous" as well (Evans, 2005, p. xxi). Doing the former trivializes both the past and present worlds with which students wrestle, leading potentially "to an exercise of labeling" (Morgan, 2012, p. 15 (quote); Bensoussan, 2014).

Conceptualizing the teaching of the Holocaust as "peace education," therefore, could encourage slipshod intellectual habits and shallow moralizing "inappropriate to the subject" (Dawidowicz, 1992, p. 77 (quote); Levine, 2007; Riley, 2001). Too "much moralizing and not enough history" could be the outcome (Eckmann, 2010, p. 10). Serving as "a prophylactic against temperocentrism" (Shemlit, 1984, p. 44), historical empathy addresses surgically the above concerns by equipping students with the very mindset and sensibility necessary to scrutinize and understand the Holocaust in a critical and humble manner the historical craft demands (Riley, 2001).

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that, in order to enable students to achieve a genuine historical understanding of the Holocaust, Shoah K-12 teaching practices must approach National Socialism as a meaningful, logical, and dynamic culture and "way of being" worthy of astute study in its

own right. Holocaust educators must acknowledge that many of those who embraced Nazism, to a greater or lesser degree, did so deliberately and intentionally, as thinking, critical, and hopeful citizens, who conceived of themselves, not only as members of a wider meaningful collectivity, but as self-actualized individuals as well. Ultimately, National Socialism comprised more than a jumbled hodgepodge of pre-modern and modern fears, obsessions, and assumptions, for it offered a coherent and logical narrative of a new history, an existential and redemptive story that informed the lifeworlds of, as well as actions within those realities for, millions of Germans. Only through such a pedagogy could students ever even begin to attempt an empathetic understanding of the origins and nature of consciousness and beliefs, as well as the trajectories of behaviors, of Holocaust perpetrators (Barton, 2012; Bauer, 2010; Bryant & Clark, 2006; Foster, 2001; Foster & Davis, 2001; Morgan, 2012; Perrotta & Bohan, 2018; Riley, 2001; Riley & Totten, 2002; Yaeger & Doppen, 2001; Yilmaz, 2007). Instead of engaging in self-righteous moral judgments based upon our own well-intentioned desire to weaponize the study of the Holocaust for improving our present world, which could undermine our very understanding of the Shoah, we must endeavor instead to earnestly and humbly "map out what might be called the mental universe in which Nazi crimes took place and held meaning" (Chapoutot, 2018, p. 8), remembering always that "the road to Auschwitz was paved with righteousness" (Koonz, 2003, p. 3) until the very apocalyptic end of the National Socialist Thousand-Year Reich.

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CHAPTER 6

Dewey, Democracy, and Holocaust Education

Jeffrey Parker

Introduction

John Dewey, an eminent American philosopher, was an ardent defender of democratic ideals and felt that it was imperative that democracy be both taught in schools and explicitly modeled in communities. He insisted that teachers could not adequately prepare students for active roles in a democratic society by passively transmitting a body of knowledge. Schools, he said, had to be run democratically, limiting authoritarian relationships within them (Dewey, 1997).

Having lived through both World War I and II, Dewey was well aware of what could happen when democracy was not the basis of a society. Before World War II, Dewey felt that "Hitler had 'inverted democracy' by brutally imposing social unity from above, a method that stood in dramatic contrast to the methods of democratic consensus building from below" (Westbrook, 1991, p. 522). The result of Hitler's inversion of democracy was not only World War II, but the horrors of the Holocaust.

The Holocaust stands as one of the watershed events not only in twentieth century, but in the entirety of human history (Totten, 2001):

J. Parker (✉)
Levine Institute for Holocaust Education, Washington, DC, USA
e-mail: jtparker@ushmm.org

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this was the "state-sponsored, systematic persecution and annihilation of European Jewry by Nazi Germany and it collaborators between 1933 and 1945" (Fallace, 2008, p. 119). The amount of primary source material is staggering and for the most part, readily accessible. The moral and ethical questions are abundant. Holocaust education is essential in schools; it presents unique opportunities to engage in deep, meaningful discussions concerning the fragility of democracy, the dangers of authoritarianism, and the responsibility of citizens. Dewey would likely agree. He maintained that schools should reflect society, believing there was a strong connection between education and social action: "…democracy has to be born anew every generation, and education is its midwife" (*School and Society*, 1915, p. 15). In order for this education to be effective, it must lead to a rich discussion of ethics and values and educators must contextualize with a firm grounding in historical fact rather than a particular political agenda.

Some Holocaust History

It is impossible to understand why and how World War II, and by extension, the Holocaust, occurred without exploring and understanding the events of World War I and the aftermath. World War I officially ended in 1919 with the signing of the Treaty of Versailles. Of the 440 clauses in the Treaty, the vast majority explicitly dealt with the punishment of Germany. Germany was stripped of its military, forced to take responsibility for the war, and ruined economically through payments of reparations. Many Germans felt as if the rest of Europe viewed them as warmongering pariahs.

Imperial Germany was dissolved and became a republic in November 1918, with the introduction of a parliamentary democracy. While highly educated, many Germans were uncomfortable with the ideas of elections, having lived under a monarchy for so long. Using a system of proportional representation, the vote was divided among a number of parties, with none holding a majority. This led to the creation of a coalition which was then tasked with writing a new constitution. The resulting document was democratic in principle, but contained an article which allowed the office of President ultimate authority to rule by decree.

Political unrest continued for years; as many as thirty-five different political parties were vying for power and public approval at different times, each with different and sometimes overlapping platforms. No one

party was able to hold power for very long and elections were held frequently. Complicating matters, by the late 1920s, the global economic depression had significantly destabilized a German economy already weakened by the struggle to pay reparations mandated by the Treaty of Versailles. Sensing an opportunity, the National Socialist German Workers Party [Nazis] became increasingly popular as it provided simple answers to the economy and other perceived social ills. Its leader, Adolf Hitler, relied on a simple message to appeal to voters. Dewey related, in the revised introduction of the 1942 edition of *German Philosophy and Politics*, that Hitler "aroused hopes and desires that accorded with the basic beliefs of every section of the German people, without a display of an openly philosophical kind" (p. 423). Hitler stressed that Germany had had its land stolen from it by the foreign victors of World War I and that the Germanic (whom he defined as racially "Aryan") people must be united. His message resonated with a vocal minority of the populace. By January 1933, even though the Nazi Party had never gained more than 38% of the vote, another coalition government formed, this time between Hitler, as chancellor, and German President Paul von Hindenburg. By offering a political position to Hitler, and forming a partnership, von Hindenburg and other conservative politicians believed that he—and by extension, the Nazis—could be controlled.

Shortly thereafter, in February 1933, the German *Reichstag*, the parliamentary building, burned. The Nazis immediately blamed the arson on a German Communist, but rumors at the time suggested that the arson had been carried out by the Nazis themselves in order to consolidate power. Hitler was quick to ask for and receive emergency powers that suspended many civil liberties, such as freedom of assembly and the press. A democratic society, with strong checks and balances and without a history of political violence, might have responded very differently, but "Only a prepared soil and a highly favorable climate of opinion could have brought to fruition the seeds which Hitler sowed" (Dewey, 1942, p. 421). Both conditions existed in Germany at the time. By the end of March, the Enabling Act passed, effectively making Hitler the dictator of Germany. In short order, the first political actions were taken, not against the Jews, but the political opponents of Nazis, including communists and socialists. By April 1st, approximately 30,000 had been arrested and 3,000 held as prisoners in Dachau, a concentration camp outside of Munich.

The Nazi Party viewed Jews as the most dangerous group. Supported by the pseudoscience of eugenics and the antisemitic Nazi conception

of Jews as a race, Nazi Germany instituted legislative action to strip Jews of their rights and spread propaganda to isolate them. Alexander Karn (2012), notes, "Germans who abandoned the liberal center rarely expressed any desire to see others directly brutalized" (p. 230), but also rarely defended the rights of those suffering abuse. This lack of consistent, pro-social civic engagement had devastating results, not just for the Jews but many marginalized populations.

World War II began on September 1, 1939, when Germany invaded Poland. German authorities placed many Polish Jews in forced labor camps where they faced hard labor conditions, or were restricted to ghettos within some of the larger cities in Poland. Conditions in the ghettos were horrible and many Jews fell victim to starvation and illness. Nazi forces stepped up their brutal campaign after the June 1941 invasion of the Soviet Union. Following in the steps of the *Wehrmacht*, the *Einsatzgruppen*, often aided by local collaborators, instituted mass shootings of Jewish communities on the Eastern front, burying the victims in large pits. Approximately 1.5–1.7 million Jews died at their hands, but some Nazi commanders felt the manner in which the murders were carried out was taking too high of a mental toll on the troops.

In an attempt to resolve this apparent issue, in January 1942 Nazi officials met in Wannsee, Germany, to discuss the "Final Solution to the Jewish Problem." By the spring, they had opened six "killing centers," transporting Jews from the ghettos and from other concentration camps across Europe for the express purpose of death. Between early 1942 and the end of 1944, approximately 2.7 million Jewish people were murdered. Even as the war drew to a close and the outcome was known, every effort was made to continue to kill Jews and cover up the evidence of their crimes. The total Jewish deaths are estimated to be approximately 6 million. The total rises to over 11 million after adding in Soviet POWs, political opponents, gay men, people with physical and mental disabilities, Roma, Jehovah's Witnesses, and other targeted groups.

Short History of Holocaust Education

Holocaust education deserves a place in school curriculums as it is relevant as both history and to contemporary society. Alexander Karn (2012) reminds us that "…we ignore the lessons and legacies of the Holocaust at our own peril" (p. 222). Yet, Holocaust education presents a specific problem for teachers and scholars; why and how it should be taught

continue to be confounding questions. Primarily, there is significant debate within the field of Holocaust studies concerning the uniqueness of the event. Those that argue for the singular nature of the Holocaust reason that the Holocaust was a watershed event which can only be understood within the limits of a contextualized inquiry that is historically disciplined in nature (Dawidowicz, 1990; Karn, 2012).

Others believe that in order to honor the memory and for learning about the Holocaust to mean something aside from history, it must be taught with universal implications in mind and focus on the fragility of democracy and the potential for injustice and violence. The United States Congress recently passed the "Never Again" Education Act, which casts Holocaust education "as a means to understand the importance of democratic principles, use and abuse of power, and to raise awareness about the importance of genocide prevention today" (Never Again Education Act). In addition, as of July 2020, fourteen states mandate some form of Holocaust education, while many others have commissions or working groups that support it. Yet, there is no consistent pedagogical approach or curriculum and no agreement on what quality Holocaust education looks like or effective Holocaust education can and should achieve. In the absence of an accepted framework, the historically grounded Guidelines written and supported by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum are considered by many to be the primary standardizing force.

This should come as no surprise though; America's relationship with the events and implications of the Holocaust has always been complex (Novick, 1999). Even as the events of World War II and the Holocaust unfolded, Americans debated how to respond to the growing crisis. When German actions against Jewish people were being widely reported in the daily newspapers and newsreels in the United States, few Americans lobbied for rescue (Erbelding, 2019). Dewey, though, did make explicit connections between what he knew of antisemitism in general and American racism:

> We are unfortunately familiar with the tragic racial intolerance of Germany and now of Italy. Are we entirely free from that racial intolerance, so that we can pride ourselves upon having achieved a complete democracy? Our treatment of the Negroes, anti- Semitism, the growing (at least I fear it is growing) serious opposition to alien immigrants within our gates is, I think, a sufficient answer to that question. (*Later Works of John Dewey*, 1938b, p. 301)

He went on to advocate that schools should go beyond teaching mere tolerance and the basic aim of "put[ting] up with people from different racial birth or different colored skin." Schools in his view should "aggressively and constructively cultivat[e] understanding and goodwill which are essential to democratic society" (Dewey, 1938b, p. 301). Dewey was further troubled when, after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, tens of thousands of Japanese Americans were forcefully removed from their homes and placed in internment camps. He joined with dozens of other public intellectuals writing to President Roosevelt, asking him to rescind the order "which is so at variance with democracy and the American tradition" (UCLA Film and Television Archive). Singling out the Japanese but not German or Italian Americans, particularly when no disloyalty had been evidenced, was racial discrimination, the authors argued. "Enforcing this on the Japanese alone approximates the totalitarian theory of justice practiced by the Nazis in their treatment of the Jews" (Walker, 1990, p. 138). Dewey again made plain the tensions he saw among democracy, racism, and humanitarian ideals.

As the war drew to a close in Europe, attempts were made to document what had occurred in the camps. Allied forces were shocked by what they found and unprepared for responding in an appropriate manner. Concerns quickly turned to the survivors and to physically restoring a war-ravaged Europe. For years, the emotionally scarred survivors of the camps and witnesses to these atrocities attempted to put their memories behind them and move on with their lives. Thus, the Nazi atrocities were not on the forefront of American public discourse for years.

In the early 1960s, fifteen years after the end of World War II, three separate events occurred in quick succession that galvanized the wider public and began to move the conversation concerning what would become known commonly as "the Holocaust" into the high school classroom. On May 23, 1960, Israeli operatives captured Adolf Eichmann (he had been living under an assumed identity in Argentina), one of the central figures who engineered the "Final Solution," and brought him to Jerusalem for prosecution. Eichmann was charged with crimes against humanity, in particular against the Jewish people. Witness testimony came from survivors, some of whom had been living in quiet anonymity for a decade and a half, and now were being asked to recall the horrors of Nazi persecution. As a result of the publicity surrounding the trial, people from around the world were reminded or learned of what had happened in the camps and ghettos. Elie Wiesel's powerful testimony, *Night*, was

originally published in 1956, but became available to a mass American audience in 1960, coinciding with Eichmann's capture. The next year, Raul Hilberg's meticulously researched work, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, was published. While each played a part in awakening public awareness and appealed to different audiences, the confluence of all three had a strong impact on society (Littell, 2014; Schweber, 2011).

While these events were important, what was happening in American society played a large role as well. By the mid-1960s, American educators had become keenly aware of the growing social consciousness and unrest of the country's youth as they confronted racial inequities and the threat of nuclear war. This led to a radical shift in social studies education—teachers and educators became more interested in students' identities, morality, emotions, and values (Fallace, 2006) and many attempted to integrate this into the classroom. As a result of racial tension, civil unrest, riots, and the birth of the counterculture movement, educational theorists began to challenge the idea that a democratic society was "inherently moral and just" (Fallace, 2006).

Dewey though, who maintained that democracy was a way of defining culture and allowed members of society to enjoy freedom, likely would have seen this unrest as signs of a healthy democracy as people argued for freedom and equality. During this time period, students across the nation demanded a curriculum that connected to their issues and personal lives, wanting an education that was relevant to their concerns and did more than just expect passive learning. The National Council of Social Studies soon rewrote their Curriculum Guidelines to more relevantly reflect the needs, interests, and concerns of students by dealing with the "real social world." This pedagogical response drew upon, but revised the work of progressive educators—in particular, John Dewey—who had long championed the idea that learning starts with interest (Dewey, 1938a).

The new guidelines also coincided with research at the time that suggested that social studies' instruction should focus on problem areas of relevant public issues and the resolution of value conflicts. The biggest contention for researchers and educators came when the researchers "…rejected Dewey's relativistic, pragmatic approach to values on the grounds that it failed to deal with "extreme violations of important social values, which may be justified rationally." They critiqued Dewey's view that actions can be guided by prediction of their possible long-term consequences" (Fallace, 82). Was it reasonable, they asked, to think

that people would—or could—predict the maximal consequences of a particular ideology?

Nevertheless, even though some rejected the usefulness of Dewey's pragmatism, the appeal and ideal of democracy were still attractive. The researchers went on to argue that, while the concept of truth in a pluralistic society cannot be defined "in such unequivocal terms that all will see it and grasp it in the same way," everyone can generally agree on the most basic level that the purpose of a democratic government is "to promote the dignity and worth of each individual who lives in the society" (Fallace, 2006, p. 84). With this as a starting point, it was felt that to have the maximum impact, history should be taught as an evolving conflict of values that were linked to the present needs of society and the individual.

Lawrence Kohlberg, building on the ideas of Dewey, also had a significant impact on this more affective approach to education. According to Kohlberg's philosophy, humans are equipped with a standardized moral framework through which cultural values could be processed. Morality was something that emerged naturally from within this, through social interaction not imposed externally through discipline (Kohlberg, 1969). The reliance on social interaction supported Dewey's contention that it was vital that democratic values be modeled in all areas of society. The final piece of this social studies reworking included the work of Louis Raths' moral development, which he called "values clarification." Also following Dewey's lead, he proposed that values clarification was "not concerned with the content of people's values, but [with] the process of valuing" (Fallace, 2008, p. 92). This process could be evaluated through identifying what was prized and cherished and the public affirmation of these values. Kohlberg and Raths disagreed on how to engage and develop student moral values most effectively, but their work was incorporated into many emerging Holocaust curricula.

By 1973, Holocaust education made its way into the public school classrooms of a few dedicated teachers. One of the first units designed by public school teachers was Roselle Chartock's *Society on Trial* in 1973 (Schweber, 2004). Her unit "viewed the Holocaust not as a historical or cultural problem, but as an ecumenical problem of humankind" (Fallace, 2006, p. 85). Her work was strongly influenced by Kohlberg's theories as she viewed the moral dilemmas as a central part of the curriculum. She identified environmental and cultural factors, along with basic human nature as the chief conditions which allowed the Holocaust to occur.

Implied in this was that such an event could occur in America. The lessons shifted between viewing film and seeing images of the Holocaust, reading accounts of the Holocaust, analyzing the works of Hobbes, Locke, and Machiavelli, and role-playing simulations designed to arouse emotional reactions. Normally, the students were then asked to respond, writing about their feelings and thoughts and reflections on humanity. With this guidance, it was hoped the students would come to the conclusion that no single factor was responsible for the Holocaust.

This and similar curricula were meant to explore the relationships between individuals and society in manners that would be relevant to student life. The Holocaust was an extreme event: regardless of ethnicity, most agreed that Nazism was evil, and Jews were innocent victims. Teachers were willing to use the Holocaust in order to activate the moral reasoning of their students. Many of the early curricula relied on using role-playing activities and images that would arouse intense emotional responses. It was reasoned that the outcome would be an awakening of moral and democratic values and students would feel compelled to actively participate in civic life.

One of the curricula that broke from this mold was produced by *Facing History and Ourselves*. The *Facing History* approach reflected a core, progressive philosophy: student participation and interests were key and the historical documents and examples were thematically organized around human behavior, the Holocaust, and contemporary genocide. In doing so, it strongly leaned on Dewey and Kohlberg's work by wrestling with issues of moral and cognitive growth by exposing students to layers of content meant to complicate and challenge their assumptions about human behavior.

Aside from the Holocaust, *Facing History* also considered other genocides, in particular, the Armenian genocide, which Dewey had written about. Soon after that genocide, Dewey (O'Dwyer, 2011) had commented on the Turks' "envy and hatred" of the more nationalist and wealthy Greeks and Armenians—sentiments that "easily were fanned into the flames of war and massacre" (p. 378). One area that also set *Facing History* apart was the introduction of material that proposed the "theme of nuclear proliferation as the next potential Holocaust" (Fallace, 2008, p. 65).

By the mid-80s, the affective method of teaching faced considerable criticism. Many felt that it relied too much on exploring student feeling

and not enough on objective facts. In particular, the curriculum developed by *Facing History and Ourselves*—which was once lauded by the federal government—came under heavy fire for promoting anti-nuclear activism. In 1983, with the publication of *A Nation at Risk*, there was a strong pendulum swing back to more disciplinary teaching in the social studies. This mindset has become even more entrenched with the introduction of progressively stricter standards, in particular the Common Core.

The Problems and Potential of Holocaust Education

Many who view the Holocaust as a unique event that was particular to a specific time and place argue there is no basis of comparison between the Holocaust and other cases of mass atrocity, state-sponsored violence, or genocide. Using the Holocaust as a tool to educate students in values such as democracy or human rights is seen as simplifying the events and potentially disrespectful. The response to teaching the Holocaust within a framework of democracy or civic values is that "Teachers who approach the Holocaust through a comparative or valuistic framework send students down a path towards relativism" (Karn, 226). The Holocaust, according to this argument, was a state-specific policy and was linked to a particular cultural pattern. Antisemitism, which was a driving force of Nazism, was a prejudice that had been ingrained in European society for millennia. There are no other reasonable points of comparison.

While these arguments must be considered, unless the Holocaust is taught with a focus on stimulating critical thought, promoting democratic involvement, and with finding universal truths in particular, it will soon be considered a niche topic with little coverage in the typical classroom. There are too many other competing "hard histories" which compete for classroom time. It is very possible to honor the unique nature of the Holocaust while stressing its historical parallels to the contemporary world and the consequences of non-democratic actions. In his study of Holocaust education, Stephen Haynes (1998) noted, "There is probably no subject matter [the Holocaust] better suited to challenging students' ingrained tendency to master knowledge passively… Why, then, do [so] many educators utilize pedagogies that challenge only students' capacity for memorizing and recalling information?" (p. 282). This observation

juxtaposes and throws into relief Dewey's belief that students should not be passive receivers of information (Hickman, 2005).

So, as pragmatic educators, what should be focused on and what lessons can be learned from the Holocaust? First, democracy is a fragile institution. The Nazis were successful as a result of consistent reinforcement of a "cognitive structure that squeezed acceptance and compliance out of ordinary Germans as they confronted emotional and moral challenges for which they were not adequately prepared" (Karn, 2012, p. 233). Dewey (1997) contends that "social control of individuals rests upon the instinctive tendency of individuals to imitate or copy the actions of others" (Dewey, p. 17). He goes on to say in *Democracy and Education* (1997):

> Society is conceived as one by its very nature. The qualities which accompany this unity, praiseworthy community of purpose and welfare, loyalty to public ends, mutuality of sympathy, are emphasized. But when we look at the facts which the term denotes instead of confining our attention to its intrinsic connotation, we find not unity, but a plurality of societies, good and bad. (p. 40)

In addition, post-WWI political affiliations in Germany swung wildly and with the onset of economic trouble, crystallized around dangerous ideas that offered simple answers. It's not that Germans were unfamiliar with democracy, but more that democracy in Germany had been "incomplete and half-hearted" (Browning, 1998, pp. 217–218) in the past. This new attempt at democracy opened the door for authoritarian counterrevolution. Middle-class Germans who supported the National Socialists were often driven by complex motivations such as anger, fear, or greed. Unless government actions posed negative consequences for them, some individuals did not question the role of government, where information was coming from or the consequences of (in)actions.

How then can this lesson from the past be extended within the context of a robust study of the Holocaust? There are three main lines of argument for democracy in Dewey's political philosophy: democracy as the protection of popular interests; democracy as social inquiry; and democracy as the expression of individuality. For Dewey, democracy involves the expression of interests on the part of voters; the vote helps to protect individuals from putative experts about where the interests of people lie. A class of experts will inevitably slide into a class whose interests diverge

from those of the rest and becomes a committee of oligarchs (Dewey & Rogers, 2016). The Nazi Party appealed to voters in many sections of the German population, likely because of the perceived simplicity of a message that focused on race and space and how this would potentially benefit Germans as a whole. As Nazi leadership grew in power though, they began to turn on segments of their base—such as the murder of supporters in the "Night of the Long Knives"—and began to focus on consolidating the power of the party itself.

We must address the big questions of truth, justice, and the obligations of citizenship. For many Germans in the post-World War I and Weimar Republic era, these concepts were elusive as political parties jockeyed for control and promoted their own explanations and solutions for societal problems. Within the Nazi regime, conformity to the state was the ideal, in thought and action; nationalism was familiar, but that required allegiance not critical thought. Members of the armed forces swore oaths of allegiance, not to Germany, but to Adolf Hitler himself. Students, in school, were taught that their loyalty was to the Fuhrer. Lessons focused on the idea of *Lebensraum*, or "living space" that was rightfully Germany's. Children's primers, such as *The Poison Mushroom*, identified Jews as the enemy. Freedom of thought and individual freedoms were significantly curtailed. Through propaganda and legislative actions such as the 1935 Nuremberg Laws, Nazi-defined truth was disseminated to the people and the obligations of citizenship were spelled out.

For a democracy to be strong and flourish, Dewey believed the exact opposite was necessary. Individuality and freedom are inextricably entwined for Dewey (1997); without the right to express individuality, a person is not free. This does not mean self-centered behavior; rather, it requires that an individual's strengths be explored and encouraged to grow so that he or she can give back to the community as a whole. For this to happen, Dewey (1938a) argued that it is essential that education produces undocile, unservile, questioning citizens, in the name of individuality. Dewey argued that it was the job of education to encourage individuals to develop their full potential as human beings. He was especially critical of the rote learning of facts in schools and argued that children should learn by experience. In this way, students would not just gain knowledge but would also develop skills, habits, and attitudes necessary for them to solve a wide variety of problems. Viewing liberty through the prism of individuality opens up the possibility of political action in the

name of liberty, as it asks students to question what their role is in society and how their individuality relies on opportunities to question.

Democratic participation, in Dewey's view, is not only protection against government being run by elites, but is a vital aspect of individual freedom. Democracy is not "simply and solely a form of government," but a social and personal ideal: it is a property not only of political institutions but of a wide range of social relationships, including schools (*Early Works*, 1969–1975, p. 246). For this ideal to be effective requires a democratically educated citizenry that is comfortable wrestling with uncomfortable ideas and ready to respond to the threat of tyranny. How do we do this? The following, with thanks to thought partner, Laura Tavares of *Facing History*, are some suggestions.

History matters. State and federal mandates for Holocaust education which focus on the vaguely worded "lessons of history" and assume an understanding of fundamental Holocaust history must be far more explicit, identifying and requiring specific study of key events, concepts, institutions, and individuals. These might range from the history of anti-semitism to the Treaty of Versailles; the Weimar Republic era to the post-liberation period. Only an accurate, detailed, nuanced study of the Nazi rise to power and its socio-cultural context while addressing the active and passive choices of individuals who experienced this history can help students understand that the Holocaust was not inevitable. Far from inevitable, the Holocaust was the result of individual and collective decisions and complex motivations, including hate, fear, and self-interest. Rich primary sources and engaging pedagogies are crucial to this deep learning. Although many educators present the Holocaust through fictional texts taught in English / Language Arts classes, actual stories, found in diaries, letters, eyewitness accounts, and memoirs, represent this complex history far better. If no other options are available, educators using fiction to teach the Holocaust should be mindful to supplement stories and novels with historical context.

Pedagogy matters as well. The facts of the history, as powerful as they are, won't achieve the ambitious aims of Holocaust education mandates unless students also have opportunities for a mixture of emotional engagement and ethical reflection through an examination of historical events and actors. Educators should aspire to create learning environments where students are compassionately supported while grappling with the enormous ethical and moral questions that are posed about the best and

worst of human behavior. Knowledge bereft of context and opportunities to build meaning has significantly limited value. It is essential to craft lesson and unit plans using a variety of teaching strategies which include, but not restricted to, establishing classroom norms, journaling, use of primary sources, and structured discussion models to engage students' minds, hearts, and consciences. To practice this kind of sensitive and creative pedagogy, teachers, too, need support. Encouragement and funding for professional learning should be an integral component of Holocaust education mandates.

Informed connections to the present matter. Most Holocaust mandates are rooted in the idea of relevance, though many seem to miss the mark. If students are to find a truly meaningful connection in a study of the Holocaust, educators can't simply teach the history of the Holocaust as a monolithic event that happened to those people, over there, a long time ago. Instead, teachers must consider the students in the classroom, listen to them, and attend to the questions that are being asked. When we broaden the context though, this history has the potential to attune us to the power of propaganda and media, the danger of hatred and "othering," the fragility of democracy, and the power of individual choices. It can help all of us—adults and students alike—ask better questions about the present moment and more meaningfully reflect on the choices we face. Holocaust history is often misused to create political messages in the form of hastily constructed memes and inaccurate analogies that obscure more than they reveal. Helping students to see more accurate and relevant connections can assist them in analyzing and deconstructing these inaccuracies. As scholar Sam Wineburg argued, history can be "a tool for changing how we think, for promoting a literacy not of names and dates but of discernment, judgment and caution."

Effective teaching about the Holocaust requires investment from a variety of stakeholders. Departments of education, college and university education programs, and schools must invest financial resources in teacher training and quality teaching materials. Time is required for educators to prepare and then teach this history in-depth. Such teaching also represents a moral investment in young people and a trust in their capacity to engage with deep and often confounding questions about humanity, power, and democracy. These investments can pay dividends long after a particular unit of study has ended, because they strengthen the capacity of schools to educate engaged, informed, and responsible decision makers and civic actors who will build more just and inclusive societies.

Concluding Thoughts

I close with a copy of a (quite possibly apocryphal) handwritten letter that a newly hired principal personally handed to each of his teachers on the first day of school. It read:

> Dear Teacher:
>
> I am a survivor of a concentration camp. My eyes saw what no man should witness. Gas chambers built by learned engineers. Children poisoned by educated physicians. Infants killed by trained nurses. Women and babies shot and burned by high school and college graduates.
>
> So, I am suspicious of education.
>
> My request is: Help your students become more human. Your efforts must never produce learned monsters, skilled psychopaths, educated Eichmanns. Reading, writing, and arithmetic are important only if they serve to make our children more humane. (quoted in Ginott, 1972, p. 317)

If we fail to keep the ideals of democracy alive in our schools and don't infuse our lessons with more than just facts, we run the risk of repeating the mistakes and horrors of the past. While Dewey certainly did not write with the horrors of the Holocaust in mind, he could predict the consequences of a society that clung to polarized ideologies, downplayed the importance of critical thought and science, and disregarded the individual. Currently, the Common Core urges educators across the country to focus on facts and to excise personal response. While using terms like "critical thinking" and "personalized learning," students are still guided toward predetermined conclusions. With the focus on standardized testing driving instruction, there are few opportunities in the basic content areas to address important issues such as democracy, truth, questioning, and justice.

Though Holocaust education is no cure-all, a carefully considered Holocaust unit has the potential to address some of these issues. By structuring a unit around primary documents and testimony, the essential questions of democracy can engage students in a historically accurate manner. The uniqueness of the Holocaust can teach students what happens when societies abandon the ideals of democracy, freedom, and individuality.

The views here expressed are solely those of the author and do not reflect those of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

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CHAPTER 7

An Education Epidemic: What United States Textbooks (Don't) Say About the Holocaust

Steven Steigerwalt and Gina Pfeiffer

Holocaust education in the U.S. is failing. Textbooks aren't helping.

The first 50-state survey on Holocaust Knowledge and Awareness, published by the Claims Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, revealed a shocking lack of Holocaust knowledge among U.S. Millennials and Gen Z, and a troubling trend of social media users sharing Holocaust denial and distortion online (Claims Conference, 2020). Of those surveyed, 63% did not know that six million Jews were killed during the Holocaust, and 48% could not name a single ghetto or concentration camp, despite there having been more than 40,000 ghettos and camps in operation during the Holocaust. Furthermore, despite the fact that Auschwitz has become emblematic of the Holocaust—over one million Jews were killed within the various Auschwitz compounds alone—56% of U.S. Millennials and Gen Z did not know what Auschwitz was (Claims Conference, 2020). In an even more disturbing trend, nearly 50% of the respondents had seen Holocaust denial or distortion on social media. In

S. Steigerwalt · G. Pfeiffer (✉)
Rowan University, Glassboro, NJ, USA
e-mail: gmads113@gmail.com

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New Jersey, where the first Holocaust education mandate in the United States was enacted, 12% of participants in the survey were either *unsure* of whether Holocaust happened or *did not believe* that the Holocaust happened at all. What these statistics tell us is that Millennials and Gen Z in the U.S. lack not only Holocaust knowledge, but *how* to understand the historical legacy of the Holocaust and its importance. Perhaps the issue goes deeper than just Holocaust education; these statistics suggest that there may be an issue with how history is being taught on all levels.

Regardless of the respondent's lack of Holocaust knowledge, 64% of those surveyed believed that Holocaust education should be compulsory in schools, and 80% believed that it is important to teach the Holocaust, in part so that something like it does not happen again. The general population, teachers, policymakers, and politicians seem to agree that the Holocaust *should* be taught; as of 2020, 19 states have some form of Holocaust education mandate (USHMM, 2021a). *How* it should be taught is a more contentious issue. These survey results led us to question why Holocaust education is failing. The respondents of the survey were all citizens of the United States, meaning that they were most likely educated in the United States. The question then became, "*How are the tools used to teach in the U.S. failing Holocaust education?*" In order to answer this question, we decided to analyze and review how textbooks, one of the most popular teaching resources in the U.S., cover the Holocaust. What we found, and present in this chapter, is that textbooks' coverage of the Holocaust is unacceptable in almost every conceivable way.

We found that most of the textbooks reviewed below are largely dispassionate disseminations of information—not useful guides for teachers trying to navigate an extremely complex, inherently moral subject. Although there are certainly times when education should remain neutral and unbiased, the Holocaust cannot be taught *without* bias—students cannot be allowed to come away from a lesson on the Holocaust without knowing, without a doubt, that Nazis are morally reprehensible. Lindquist (2011) states that teaching the Holocaust is "complex, emotionally charged, and intrusive," and therefore must be treated with the utmost care; teachers must make extremely careful pedagogical choices including selecting lesson plans carefully and directing classroom discussion to avoid problematic conclusions about the Holocaust and those it affected (p. 125). Therefore, teachers cannot be impartial or dispassionate if they want to deliver an effective lesson on the Holocaust (Barton & Levstik, 2004).

Historically, textbooks have been disproportionately influenced by large states like Texas and California due to the sheer number of textbooks bought by these states for their large student populations. Additionally, large states with varied populations, like Texas and California, influence textbook manufacturers to avoid overt moral lessons in an attempt to remain politically neutral, and as a result, lack in detail, empathy, and specificity (Slater, 2020). The ways in which textbooks represent the Holocaust, and the moral and educational take-aways that are pushed on to the teachers and students who use them, are ineffective at best, and, at worst, perpetuate problematic assumptions about Jews, the notion of race, the fragility of democracy, and much more. We argue that textbook authors, in their word choices and harmful, reductive coverage of the Holocaust, are perpetuating the ideology that Holocaust education has broadly been applauded for combating. If teachers want to provide their students with the tools that they need to understand and learn from the Holocaust, they may, in fact, want to avoid *most* textbooks.

Education has long been hailed as a panacea for many of society's problems, and Holocaust education is no different. Good Holocaust education boasts a myriad of benefits; although Holocaust education cannot eliminate racism or xenophobia, research has shown that students who learn about the Holocaust are more aware of human rights issues, and think critically about their beliefs, prejudices, and individual choices (Rich, 2019). Another survey of U.S. college students found that Holocaust education makes students more empathetic, tolerant, and open-minded (ADL, 2020). Barton and Levstik (2004) argued that the goal of history education, and by extension Holocaust education, should be to prepare students to participate in and protect democracy. The Holocaust, perhaps more than any other subject, is one ideal way for students to explore the fragility of democracy, consider what they can do to uphold it, and contemplate how they can protect the rights of their peers. By exploring these topics through the Holocaust, students are more likely to become active participants in their democracy, and therefore, these goals should inform all Holocaust education (Barton & Levstik, 2004). In the wake of a global rise in antisemitic and xenophobic hate crimes, and a global shift to the political right, these moral and civic outcomes of Holocaust education are needed more than ever. As the survey results above indicate, young people in the United States have severe gaps in their knowledge of and about the Holocaust. Although these gaps may not negate the benefits

of Holocaust education altogether—students can still glean that the Holocaust was wrong without remembering the date that Auschwitz was liberated—filling in these gaps is a massive and important undertaking; and the logical place to start is in the classroom.

Teachers are faced with multiple difficult choices during the course of a single school day, and some of the most difficult curricular choices that teachers will face is what teaching materials they should use during a lesson on the Holocaust (Jackson, 1990). Teaching the Holocaust (or any genocide) is uniquely challenging for several reasons: teachers feel they lack the content knowledge to adequately teach the Holocaust, the Holocaust requires an open dialogue between teachers and students on the complexity of human nature, and the subject is overwhelming in both scope and ethical concern (Donnelly, 2006). According to Lindquist (2007), the Holocaust needs to be *confronted* to be properly taught; at the core of Holocaust education sit enormously complex issues, such as the complexity of human nature, and man's inhumanity to man. It is only natural then, in attempting to teach such a difficult topic, that teachers turn to one of the most ubiquitous teaching resources in the U.S. textbooks.

Teachers face added pressure from school administrators to use the textbooks purchased for their use. Many K-12 teachers feel pressured by school administration and state teaching standards to have different classes on the same chapter of the same textbook at the same time, regardless of the natural ebb and flow of teaching such complex material (Slater, 2020). In this study, we reviewed ten commonly used NJ textbooks to discern and analyze how textbooks address and cover the Holocaust. If well written, thorough, and thoughtful, textbooks could be a great resource for educators who are finding their footing in teaching the Holocaust. The reality, however, is that most textbooks barely scrape the surface of even the most rudimentary Holocaust education.

Methods

Though there have been a few published studies on how the Holocaust is covered in textbooks and other teaching materials, there have been no thorough analyses of commonly used textbooks that cover the Holocaust. In order to analyze general trends in textbooks, we identified some of the most commonly used textbooks in the state of New Jersey, chosen because it was the first state in the nation to introduce a Holocaust education mandate, to examine what materials are used to teach this content.

There are 584 school districts in New Jersey (NJ DOE Public School Fact Sheet). We emailed the appropriate contacts from each district, including superintendents, principals, and curriculum supervisors to gather information on what materials are most commonly used across the state. In total, 207 districts responded to the request for information. From this information, 34 textbooks emerged as "commonly used" meaning that they appeared in more than twenty-five school districts as the primary form of Holocaust education. From these 34 social studies textbooks, 10 were selected for further analysis through a random sample. Overall, we analyzed one "Western Civilization" textbook, three "United States History" textbooks, and six "World History" textbooks. We analyzed the value of the information within them using a framework which was heavily influenced by David Lindquist's (2009) article, "The Coverage of the Holocaust in High School History Textbooks." We also referenced Barton and Levstik's *Teaching History for the Common Good* to analyze the various historical stances utilized in textbook's coverage of the Holocaust (2004).

Before developing the complete framework, we decided on a definition of the Holocaust that we would use to compare with the definitions provided in textbooks. Though defining the Holocaust can be extremely difficult, we decided to use a recent definition of the Holocaust from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM). At the time this chapter was written, USHMM defined the Holocaust as "the systematic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of six million Jews by the Nazi regime and its allies and collaborators" (2021b). An earlier definition from USHMM defined the Holocaust as:

> a specific genocidal event in twentieth-century history: the state-sponsored, systematic persecution and annihilation of European Jewry by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945. Jews were the primary victims – 6 million were murdered; Gypsies, the handicapped, and Poles were also targeted for destruction or decimation for racial, ethnic, or national reasons. Millions more, including homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Soviet prisoners of war, and political dissidents, also suffered grievous oppression and death under Nazi tyranny. (Cowan & Maitles, 2017, p. 6)

These two definitions, Lindquist's (2009) prior framework and pedagogical/historical stances developed by Barton and Levstik (2004), lead us to

develop an analysis framework that focused on: defining the Holocaust, contextualizing the Holocaust within World War II, coverage of anti-semitism and Judaism, establishing roles in the Holocaust and the role of Hitler, exploring moral and ethical questions, the notion of "race," factual and inferential accuracy, textbook narratives, and historical stances and student learning objectives. As we analyzed the textbooks, we also took note of text features such as images, vocabulary words, headings, included activities, questions to consider, and recommended assessments. We thoroughly examined each textbook and took notes about how the textbooks aligned or did not align with the established frameworks, as well as our impressions of the textbook as a whole.

Findings

Defining the Holocaust: Who, Why, and What's Left Out

Definitions are important and distinctive features in any middle school or high school textbook; they allow students to retain the meaning behind specific glossary words in a given lesson, which is important when it comes to applying knowledge across disciplines. Due to the complexity of the Holocaust, it is imperative that textbook chapters provide students with historically accurate and comprehensive definitions. We used the definition provided by USHMM to measure the accuracy and appropriateness of the definitions provided by the selected textbook chapters. While definitions remain a crucial building block for students to grasp key concepts in a given lesson, the social studies textbooks we reviewed for this study often lacked consistency when explaining the Holocaust as a historical event. The textbook chapters' definitions of the Holocaust varied and offered generally conflicting accounts of the same event. For example, of the ten textbook chapters analyzed for this research, each one had a different definition of the Holocaust. Each of the definitions provided scant amounts of content, leaving many questions unanswered regarding *who* was impacted by the Holocaust and *why* the Holocaust occurred. From one text to another, each account of the Holocaust omitted significant contextual information, including those behind the perpetration of the Holocaust, the existence of multiple victims groups, the reasons for targeting and persecuting specific groups, and the extent to which specific groups were persecuted.

David H. Lindquist asserted that "textbooks should provide students with a definition that enables them to respond accurately and knowledgeably to the question, 'What was the Holocaust?'" (2009, p. 298). Overall, there was an evident divergence in content when comparing the textbook's definitions to the one provided by USHMM. The authors consistently failed to acknowledge the widespread civilian involvement in the Holocaust, instead opting to place sole responsibility on Hitler. *World History* (King & Lewinski, 2008) stated that the Holocaust was "Hitler's killing of many of the Jews in Europe" (p. 685). King and Lewinski's definition attributed the entirety of the Holocaust to Hitler while simultaneously oversimplifying the suffering of victims, both Jewish and non-Jewish. Similarly, *Ways of the Word: A Brief Global History* disproportionately emphasized Hitler's influence on the Nazi's deliberate murder of European Jews by stating that "Hitler…suppressed all other political parties, abolished labor unions, arrested thousands of opponents, controlled the press and radio," and more (Strayer, 2009, p. 639). In a literal interpretation of the text, students could gain the impression that Hitler was the only Nazi in all of Germany, and even if they don't, the chapters continually reinforce the notion that Hitler alone was responsible for every aspect of Nazi ideology. *World History and Geography* stated that "Himmler and the SS closely shared Hitler's racial ideas," furthering the idea that Hitler was the arbiter of all Nazi ideology (Spielvogel & McTighe, 2018, p. 356). In reality, Nazism would not have gained a foothold in Germany without the active and enthusiastic participation of a contingent of dedicated men who were involved in the party even before Hitler.

Although including Adolf Hitler and the murder of six million Jews requires no justification and is a reasonable starting point, a definition of the Holocaust must provide more. First, although many authors cover the Holocaust's impact on European Jews, few specifically mention groups like Roma (often referred to as Gypsies), Slavs, Jehovah's Witnesses, Communists, Socialists, Afro-Germans, homosexuals, and people with disabilities as victims of the Holocaust (USHMM, 2021a, b, c). Beyond a more inclusive definition of who the victims were, students must learn that the Holocaust required the participation of an entire society, not the sole efforts of a single man, to happen. Attributing the Holocaust's occurrence solely to Hitler relinquishes all accountability from the countless other perpetrators, collaborators, and bystanders who committed murder during the Holocaust. By restricting the narrative's scope to Jews as the

sole victims of the Holocaust, and Hitler and a handful of high-ranking Nazis as the sole perpetrators, the authors provide students with a narrow definition that will hinder their understanding of the Holocaust, leaving them unprepared to think critically about the Holocaust as a whole. After vaguely defining the Holocaust (if they attempted to define the Holocaust at all), most textbooks quickly shifted the chapter's focus to the next topic.

Why the Holocaust happened is another underexamined aspect of most Holocaust definitions. *United States History: Civil War to the Present* (Deverell & White, 2012) asserted that the Nazi's attempt to murder the Jewish population of Europe was all in the name of Aryan Supremacy. *AGS United States History* attributed the Holocaust to the German people's general perception of supposed Jewish inferiority, stating that Jews were persecuted because of their "ethnic heritage" (King & Napp, 2005, p. 533). Worth noting is that *United States History* (2005) does not mention antisemitism, instead focusing erroneously on ethnicity as the reason for Jewish persecution, a complication that does not further students' understanding of the Holocaust. Time and again, the authors neglect to provide a consistent explanation of *why* the Holocaust happened, nor do they invite students to question how a society considered to be a highly functioning liberal democracy, not unlike their own, could fall to such depths of inhumanity. The definitions provided in the chapters somehow manage to both needlessly complicate and drastically oversimplify the Holocaust in a way that detracts from the textbooks' overall value.

The textbook chapters analyzed for this study were inadequate in various ways, perhaps stemming from inconsistencies in their definition of the Holocaust. In sum, although slight differences are understandable, the chapters' definitions exemplify an egregious disparity in how the Holocaust is defined and contextualized for students. Such disparities present educators with the enormously challenging task of compensating for the lack of factually accurate and precise content required to teach the Holocaust successfully. As a result, students are often presented with misleading contextual information that diminishes the efficacy of Holocaust education.

"A War for Racial Purity": Antisemitism, Judaism, and the Notion of Race in Textbooks

As of this writing, the U.S. Department of State's working definition of antisemitism is "a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews," and includes "rhetorical and physical manifestations" which are directed at "Jewish… individuals and/or their property" or "toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities" (2021). Although many scholars highlight the role of antisemitism within Nazi ideology and German nationalism, we found that the textbooks glossed over antisemitism, or worse: they failed to acknowledge it at all. Since textbook authors' coverage of antisemitism generally falls short, it is no surprise that they neglect to acknowledge that, although antisemitism was an integral component of Nazism, Nazis are not responsible for its creation. According to Lucy Dawidowicz (1975), "modern German antisemitism was the bastard child of the union of Christian antisemitism with German nationalism" (p. 23). The chapters' coverage of antisemitism is fleeting, at best, and the authors commonly refer to antisemitism as a general hostility toward Jews, if they refer to it at all. King and Lewinski (2008) failed to define antisemitism for their readers, but decided to include the definition of "swastika" (p. 642). As a result of the poor coverage, the devastation caused by antisemitism is trivialized. The authors also ignored the Christian origins of antisemitism, as well as its long history in Europe.

Judaism, like antisemitism, is scarcely and inadequately defined in the textbook chapters analyzed for this study. The current definition of Judaism provided by USHMM is:

> Judaism is a monotheistic religion, believing in one god. It is not a racial group. Individuals may also associate or identify with Judaism primarily through ethnic or cultural characteristics. Jewish communities may differ in belief, practice, politics, geography, language, and autonomy. (2021)

Returning to the importance of defining the Holocaust, *World History and Geography: Modern Times* (Spielvogel & McTighe, 2018) provided that the Holocaust was the mass murder of over six million Jews and nine to ten million non-Jews in a German war against non-Aryans for "racial purity" (pp. 356–357). Although the text covered Nazis and Nazism well, it failed to clarify that the Nazis' racial ideology was based on pseudoscience and that the Jews are *not*, in fact, a racial group. The text

does, however, acknowledge the Nazi's misuse of the word "race" by stating "the Nazis misused the term by treating it as a racial designation and identifying the Aryans with the ancient Greeks and Romans and the twentieth-century Germans and Scandinavians" (Spielvogel & McTighe, 2018, p. 307). Despite acknowledging Nazi's misuse of the word "race" in reference to the Aryan race, the authors never addressed how the notion of race was abused in order to persecute the Jewish people. The authors also failed to acknowledge Judaism as a religion by asserting that the Holocaust was a genocide explicitly targeting the Jewish race (Spielvogel & McTighe, 2018). This raises further concerns given the potential for students to misinterpret Jews as an easily identifiable racial group rather than understanding that "being Jewish" is a complex mix of religion, culture, and ethnicity. These misconceptions perpetuate the kind of discrimination and prejudice that Holocaust education has been hailed for alleviating.

The inclusion of primary sources like an image of "*The Eternal Jew*," a propaganda film created by the German Propaganda Ministry in order to demonize Jews, likening them to parasites, and quotes from Hitler's *Mein Kampf* in *Ways of the World* (2012) exemplified the dire need for in-depth coverage of antisemitism and Judaism in textbooks (p. 640). The general coverage of antisemitism in social studies textbooks leaves much to be desired, *Ways of the World* (2012), in particular, demonstrated the need for elaboration and clarification regarding antisemitism's role in the Holocaust, and the impact of antisemitism on the Jewish community. Although *Ways of the World* (2012) correctly stated that Jews were considered an alien presence in Germany and were depicted negatively in propaganda, the text falls short by failing to denounce the antisemitic notions presented in primary documents throughout the chapter (p. 640). The documents are simply placed in the text, basically unchallenged save for a few words about how *Mein Kampf* was "vitriolic" (p. 640). When an author incorporates primary sources containing antisemitic content, they must also clarify that images and ideas like those presented in *The Eternal Jew* and *Mein Kampf* are unacceptable. To not do so is reckless; if a student already vulnerable to far-right radicalization, a disturbingly common trend in an increasingly "online" world, is presented virtually unchallenged Nazi propaganda, the outcomes could be disastrous. Ultimately, primary sources such as these must be discussed within a context where it is made explicitly clear that the antisemitic ideas expressed by Hitler, or any other human being, are deplorable.

Without a general understanding of concepts like antisemitism or Judaism, students could potentially come away from a unit about the Holocaust misinterpreting content, thus reinforcing—or learning—dangerous stereotypes. The paucity of accurate information relating to antisemitism and Judaism in social studies textbooks poses many troublesome obstacles. The chance that students will come away from a lesson on the Holocaust not truly understanding what antisemitism is, or what it looks like outside of the context of genocide, poses too great of a risk. More specifically, the lack of content regarding these concepts within the narrative of a Holocaust unit is detrimental to the unit's overall efficacy.

Factual Accuracy, Oversimplification, and Consistency in Holocaust Narratives

The inclusion of factually accurate information and a consistent narrative increases a lesson's efficacy. Conversely, an author's tendency to oversimplify certain aspects (or even the entirety) of the Holocaust also presents possibilities for damaging students' educational outcomes. With that in mind, much of the information included within textbooks *is* accurate; however, the authors choose to provide surface-level explanations of crucial information. Overall, the textbooks provide varying degrees of factual accuracy regarding World War II and the Holocaust. The textbooks also tend to present this information from an American perspective which distorts the understandings that students will glean from the textbooks' versions of important events that led up to the Holocaust.

Although the textbook chapters generally provided students with sufficient background content and a basic understanding of the Holocaust, significant oversimplifications cannot be overlooked. *AGS United States History* stated that the "German people did not understand how they lost WWI"; while partially true, the authors simplify the story (King & Napp, 2005, p. 527). In doing so, this account omits the "stab in the back myth," the German's belief that their defeat in World War I had come at the hands of Jewish and Communist traitors who were deliberately attempting to destroy and take over Germany (Wachsmann, 2015). This myth and the ideologies surrounding it are an important aspect of the antisemitism that contributed to the Holocaust. Similarly, King and Napp (2005) asserted that Germany and the Soviet Union had signed a pact of "friendship" (p. 533), an abridged reference to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. Textbooks should also provide extensive

and factually accurate coverage of *Kristallnacht*, the anti-Jewish pogrom in which Nazis, SA members, and Hitler youth destroyed hundreds of synagogues and desecrated thousands of other Jewish-owned establishments (USHMM, 2021a, b, c). While *World History* (Spielvogel & Mctighe, 2018) provided factually accurate and in-depth information about *Kristallnacht*, other texts provided surface-level information or do not cover the event at all. Overall, coverage of these events requires expansion. If students are only given access to surface-level information, they can only be expected to reach surface-level learning outcomes.

Though coverage of the Holocaust varies across all of the chapters analyzed, the consistent mistake of placing Adolf Hitler at the center of the Holocaust stands out as particularly detrimental. Providing students with a narrative centralized on Hitler confines educators and students to a singular representation of perpetrators, thus omitting the involvement of various culpable agencies. These omissions continue the trend of oversimplifying what it looks like to be the perpetrator of such a heinous crime, therefore truncating students' understanding of the Holocaust. Therefore, presenting the Holocaust to students as a narrative wholly contingent on the involvement of Hitler is a grotesque oversimplification.

Hilberg's (1985) coverage of the "destructive activity of the bureaucratic apparatus" presents historically accurate information that attests to the Holocaust's complexities and explicitly acknowledges the event's magnitude spans farther than a single human being (p. 264). Conversely, the textbooks in this study provide students with copious amounts of information and photographs depicting Adolf Hitler, thus casting him as the sole perpetrator of the Holocaust. Expanding upon the widespread involvement of German society in the Holocaust, Hilberg (1985) asserted, "we know that as the process unfolded, its requirements became more complex and its fulfillment involved an ever larger number of agencies, party offices, business enterprises, and military commands" (p. 264). One cannot discredit the importance of Hilberg's work in dissecting the massive amount of people involved in the perpetration of the Holocaust. Perhaps textbooks should touch upon the information in Hilberg's work to appropriately expand their coverage of perpetration rather than narrowly focusing on Hitler.

Victims and victimhood were also oversimplified in many of the chapters. Victimhood is presented numerically throughout the chapters, reducing victims down to numbers rather than individuals; and like many other aspects of the Holocaust in textbooks, students are provided an

overly condensed account of the targets of the Nazi regime. *United States History: Civil War to the Present* (Deverell & White, 2012) exemplified this issue by emphasizing that the Nazis murdered six million Jews and millions of "others" (p. 828). Authors also emphasized the horrors of the Holocaust and asserted that Hitler and Nazis "killed nearly six million innocent European Jews" while adding oversimplifications like "five million other people were killed as well" (Ellis & Esler, 2016; King & Napp, 2005) when discussing non-Jewish victim groups. In the case of *World History* (2008), the chapter emphasized the causes of World War II and its economic and physical toll through numbers. The authors stated, "World War II ended… Millions of people had been killed or injured" and "the economies of many countries were destroyed" (p. 688). Despite the truth in these statements, the authors oversimplified the events that took place, again reducing the devastation of the Holocaust to numerical evidence.

While many chapters oversimplified the Holocaust through statistics or overall coverage of certain events, some did so by narrowly focusing on a singular narrative meant to encompass the entirety of the Holocaust. For instance, the majority of the chapters at least briefly mentioned *The Diary of Anne Frank* when discussing victimhood, while one textbook, *Harcourt Social Studies: World History*, detailed the Holocaust exclusively through the life of Anne Frank and her family (Harcourt School Publishers, 2007). David H. Lindquist (2006) argued that because *The Diary of Anne Frank* is one of the most commonly utilized memoirs when teaching about the Holocaust, her life *becomes* the Holocaust for many students due to the disproportionate emphasis on her story. Though Anne Frank's story is valuable and should continue to be integrated into Holocaust curricula, the widespread reliance on her narrative diminishes the experiences of the many other victims of the Holocaust by providing a single, monolithic narrative of an endlessly complex and varied event.

Another fundamental flaw within textbooks is the oversimplification of resistance narratives that highlight the strength and perseverance of the Jewish community. Although many of the textbooks briefly mentioned the Warsaw ghetto uprising in their sections about resistance, the narratives highlight the uprising as a failed attempt above all else, cast Jewish resistance efforts as hopeless, and tend to oversimplify the cause and significance of the uprising as a whole. *United States History: Civil War to the Present* compelled teachers to ask their students why Jews in the Warsaw ghetto might have resisted the Nazis; the expected answer being

"They had been able to gather guns and homemade bombs" (Deverell & White, 2012, p. 827). Stating that the only reason that the Jews of the Warsaw ghetto resisted is because they were able to gather weapons minimizes the efforts of Jewish resistance fighters within the ghetto; one does not "gather" homemade bombs; they make them. Nearly all accounts of the Warsaw ghetto uprising detail that the Jews who were imprisoned there chose to revolt because they wanted to "pick the time and place" of their deaths; that they wanted to fight against the Nazis rather than waiting to be deported to Treblinka (Zeitlin, 2010, p. 42). To reduce this complex, sustained act of rebellion to happenstance is inappropriate and disrespectful to the memory of those who were murdered in the uprising.

When textbooks discuss resistance or the Warsaw ghetto uprising, the iconic image, "The Boy in the Warsaw Ghetto," often accompanies whatever block of text is written. The Warsaw ghetto uprising is regarded as the most symbolic Jewish resistance effort during World War II and inspired further resistance efforts in ghettos like Bialytok and Minsk (USHMM, 2021a, b, c). However, "The Boy in the Warsaw Ghetto" continues to be interpreted as a symbol of German brutality and Jewish victimization, when in reality, the image depicts the conclusion of an empowering Jewish resistance effort during the Holocaust (Magilow & Silverman, 2020, p. 20). These represent just a couple of instances where textbooks undercut the efforts of the Jewish men and women who participated in the uprising.

Social studies textbooks also lack consistency in the narratives that they perpetuate. *Secular Icons* (Brink, 2000) argues that well-known photographs of the Holocaust, taken primarily by British and American photographers, which captured corpses in Dachau and moribund individuals in Buchenwald have been etched into the memories of Western consciousness through repeated dissemination. The same photographs are present throughout many of the textbooks analyzed for this study. For example, the same image of prisoners in a concentration camp bunk is used in four separate textbooks; however, each provides a conflicting account of what is in the photograph. *United States History: Civil war to the Present* (2012) and *American Anthem* (2009) both acknowledged the image was captured in Buchenwald. *World History* (2008), however, stated that the image depicts prisoners in Dachau rather than Buchenwald. The conflicting information in *World History* (2008) raised many questions concerning the use of this photograph and the use of photographs in general. Was this an oversight regarding the information provided, or

a more concerning lack of due diligence that can be found across textbooks? Regardless, authors must meticulously vet the material they wish to include in a chapter before providing careless misrepresentations.

The textbook chapters analyzed in this section displayed inconsistencies which continue to plague contemporary Holocaust education. Upon reading the narratives and viewing the images displayed for students throughout the chapters, it is evident that the images and text in each chapter were carefully selected for the purpose of eliciting specific emotions from the reader, rather than *educating* the reader. Thus, images and blocks of text cast Adolf Hitler as the personification of Nazism, while images of Anne Frank, Elie Weisel, and other Jewish victims or survivors symbolize innocence and victimization in the face of evil Nazis. In sum, Holocaust education must move away from current practices and provide students with in-depth content that is factually accurate rather than all-encompassing narratives that simplify the Holocaust.

Historical Frames and Student Learning Objectives

Barton and Levstik outline several historical and pedagogical frames in *Teaching for the Common Good* (2004), which were used in creating the framework used to analyze the selected textbooks. Table 7.1 include the identification stance, the analytic stance, the moral response stance, and the exhibition stance.

Each stance has positive and negative attributes; the identification stance, which is used to promote identification with *the nation* above all, can foster a desire to participate in and uphold democracy, but can also encourage students to internalize a sort of national exceptionalism (Barton & Levstik, 2004). Each of these stances is featured throughout each textbook, some more obviously than others. Nevertheless, teachers and students who use these textbooks *will* be exposed to the above stances, and how the stances are implemented can significantly influence the students' learning outcomes and how they come to think about the Holocaust and the lessons it has to offer.

The analytic stance and the exhibition stance go hand in hand in both context and how they are represented in textbook chapters on the Holocaust. Textbooks lack in both the analytic and exhibition stances; they are too general and broad to encourage deep, critical thinking. Many discussion questions presented in the textbooks featured "expected answers" that would discourage students from engaging in meaningful discussion.

Table 7.1 Definition of terms

Identification stance	History education is used to promote identification with the nation in which students are educated; some level of identification is needed to promote civic involvement. Drawbacks include an idealized or unrealistic perspective of the nation, and the reluctance to question the past of the home nation
Analytic stance	Analysis involves searching for connections across different events to identify trends or causal patterns. Students utilize the analysis stance by applying knowledge across different disciplines and by using critical thinking skills to examine why things are the way they are today, or how atrocities could be prevented
Moral response stance	Students form strong moral responses to history and focus heavily on what is "fair" or "unfair". The goal of the moral response stance is for students to not only know about history, but condemn injustices and emulate heroic actions. Drawbacks include the idolization of history's "heroes," and a veneration of events that prevents analysis
Exhibition stance	Concerns how students will exhibit what they have learned. Most forms of knowledge exhibition (such as quizzes/tests) do not encourage reflection or inquiry and provide no evidence that students have an expanded view of humanity, can make reasonable judgments, or deliberate the common good

For example, *World Studies: Medieval Times to Today* instructs teachers to ask their students "What was the Holocaust?" with an expected answer of "Nazi Germany's mass killing of about 6 million Jewish people" (Jacobs & LeVasseur, 2008, p. 226).

The simple, straightforward question and answer template used by many textbooks discourages critical thinking and questioning, ultimately negating the purpose of Holocaust education; students are given very few opportunities to analyze the causes or complexities of the Holocaust, and even fewer opportunities to exhibit their knowledge in meaningful ways. Most textbooks feature some kind of quiz or test practice after the chapter, making it clear that students who are reading these textbooks are not reading to truly learn, but to perform well on a test. All ten of the textbooks analyzed featured some kind of review section in which students are asked to display their ability to remember information, with the most common question format being multiple choice. Though some textbooks do encourage students to critically think, asking questions like "Why

do you think observers of events in Germany did not do more to help Germany's Jews?" the questions are mostly meant to measure how many facts a student has memorized (Ayers & de la Teja, 2009, p. 783). Some of these questions include "What happened in the 'showers?'" or "Where were the death camps located?" Though these questions do contribute to furthering student understanding, when coupled with the inadequate coverage of the Holocaust throughout most textbooks, the focus on rote memorization is cause for concern. Barton and Levstik (2004) made the argument that the most beneficial form of knowledge exhibition is "exhibition as service to others," in which students share the knowledge they have acquired to teach others to be more thoughtful, well-rounded citizens. Fundamentally, textbooks are not adequately preparing students to exhibit knowledge in that way. Students are asked to remember dates and definitions, not to engage in important discussions about genocide, human rights, and human nature.

The two stances which are most prevalent throughout the textbooks are the identification stance and the moral response stance. Identification with the nation has to be actively constructed and maintained through learning about the nation's shared history, because the nation is an imagined political community wholly contingent on the belief of the people living within its borders (Barton & Levstik, 2004, p. 48). If schools did not encourage the identification stance at all, students would have little interest in upholding or improving the nation's values, and therefore would have little interest in the common good. The moral response stance is more natural; students revile the Nazis but aspire to be like those who rescued their victims (Barton & Levstik, 2004, p. 103). Although only three of the ten textbooks used for this study are American history textbooks, they *all* feature some degree of identification with the U.S., and rely heavily on the admiration of rescuers and the condemnation of perpetrators. Textbooks tend to overemphasize the role America played in liberation, casting them as the heroes of World War II.

Since all of the textbooks are intended for an American audience, the narratives strongly favor American actions to the extent that one could argue that the United States is presented as the entirety of the Allied Forces. Resistance and rescue are presented as almost exclusively American efforts. While it is expected for the authors to emphasize the role of the United States, considering the audience the textbooks are intended for, overall coverage of the Holocaust is troubling. *United States History: Civil War to the Present* (Deverell & White, 2012) depicts the

history of World War II and the Holocaust almost exclusively through an American perspective. "It is August 1944," the chapter begins, "*You* are an American soldier in France" (Deverell & White, 2012, p. 825). Students are asked to put themselves directly in the shoes of an American liberator, to imagine what it might have felt like to march through the streets of formerly occupied Paris, triumphantly waving the American flag as the whole city rushed to greet the Americans. Students are left with a glorious (if inaccurate) picture of American history at the cost of thorough Holocaust education. *World Studies: Medieval Times to Today* (Jacobs & LeVasseur, 2008) features a significantly longer section on Allied victories than on the entirety of the Holocaust, which is afforded a scant one paragraph (pp. 226–227). However, the heroism of Audie Murphy, the most decorated American combat soldier of World War II is given a spotlight; students are encouraged to identify with Murphy and his dedication to the United States far more than they are encouraged to empathize with the victims of the Holocaust or question the decision to drop the atomic bombs (Jacobs & LeVasseur, 2008, p. 227).

By attempting to convince students of America's heroism, most textbooks leave out the truth of mid-century American society. The fact that many Americans also harbored antisemitic sentiment—that the U.S. was home to an active Nazi party—is swept under the rug. Instead, American society is depicted as aspirational. One of the most detrimental aspects of the identification stance when it comes to Holocaust education is that it discourages self-reflection and the correction of past mistakes. One textbook began its chapter on "The Rise of Dictators" with an inspirational shot of Jesse Owens, an African American Olympic gold medalist, at the Berlin Olympics of 1936 (Ayers & Teja, 2009, p. 738). "How can one man shatter a hateful myth?" the textbook asks, seemingly ignoring the fact that Owens would still be considered "inferior" at home in the United States. In fact, the same armed forces that are the subject of much adulation across most of the textbooks analyzed mistreated and segregated Black soldiers in their ranks, as Jews were segregated from much of German society—a discrepancy that many Black soldiers were keen to note (Moore, 2007, p. 265). Textbooks could use this discrepancy in morality as a chance to explore American exceptionalism, how the U.S. could condemn persecution abroad while perpetuating it at home, and what that means for America today. Textbooks consistently squander these critical thinking and analysis opportunities in favor of romanticized descriptions of American heroism. The same text even chastises all of

German society for failing to "learn the lessons of Owens's example," without mentioning the legacy of racism in the U.S. that, in part, inspired the Nazi party's antisemitic laws and actions. If students are made to believe that any divergence from America's supposed commitment to justice is nothing but an aberration, they are less likely to seek out the common good and actually improve the nation. The overemphasis of the identification stance in history textbooks is hindering American progress because students are being taught that there is no need to rectify the pain of the past.

Because both the identification and moral response stances focus so much on presenting students with either heroes to admire or villains to condemn, it leaves little space for textbooks to ask students to do the hard work of identifying with or analyzing the bystander. Most European citizens *were* bystanders to the Holocaust; nevertheless, textbooks take an incredibly complex, morally gray history and make it black and white: you were a Nazi, a victim, or a rescuer. In reality, students are bystanders to injustices, small and large, every day. Realistically, they are not always equipped with the tools to be heroes, nor is it realistic to always expect them to be heroes. Students cannot be expected to honestly look at and measure *their* roles in the injustices that they're faced with if they are not exposed to what the reality of persecution looks like. How can they build a future where something like the Holocaust couldn't happen again if they don't know what the Holocaust actually looked like?

At the present moment, the identification stance is far too pervasive in Holocaust education. It is not *inaccurate* to state that the U.S. played a part in liberation during World War II; it is true that American military forces did liberate thousands of Jewish prisoners. Nevertheless, textbooks would benefit from a more critical view of America's role in the Holocaust. Though some textbooks do cover the darker parts of America's involvement in the Holocaust, such as refusing to take in thousands of refugees, it is far more common for America to be hailed as a rescuer nation that saved Europe from itself (King & Napp, 2005, p. 527). Students should be encouraged to identify with those who risked their lives to save the victims of the Nazi regime but should also have difficult conversations about America's racist and antisemitic past *and present*. If the goal of Holocaust education, as is implied in most textbooks, is to create a society where something like the Holocaust can't happen again, students must be taught to speak out against discrimination anywhere they see it—even at home.

Never Again? Ethical and Moral Concerns in Textbooks

Moral and ethical outcomes are, arguably, some of the most important aspects of Holocaust education, but students who get content solely from textbooks aren't learning for moral outcomes. Remembering and recalling facts is an undoubtedly important skill—students must be able to recall information in order to apply that knowledge across different real-life scenarios—however, this kind of rote memorization is disproportionately important in textbooks, leaving students with the impression that the where, how, and who of the Holocaust are more important than the "why." Generally speaking, textbooks handle the moral lessons of the Holocaust poorly, opting instead to provide students with countless facts—death tolls and army movements—in a history that should instead focus on ethics; how legality does not necessarily correlate with morality. Some may argue that moral lessons are not the responsibility of a school, but events like the Holocaust did not happen in a vacuum. The Holocaust was morally and ethically wrong, and to teach this fact to students is not radical—it is necessary. Textbooks also feature careless word choices that perpetuate dehumanization and persecution. The stories that textbooks decide to tell will not inspire thoughtful retrospection or change. Textbook authors need to rethink the stories that they tell, and the words they choose entirely if students are expected to reap the benefits of good Holocaust education. If they don't, students will gain harmful impressions about the Holocaust, Jews, the notion of race, and more.

Every retelling of a historical event relies wholly on the perspective of the narrator; take, for instance, an incident in which the Atlantic Slave Trade was compared to other "patterns of immigration" in a Texas textbook published by McGraw Hill; or the discrepancies between how the northern and southern states teach the Civil War (Slater, 2020). Many textbooks that cover the Holocaust used in the U.S. take an American liberator narrative. However, for America to appear so heroic, there must be a clear villain that needs to be thwarted, at the expense of any nuance that existed within American or German society at the time. In setting up this battle of good versus evil, textbooks focus far more on Hitler and the Nazis than they do on the persecution or memory of their victims. Over half of the textbooks used for this study featured no survivor testimony at all, while *all* of the textbooks analyzed featured a quote from someone in the Nazi party, whether it was Hitler or an unnamed death squad leader. We are not arguing that students shouldn't study perpetrators;

however, textbooks must carefully select testimony to provide students with a universal understanding of how and why the Holocaust happened. Students should be interrogating perpetrator testimony to understand the motivation for persecution as well as victim and survivor testimony as a means of remembrance.

In the most extreme example, *Western Civilization Since 1300*, Spielvogel made the choice to include *no* survivor testimony but featured quotes from *five* different Nazis and a French doctor (Spielvogel, 2012). Spielvogel then recommends that students watch *Europa, Europa* (1990), a film about a boy in the Hitler youth. Spielvogel allows students to encounter a myriad of Nazi propaganda and ideology while giving survivors and victims no voice in the narrative of their persecution. *Ways of the World: A Brief Global History* features testimony from a pro-Nazi Bavarian teenager, Erna Kranz, stating that many saw Hitler as a "glimmer of hope…" for Germany after the Weimar era (Strayer, 2009, p. 640). Why the author would include no victim or survivor testimony but also feature the testimony of a pro-Nazi Bavarian teenager, especially considering that textbook authors are limited in how much information they can include in a chapter on the Holocaust, is inexplicable. These lapses in judgment are consistent throughout all of the textbooks we analyzed. However, problematic coverage of the Nazi regime does not end with testimony.

Photographs also present authors with a moral dilemma; what photographs they choose to include can radically change the narrative of the Holocaust. Therefore, it is important that students are exposed to various images that capture the complexity of the Holocaust. The Nazi party was comprised of an incredibly varied assortment of men and women. They were human beings who joined the party for a number of reasons; some were certainly true believers, but others felt pressured, or were forced, to join the Nazi party as a means of job security. Teachers, for instance, were forced to join the party, lest they lose their jobs or face imprisonment. Nevertheless, students are presented photos of the Nazis that suggest they were one unified military unit. Across all of the textbooks analyzed, photos of Hitler and the Nazis depict them standing tall, smartly dressed, and surrounded by enthusiastic supporters. The Nazis, despite their horrific crimes, are shown in a flattering light.

Their victims, however, are shown almost exclusively at what was probably the lowest point in their lives. There are no images of Jewish resistance fighters or partisans in any of the textbooks; instead, the

photographs chosen depict emaciated bodies or death marches. While documentation of Jewish resistance fighters or partisans is scarce, that does not mean that it is nonexistent. The Ringelblum Archive holds thousands of artifacts which document what Jewish ghetto life was like during the Holocaust. These artifacts are rich with information regarding religious and cultural practices, political activism, and many other facets of Jewish life under Nazi occupation that, despite the absence of weaponry, should be counted among resistance efforts (Yad Vashem, 2021). Artifacts and photographs such as these could potentially introduce students to new narratives and enhance their understandings of the Holocaust. The only photographs that show Jewish life pre-war are of Anne Frank, and the only image of Jews post-war is a photograph of Elie Wiesel (Ayers & de la Teja, 2009; King & Lewinski, 2008). Jewish victims and survivors are immortalized solely as victims with protruding bones and gaunt faces while their oppressors are allowed to retain their dignity. The narrative pushed through these photographs is that the Nazis, while deplorable, were strong, and their victims, though undeserving, were weak.

Additionally, textbooks' stance on Nazism is also cause for concern. Many of the textbooks analyzed do not explicitly state that Nazi ideology is unacceptable; and in another troubling trend, eight of the ten textbooks do not dismiss the link between Judaism and race. Although word choices such as "terrible," "innocent," and "horrible," used to describe the Holocaust, imply to students that Nazi ideology is wrong, the textbooks fall flat because they do not explicitly say so. As antisemitic hate crimes are on the rise globally, teaching materials such as textbooks must evolve to meet the social needs of today. Students cannot be allowed to learn about the Holocaust without also learning that Hitler was unequivocally incorrect in his use of the word "race." *Ways of the World: A Brief Global History* features an image of "the Eternal Jew," next to a quote from *Mein Kampf*; neither time does the text make clear to students that Hitler's racial ideology is based on nothing but baseless eugenics and *false* science (Strayer, 2009, p. 640). That is not to say that the authors of these textbooks do not understand the ways in which Hitler abused the notion of race—they do. In *World History and Geography: Modern Times*, Spielvogel and McTighe (2018) clarified that Hitler misused the word race when he referred to the "Aryan race"; what they fail to clarify, however, is that the word race was *also* misused in relation to the Jewish population. This strange and careless choice might lead students to believe that while Hitler was wrong about the Aryan race, he was right about the Jews. The sheer

number of harmful misconceptions that students could leave textbooks with, due to the negligence of the authors, is concerning. If an article, book, or textbook chapter about the Holocaust is not rigorously accurate and clear in its stance on Nazi ideology, the door for Holocaust distortion or denial is left open. *Ways of the World* refers to the tragedies that inflicted Europe in the twentieth history, *including the Holocaust*, as "wholly self-inflicted" (Strayer, 2009, p. 653). This language suggests to students the Holocaust itself was self-inflicted, one of the most common lies spread by Holocaust deniers. Missteps like these have lead us to the conclusion that textbook authors are generally unprepared to handle the gravity of the Holocaust in such a limited space.

Another moral concern that textbooks do not sufficiently address is the problem of "Never Again." "Never Again" has become something of a rationale for teaching the Holocaust; textbooks ask students questions like "how can studying the Holocaust prevent such things from happening again?" without providing them with the tools they need to answer that question (King & Napp, 2005, p. 551). Students are not properly equipped to ponder such an expansive question after being bombarded with countless facts, names, dates, places, and tests, with very few critical thinking opportunities scattered in between. Furthermore, while there *is* evidence to suggest that Holocaust education makes students more empathetic and thoughtful, there is no evidence that studying the Holocaust makes genocide, broadly speaking, less likely. In fact, the whole notion of "Never Again" would be quickly tarnished for students if textbooks covered the fact that *many* genocides have happened, and continue to happen, after the Holocaust. The question of why we study the Holocaust is a worthy one, but simply telling students that we study the Holocaust "so it doesn't happen again," trivializes the suffering of the victims and provides students with a false rationale for studying the Holocaust at all. It *is* happening, textbooks should be asking students, "what are you going to do about it?"

Conclusion

Although the textbook chapters analyzed for this study do include some beneficial and factually accurate information, they each inadequately portray the Holocaust in ways that may be harmful. We are aware that textbook authors face a tremendously difficult task in crafting a chapter on the Holocaust. Within a limited space, they must detail an incredibly

important and complex twelve-year history. That being said, the ways in which they choose to represent the Holocaust are inadequate at best, and perpetuate problematic assumptions about Jews at worst.

Each chapter's content differed in some respects, but the overarching theme of these chapters was a disproportionate focus on Adolf Hitler. From the outset of each chapter, students are lead to believe that World War II and the Holocaust happened solely because of Hitler. Despite some of the chapters providing the names of other notable perpetrators, they fail to provide information on big picture concepts such as antisemitism and Judaism. The importance of antisemitism cannot continue to be diminished within Holocaust narratives; instead, it should be included as a cornerstone of any Holocaust unit or lesson while being properly contextualized and denounced by authors and educators. This problem is exacerbated by the ways in which textbooks oversimplify the Holocaust, such as the overuse of statistics to recount the devastation of the Holocaust, or relying on single narratives (like that of Anne Frank) to portray the entirety of those affected by the Holocaust.

We also feel that the textbooks' coverage of the Holocaust may be lacking in complexity due to the topic's moral nature; however, coverage of the Holocaust is and should be inherently morally charged. Authors consistently failed to explicitly denounce the ideology of Nazism or the pseudoscience on which the Nazis based their false narratives of Jewish inferiority. At the same time, U.S. textbooks provide students with a glorified and inaccurate picture of American rescue efforts, spending more time detailing the "heroes" of World War II than they do encouraging thoughtful retrospection on how and why the Holocaust, and other atrocities like it, could happen. We presume that this lack of retrospection is due to the inordinate focus on memorization and test skills that textbooks feature. While we empathize with authors and manufacturers of textbooks and the challenges that they face attempting to present a comprehensive Holocaust narrative, the coverage of the Holocaust in textbooks must improve.

Teachers who find that they have to use textbooks in the classroom may be concerned with the findings presented throughout this chapter; however, these inadequacies could be used as a critical thinking and learning opportunity, especially in higher grade levels. Rather than reading and memorizing facts, use textbooks as a tool for inquiry. Ask students to act as historians and discuss what they think about how the Holocaust is represented in textbooks. What does the text say about Nazis or victims?

What information is presented and why; or conversely, what vital information is left out? Invite students to examine and critique their learning materials, rather than blindly accepting the narrative laid out by different textbooks. Students who are invited to actively engage in their educations in this way are more likely to accept new knowledge and reap the benefits of Holocaust education.

Nevertheless, textbook manufacturers must improve their coverage of the Holocaust. In order to improve the outcomes of Holocaust education, there are five things that textbook publishers can do. First, textbooks must adopt a widely accepted, standardized, and inclusive definition of the Holocaust. We found that across the ten textbooks analyzed for this study, definitions of the Holocaust varied wildly. In order to build an understanding of the Holocaust and the lessons commonly attributed to it, students must be given a solid foundation, or definition, to expand upon.

Second, some textbooks do not define the Holocaust *at all*, nor do they define antisemitism or Judaism. Universally, this information must be treated as a prerequisite to any lesson on the Holocaust. Students cannot be expected to understand why Jews were targeted if they have no basis for understanding concepts such as Judaism or antisemitism. Third, textbooks must unequivocally dismiss the link between Judaism and race, and condemn the Nazis' ideology as baseless pseudoscience. There can be no half measures regarding denouncing the moral repugnance of the Nazi regime. Textbooks often relied on word choice alone to imply the depravity of the Nazi ideology; we believe that simply stating that *Mein Kampf* was "vitriolic" is not enough (Strayer, 2009, p. 640). Textbooks should clearly state that Nazism and the ideas it represents, including antisemitism, racism, homophobia, ableism, and more, are wrong. Though some may argue that it is not the place of the educator to instill moral values in students, we argue that the purpose of education is to encourage students to participate in and uphold democratic values, including universal equality. The Holocaust provides educators with an unparalleled opportunity to explore what happens when these concepts are denied.

Fourth, textbooks should emphasize morality and move away from a nationalistic bias within the confines of their narratives. Although it is expected that American textbooks would feature some kind of identification with the state, such as highlighting American rescue, this identification should not happen at the cost of understanding the Holocaust.

The American narratives in textbooks tend to override the importance of critical thinking or important discussions about genocide prevention. Lastly, textbooks should highlight the preconditions and the escalation of persecution, along with victim narratives, rather than condensing the Holocaust to a simplified version of itself. Students should come away having learned more than a few dates, people, and statistics if we wish to achieve good Holocaust education. If a goal of education is for students to participate in democracy and prevent future genocides, we should focus on moments of possible prevention, not the abhorrent ways in which victims were murdered.

The stories and outcomes presented by textbooks are insufficient both for educating civically minded students and for honoring the victims of the Holocaust. While textbook manufacturers reckon with the narratives that they perpetuate, the time has come for educators to call for a revision to the standard Holocaust curriculum or to find additional (or alternate) curricular materials. Based on our findings, we argue that textbooks are not fit to meet the needs of students, who are expected to exhibit the benefits of Holocaust education, or educators, who face the difficult task of teaching one of the most important and complex events in human history. It is clear that textbook manufacturers have a choice: remain inadequate and fade into obscurity or do the hard work required to finally meet the needs of students and teachers across the nation.

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PART II

Moving Holocaust Education Beyond Traditional Paradigms

CHAPTER 8

Putting in the Pre-work to Teach the Holocaust for Racial Justice

Tiffany Mitchell Patterson

> We have come to understand what the meaning of racism is. We know that racism ends in death. We know that racism ends in charred bodies.
> —Max Lerner, Educator and Journalist

From concentration camps to the current public lynchings of Black Americans, Max Lerner reminds us that we know that the consequence of racism is death. Likewise, the consequence of ignoring the devastating effects of racism erodes humanity. And educators are on the front lines of helping young people grapple with the complex entanglements of racism, bigotry, and hatred. Meanwhile, in the U.S., the number of white nationalist hate groups has increased by 55% since 2017 (Southern Law Poverty Center, 2020). Further, 59% of adults under 40 believe something like the Holocaust could happen again (Claims Conference, 2020). If a stated purpose of Holocaust education is to ensure genocide never happens

T. Mitchell Patterson (✉)
West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV, USA
e-mail: tiffany.mitchell@mail.wvu.edu

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again, then white supremacy, the normalization of racism and anti-semitism must be taught explicitly and with courage. The 2020 uprisings that manifested acutely after the murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police officers, but also in the name of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and so many others, exposed long-standing racial inequities leading many schools to begin or deepen anti-racism culture and curriculum work. And this work surely has value in that it can engender conversations and reflection. As educators, however, the work of anti-racism must begin with ourselves. In a recent study examining the racial bias of teachers, Starck et al. (2020) reported that 77% of teachers expressed implicit racial bias on an assessment, a percentage similar to non-teachers. As schools are often referred to as microcosms of society, teachers are too. Demands for anti-racist pedagogies in schools will be in name only if teachers do not engage in critical self-reflection and actively work to contend with their own racial biases. So, what does Holocaust education have to contribute to this work? As a chapter in this volume situated between theoretical ideas about the nature and potential of Holocaust education and practical applications of those ideas, I hope this chapter puts educators in a better position to leverage broad pedagogical frameworks with ways to approach Holocaust education with purpose, intention, and awareness.

Holocaust education is commonly positioned to teach students about the perils of racism, antisemitism, and genocide. The Never Again Education Act (2020) stated that learning about the Holocaust, "provides a way in which to learn about the danger of what can happen when hate goes unchallenged and there is indifference in the face of the oppression of others" (p. 637). This broad mandate offers an opportunity to explore connections Holocaust education can have to anti-racism and oppression. In so doing, however, teachers must be cautious of approaching Holocaust education as the only vehicle to drive teaching about morality, empathy, racism, and oppression. Likewise, teachers must balance lessons that ask learners to take away a deeper understanding of today through study of the Holocaust with efforts to undertake a study of the Holocaust as history.

As of 2021, 21 states have established formal state mandates for Holocaust education (Echoes & Reflection, n.d.). However, eight out of ten college students reported having received at least some Holocaust education during high school mostly (90%) in social studies or English language arts (Echoes & Reflection, 2020). Typically, in secondary schools, the Holocaust is taught through books such as *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *The*

*Boy in the Striped Pajama*s, or in a World War II unit in social studies. A recent national survey found 50% of American millennials and generation Z adults (18–39 year olds) believed the Holocaust education they received was historically accurate, but could be better (Claims Conference, 2020). Generally, educators approach the teaching of the Holocaust with care and good intentions, often focused on the dangers of fascism, but beyond a cautionary tale, are we engaging students in a complex and nuanced racial analysis of the Holocaust as a means to not only recognize racism but to fight for racial justice (Carrington & Short, 1997; Marks, 2017)? If not, then I argue that this is a way to make Holocaust education "better."

Putting in the Pre-work

However, making pedagogical choices that engage learners in the deep, complicated, and nuanced racial analysis necessary is difficult, complex, and personal. It depends upon critical pre-work that requires acknowledgment of our own biases, willingness to take account of our personal privilege, and discomfort with our own complicity. But this pre-work is necessary. In fact, it is the only way to fully commit to the racial justice goals of Holocaust education. Comparable to the teaching American enslavement, the Holocaust is hard history. As Professor Hasan Kwame Jeffries noted in the preface of Teaching Hard History, "We the people have a deep-seated aversion to hard history because we are uncomfortable with the implications it raises about the past as well as the present" (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2018, p. 5). Grappling with hard history requires us to challenge ourselves as educators to reckon with our own internalized guilt and shame. It is the time to lean into discomfort, confront ourselves, and rethink how we teach racism through the Holocaust. The ramifications of a collective inattention to the rise of explicit racism have always been clear. Scholarship on the challenges, issues, and opportunities of Holocaust education (Pearce & Chapman, 2017; Totten & Feinberg, 2016) or teaching racism (Kohli et al., 2017; Milner & Laughter, 2015) is hardly novel. In that spirit, this chapter seeks to delineate the critical pre-work prior to teaching racism and the Holocaust. I outline two key areas of preparation: radical honesty and (un)learning and embracing complexity through counter-storytelling. This chapter does not presume to offer a silver bullet rather a starting point for educators

to begin what should continue as part of their ongoing anti-racist development. By focusing on practical strategies, the goal is to build capacity for racial justice by teaching racism and the Holocaust in complex and nuanced ways.

Radical Honesty and Unlearning

Radical honesty is simply telling the truth all the time. Scholars have long noted the need for teachers to engage in critical teacher reflection and the difficulties of deeply acknowledging how their positionalities, such as race, class, and gender, shape their teaching practices and interactions with students (Howard, 2003; Milner, 2003; Shim, 2017). Racism along with other -isms is normalized and shapes our lives covertly and overtly. Understanding of race and racism and the role it plays in your life and actions is a critical step toward racial justice. Milner (2003) viewed race reflection as a process in which teachers can explore their conscious and subconscious beliefs, values, and experiences related to race as a means to better understand themselves and their students. However, critical reflection pertaining to race and racism requires a level of vulnerability that can also lead to resistance and ambivalence (Shim, 2017). It is important to take note of your raw feelings as they arise because that is part of the process. Ask yourself, why am I feeling distressed or resistant? Why is it hard to think about race? Is that a privilege that I never had to think about before or a burden that I can never not think about? An honest self-assessment can offer insight on potential areas of growth. Be mindful just as you experience resistance and trepidation, your students might as well. As a pre-work exercise, prepare to teach or engage students with self-reflection techniques that will provide them the processing space to grapple with the content. As Oluo (2019) eloquently tweeted, "the beauty of anti-racism is that you don't have to pretend to be free of racism to be an anti-racist. Anti-racism is the commitment to fight racism wherever you find it, including in yourself. And it's the only way forward."

Challenging norms and previously held assumptions can prompt you to consider what you need to learn but also what you need to unlearn. Unlearning is generally defined as discarding a bad habit or outdated information. Reflective practitioners recognize unlearning as an iterative process with learning (McLeod et al., 2020). In the context of Holocaust education, asking critical questions before planning for instruction

is crucial pre-work. For instance, what have you learned about the Holocaust throughout your life? Has any of the information you know about the Holocaust been debunked or challenged? What are some potential gaps in your knowledge? This line of questioning provides an opportunity to recognize and disrupt potential preconceptions for you and should be posed to your students as well. Identified gaps can be redressed by engaging in relevant research and continued critical teacher reflection. Radical honesty, learning and unlearning, is critical pre-work and should be a regular part of the work you do as a person and educator.

Here are a few reminders:

- Critical teacher reflection must be radically honest and ongoing.
- Embrace the myriad of emotions that accompany deep reflection as a necessary part of the process.
- Recognize that students may also struggle with this process and prepare for resistance and trepidation. Build in time for students to engage in self-reflection techniques and model that process for them by sharing your journey.
- Identify gaps in your knowledge and potential areas of growth.
- Unlearning is an integral part of anti-racism development and effective instructional planning.
- Actively seek opportunities to expand your understanding and knowledge, particularly involving race and racism.

Embracing Complexity Through Counter-Storytelling

The term Holocaust education can be a vast and potentially ambiguous catch-all for a dynamic and complex historical period. Eckmann (2010) found that the term does not specify whether it involves "learning about history, literature, or moral issues, or learning about the Jews, or the Nazis, or other victims of Nazi politics" (Eckmann, 2010, p. 8). Educators may find it difficult to navigate the intricacies of the history itself and pedagogical considerations on how to teach it. Lindquist (2006) viewed teaching the Holocaust as a complex, frustrating, and intimidating endeavor, requiring care, forethought, and research in the planning process. Guided by critical teacher reflection, one way to embrace complexity and fill identified gaps in the curriculum is through

counter-storytelling. Counterstory is a contrasting story to what is typically presented to the public and offers insight on the experiences that are undertold (Ladson-Billings, 2013). Complex, nuanced counterstories exist and should be used to enhance the curriculum.

There are a multitude of counterstories to explore during the Holocaust. Staub (2019) argued "as our capacity to reconstruct Holocaust memory has expanded so immensely, we still see an erasure of race from this narrative—a fact that becomes its own sort of historical development" (p. 215). Nazi racism targeted several groups; therefore, diverse counterstories could focus how those groups experienced oppression but also on the ways in which they resisted. Critical pre-work is first recognizing that diverse counterstories must be woven into our practice, not as an add-on to the traditional narrative we present, but as central to student understanding of the Holocaust. From that approach, challenge learners to research counterstories through primary and secondary sources, oral histories, documentaries, and other leading educational-based websites such as United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Facing History and Ourselves, and Anti-Defamation League. Central to integrating counterstories into the curriculum on the Holocaust, it is critical to foreground that groups are not a monolith and there is a myriad of experiences within and across groups. This way of thinking should be presented to students as Holocaust counterstories are introduced and uncovered. An important caveat is to avoid engaging what is termed the "oppression olympics". This is the idea that oppressed groups should be pitted against or competing for some title as the most victimized. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (n.d.-a), in fact, recommends that distinctions and comparisons about the level of suffering during the Holocaust be explicitly avoided. Nobody wins the oppression olympics and as an educator incorporating diverse counterstories, be mindful to help learners understand oppression as a concept, a practice, and a tangible reality. By teaching racism concretely through policies, ideologies, and counterstories, students have the opportunity to acquire a comprehensive historical and contemporary perspective of antisemitism and systemic racism.

In summary, remember:

- Embracing complexity requires careful thought, care, and research.
- Engage students in a systemic analysis of racist policies and ideas.

- Find and teach examples of diverse and racialized counterstories about the Holocaust (i.e., Jews of Europe, Sinti and Roma "Gypsies," Poles, Afro-Germans, people with disabilities, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans community, and others).
- Be mindful of how counterstories are introduced and presented to students.
- Teach oppression but avoid the oppression olympics.

Teaching the Holocaust for Racial Justice

If a goal of Holocaust education is to ensure that it never happens again, then the fight for racial justice, the complete eradication of racial discrimination and injustice, must be central. Kendi (2019) defined racism as "a marriage of racist policies and racist ideas that produces and normalizes racial inequities" (p. 18). The Holocaust is an example of this as racist laws, orders, and science led to round ups, sterilizations, concentration camps, and, ultimately, to genocide. Davis (2016) reminded us "it's often those structural elements that aren't taken into consideration when there is a discussion about ending or challenging racism" (p. 34). Engaging in a structural analysis of racism takes pre-work as we first must understand it ourselves. With this knowledge, most are prompted to action and feel more equipped and empowered to engage in the fight for racial justice.

When complex historical events are reduced to limiting dominant narratives, students may have a simplistic understanding and, in many ways, denied access to a rich, robust curriculum. As I mentioned, this chapter is not designed to be exhaustive. There are many studies and resources through United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Facing History and Ourselves, Anti-Defamation League, and others available about instructional approaches. My goal is to emphasize the importance of putting in the pre-work, especially when teaching racism and the Holocaust. Before planning and implementing instruction there is some raw, messy, challenging but necessary work that must be done for all of us. Pre-work is an ongoing process rooted in reflection, truth-telling, and recentering diverse experiences. As racism continues to persist today, an analysis of race and racism during the Holocaust could broaden our own perspectives so that we might do the same with our students.

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CHAPTER 9

Rethinking Holocaust Education with Teacher Trainers

Jennifer Rich

Every semester, a favorite topic of conversation in the Holocaust and Genocide Education classes that I teach at a large public university in New Jersey is how students, all of whom are pre-service teachers (PSTs), learned about the Holocaust in their high school classes. Some students share that they learned by watching a film, most often *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*, while others note that they spent a day talking about the Holocaust when they learned about World War II. Many had a survivor present to one of their classes or read Elie Wiesel's classic memoir, *Night*. The majority of students, though, recount "special assignments" that their teachers had assigned them. These include everything from creating a "Nazi cereal box" to constructing an "ideal concentration camp" using popsicle sticks, to simulating the Jewish experience by wearing yellow stars on their arms and eating no snack for a class session.

A natural follow-up to this conversation centers on the question of whether or not these PSTs would teach their own future classes in the

J. Rich (✉)
Rowan University, Glassboro, NJ, USA
e-mail: richj@rowan.edu

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same way. With few exceptions, their initial answer is a resounding "yes." This inclination to adopt teaching practices that they encountered in high school points to a major obstacle in Holocaust education, as research shows that Holocaust education as it has always been done is not working; young people in America are sorely lacking content knowledge about the Holocaust (Claims Conference, 2018; Rich, 2019). PSTs often come to their education training with preconceived notions about what best practices are, which reflect their own schooling (Lortie, 1975). And yet their teachers, in most instances, were ill-prepared to discuss a difficult but profoundly important topic like the Holocaust, or other genocides and complex historical topics. In essence, the teaching that PSTs will likely emulate is insufficient, and existing notions of what "good" Holocaust education consists of must be challenged.

There are problems at many levels of our educational system that need to be addressed to broadly improve teaching the Holocaust and other related topics. One conclusion that is clear, however, is that there is a need to re-evaluate several accepted practices in the field today. Pre-service teachers need to have the tools available to engage with difficult subject matter. More successful Holocaust education must incorporate the most recent thinking about pedagogy and content, including when and how to teach this subject. It also must map out specific steps to improve education for pre-service teachers who plan to teach at all grade levels.

There is very little written about how educators should be trained to teach about the Holocaust. This chapter, in an effort to fill that gap, lays out and answers three questions about Holocaust education that suggest how teacher educators can offer enhanced guidance to their PSTs. These are (1) What are the outcomes and key trends of Holocaust education today? (2) What should Holocaust education for pre-service teachers look like? and (3) How can Colleges of Education best prepare pre-service teachers to teach about the Holocaust in the twenty-first century? Through careful consideration of these three questions, this chapter ends with well-defined and practical recommendations, which include integrating Holocaust education throughout existing curricula, focusing on enhanced content knowledge, approaching the subject in interdisciplinary ways, and developing core Holocaust education coursework for PSTs.

Outcomes and Trends in Holocaust Education Today

In the past several years, researchers in the United States have assessed what Americans know about the Holocaust. A 2018 Claims Conference survey of 1,350 people aged eighteen and older found critical gaps in both awareness of basic facts and detailed knowledge of the Holocaust. Eleven percent of US adults and over one-fifth of millennials had not heard of, or were not sure if they had heard of, the Holocaust. Almost half of US adults (45%) and millennials (49%) could not name one concentration camp or ghetto that was established in Europe during the Holocaust. The findings show an overwhelming lack of personal connections to the Holocaust; most Americans (80%) had not visited a Holocaust museum and two-thirds (66%) did not know, or know of, a Holocaust survivor. A significant majority of American adults believed that fewer people care about the Holocaust today than they used to, and more than half of Americans believed that the Holocaust could happen again (Schoen Consulting, 2018). A smaller study conducted with pre-service teachers in New Jersey reinforced these findings (Rich, 2019). This survey yielded further troubling results in the first state in the United States to mandate Holocaust education and develop a curriculum. Teacher candidates knew very little about the Holocaust and displayed an inability to discuss broader implications of its history; when asked to name other genocides they knew of, answers included "the Boston massacre," "the one where they drank the Kool-Aid," and "girls being murdered in China because they aren't boys." Student responses also indicated problematic attitudes about this important and disturbing historical event, as they responded to questions with "IDK" (I don't know) and "not sure why this matters."

These studies are echoed internationally. In 2016, the Centre for Holocaust Education at University College London completed an extensive study of student knowledge, surveying nearly 8,000 students in the United Kingdom and interviewing approximately 250 students in focus groups (Foster, et al., 2016). This survey, a mixed-methods instrument that assessed Holocaust content knowledge, found that students had generally limited knowledge that was based on misunderstandings or inaccurate information (Foster et al., 2016). Other countries, including Sweden, Belgium, Germany, and Israel, have all conducted large-scale

surveys of students in order to assess content knowledge and attitudes about the Holocaust, with similar results (Foster et al., 2016).

In America, and most other countries where we might expect to find Holocaust education that is pedagogically appropriate and historically accurate, it seems that what students are learning is often deficient or inaccurate. The problem becomes clear: students, in the United States and across the globe, are not participating in Holocaust education that is factually correct, meaningful, or grade-appropriate, as we see in smaller-scale surveys like New Jersey study (Rich, 2019), as well as large national studies like the one conducted in the United Kingdom (Foster et al., 2016). It is not a leap to say that schools play a large part in what students learn about the Holocaust, and teachers need an updated understanding of how to teach about the Holocaust (Lindquist, 2006). The question, then, becomes what does "good" Holocaust education look like for pre-service teachers? And how can colleges of education support their students in this work?

If there are limits to the existing research about general Holocaust knowledge, there is even greater paucity of information about what pre-service teachers know and how colleges and universities are preparing them to tackle the teaching of a difficult and challenging subject like the Holocaust. Current research does not allow us "into" classrooms to see what teachers in schools are doing, how they are doing it, or the materials they are using. What it does, however, is allow us to see what teacher candidates *who are going to be teachers themselves* have learned about the Holocaust after experiencing twelve years of primary and secondary education in a state with a Holocaust mandate. Although the study completed in New Jersey tested outcomes rather than process, it is critical to explore and understand the implications of the results (Rich, 2019).

The New Jersey study suggested that students are seriously lacking in basic factual content knowledge because they are working toward a *sympathetic* understanding of the Holocaust rather than one grounded in *disciplinary thinking* (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Rich, 2019). Sympathy is problematic because it suggests that all people are essentially the same across time, cultural boundaries, and personal preferences, and that one's own singular frame of reference is the acceptable standard with which to measure the world (Barton & Levstik, 2004). Disciplinary thinking, which includes historical empathy (rather than sympathy), includes using primary and secondary sources, considering narrative structure, understanding change and continuity, cause and effect, and turning points, and

employing inquiry. Students describe the Holocaust as "sad," which at the most basic level is an entirely fair adjective to use (Rich, 2019). But further content knowledge would empower students to engage with the Holocaust in a different way: rather than simply feeling that the Holocaust was "sad," they might begin to articulate why the Holocaust occurred in its very specific historical context, and why genocides continue to take place in the world today (Endacott, 2010, 2014; Rantala et al., 2016; see also chapter XX in this volume).

Many curricula designed to teach about the Holocaust also implicitly encourage students to believe that they would all be rescuers, and that the Holocaust can never happen again because they have been taught to stand up to playground bullies (Dalbo, 2019). This sympathetic thinking, though inaccurate, is not surprising as it falls well within students' own frames of reference. Understandably, many children living in the United States in the twenty-first century cannot imagine risking their own lives to hide a neighbor. They can, however, consider standing up for a friend on the playground or soccer field. This produces a false equivalency for students, despite the good intentions of the teachers who encourage sympathetic thinking.

Disciplinary thinking is more challenging to engender within students, but also has a greater reward. It includes empathy, rather than sympathy, as its guide. Historical empathy, while often contested, is a much higher standard. It involves using the perspectives of people of the past in order to understand their actions (Barton & Levstik, 2004). To help students gain this sort of perspective, educators must ground their teaching in content; they must use sources from the past and help students vigorously analyze and contextualize them in order to understand, as best we can, why people made the decisions they did. This teaching avoids the drawing of false equivalences mentioned above through a careful analysis of primary documents, the use of testimony, and multimedia resources. Some state curriculum guides draw false equivalences that border on the absurd—the Pennsylvania teaching guide, for example, incorporates a simulation which tries to approximate the nature of Nazi indoctrination. Students must wrestle with whether or not they would submit to attending a school pep rally, wearing their school colors, as per their principal's instructions (Totten & Riley, 2005, p. 136). Disciplinary thinking, however, asks students to consider the relationships between events in order to understand connections and cause and effect rather than applying their knowledge about the world today to the world as it once was.

In order to facilitate this sort of change, one major step would be to revise Holocaust education mandates so they are implemented differently, and to ensure that where states adopt mandates that they have clearer guidelines for enactment and enforcement. The New Jersey mandate, for example, passed in 1994, was the first in the United States, has not been revised and is long overdue for an overhaul. It offers little guidance about when or how the Holocaust is taught, and there is no consequence for *not* teaching about the Holocaust. As a result, it is largely neglected or often poorly taught (Rich, 2019). Furthermore, knowledge of content and pedagogy has changed significantly since 1994, and the Holocaust education mandate needs to take account of important trends in the field, including findings like those presented here. This research shows that a greater emphasis on learning *about* the Holocaust is needed (Rich, 2019). Currently, the New Jersey mandate does not mention the teaching or learning of any Holocaust history at all. The emphasis is on learning *from* the Holocaust. The mandate reads, in part:

The instruction shall enable pupils to identify and analyze applicable theories concerning human nature and behavior; to understand that genocide is a consequence of prejudice and discrimination; and to understand that issues of moral dilemma and conscience have a profound impact on life. The instruction shall further emphasize the personal responsibility that each citizen bears to fight racism and hatred whenever and wherever it happens (New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education, 1994).

The wording of the mandate puts the focus on human behavior and moral dilemmas, leaving out an emphasis on the facts about or context needed to study the Holocaust. It becomes too easy for well-intentioned teachers to encourage historical sympathy without helping students learn historical context.

Holocaust Education for Pre-Service Teachers

Rethinking Holocaust education is, in part, a big-picture, structural issue that needs attention in the form of legislatives mandates informed by best practices and research, enhanced funding, and more overall attention given to the humanities. But there are also issues of practice in teacher education that can concretely begin to create change. The traditional teacher education curriculum requires PSTs to develop lesson plans, regulate classroom culture, and communicate effectively with families (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1992; Sleeter, 2012; Zeichner, 1993).

Teaching, however, is also about a deep knowledge of content and an understanding about how to marry this content to appropriate pedagogies to help students learn effectively; this is true across all grade levels and in all content areas, but is particularly relevant for secondary English/language arts and secondary social studies. The responsibility, then, falls on teacher educators to engage PSTs in questioning the knowledge they have received in their primary and secondary educations so that candidates can better educate the next generation of students. All too often, "what has always been done" in schools is what teachers continue to do.

Looking at the myriad facets of Holocaust history can redress this thinking. While "understanding" the Holocaust is a lofty (if impossible) goal, there are concrete ideas that can be concurrently taught, including nationalism, racism, antisemitism, xenophobia, and the fragility of democracy. Teaching this complex and nuanced history means engaging in hard conversations about the past, allowing students to ask and struggle through complicated questions. New and seasoned teachers alike rely on pedagogy poorly suited to these topics, if they teach hard histories at all (Lindquist, 2006, 2007; Meseth & Proske, 2015). In American Holocaust education, teachers use lessons about the Holocaust that allow students to visualize themselves as "rescuers," such as writing autobiographies from the point of view of a rescuer during the Holocaust, ending with a connection to how they act as similarly brave individuals in their own lives, or might in the future (Delbo, 2019; Grobman, 1995; Kohen & Steinacher, 2019). This sort of simulation, different from comparing the Holocaust to bullying because of the nod to history, both sentimentalizes the Holocaust and desensitizes students to the horrors of what occurred. To break this cycle, teacher educators have the opportunity to support teacher candidates in learning new pedagogies that allow for meaningful conversations about historical content—and this is precisely where our teacher education programs can improve. Teacher education programs, as they are currently structured, do not equip PSTs with strategies to converse with their future students about complicated histories writ large, and Holocaust history more specifically.

An old adage in education is "never ask a question you don't know the answer to," and, appended to that, "never lose control of a classroom conversation." In order to teach about the Holocaust well, these ideas need to be thrown out. Teachers need to ask big, open-ended questions and allow students the space to think through complex answers,

disagreeing with one another, and learning to speak and listen respectfully and factually. Anecdotally, this is something that new and seasoned teachers alike struggle with and should be modeled and developed in teacher education classes. Something as simple as sentence starters give students (and teachers) a structure that is helpful. Some examples are: I agree with Ethan because…; I disagree with Katie because…; Can you explain the evidence for that idea?; I hear Holden saying…, but I understood this to mean…In framing conversations this way, students retain a focus on evidence and learn that expressing disagreement is a vital and expected part of meaningful conversations.

What scholars in this field can see is that changes in both policy and practice are needed. Policy changes, understandably, will not begin without a more extensive, systematic look at the efficacy of the Holocaust education mandates, but certainly practice changes can begin sooner. Teacher education programs and individual teacher educators can begin to institute changes so that "what has always been done" is improved upon, hard conversations can be modeled, and disciplinary thinking can be explicitly taught in order for PSTs to feel confident in their own future teaching of the Holocaust.

If it is agreed that the Holocaust should be taught with rigor (Gray, 2014; Taubman, 2010), a focus on historical empathy and disciplinary thinking, and consistency, teachers at all levels need to be prepared to teach the Holocaust. This is one area where teacher training and practice can be refined to reconsider how the Holocaust and other challenging subjects are introduced to PSTs. Generally speaking, PSTs who plan to teach secondary English or social studies are required to take disciplinary classes that touch on the Holocaust. Elementary Education PSTs, however, are more likely to focus on liberal arts without deep content knowledge (Calandra et al., 2004).

This is closely associated with one of the key debates in the field of Holocaust education, namely the question of when, at what age, Holocaust education should begin. Scottish researchers Cowan and Maitles (2017) argued that because of the positive outcomes of Holocaust education, including "developing students' positive values and attitudes about minority groups and toward responsible citizenship" (p. 19), it should be taught not only in secondary school, but in primary school as well. Their research shows that prejudice and discrimination begin in young children, and teaching and learning about the Holocaust is one effective way to combat these attitudes.

Their findings on the subject of "when" come years after this issue was raised in the United States. Shortly after New Jersey instituted its mandate in 1994, a "conversation" between Holocaust scholars Harriet Sepinwall and Samuel Totten effectively shut down the research and teaching of the Holocaust in the early grades. Sepinwall (1999) argued that the Holocaust should be taught in the early grades, carefully and with consideration. She believed that the Holocaust covers themes and ideas critical for early education, such as teaching tolerance and respect for difference, though teachers should carefully consider the materials they choose and the content they cover in order to avoid scaring students. Totten responded with an article (1999), where he argued that any Holocaust information given to early education students would be watered down and would not effectively or fairly impart the lessons of the Holocaust. He suggested "pre-Holocaust education," where students are confronted with the ideas of prejudice and discrimination, instead. Simone Schweber (2008) added her voice to this conversation with an account of a third-grade class that studied the Holocaust in depth. Schweber introduced the idea of "curricular creep," content being taught to younger and younger students, and asserted that the Holocaust is a prime example of this propensity. Her qualitative case study was groundbreaking, and she strongly suggested that primary aged children not be exposed to the Holocaust in school because they either do not understand the content or they grapple with depression and anxiety as a result.

Young Learners and Holocaust Education

In the United States, the voices of Totten and Schweber largely ended the discussion about when to begin teaching and learning about the Holocaust. It is past time that this debate is reconsidered, as it has been effectively "closed" for over a decade. I argue that Holocaust education can, and must, begin in the elementary grades and echo the argument set forth by Cowan and Maitles (2017) that prejudice begins in young children, and Holocaust education is one way to counter biased beliefs. This is not to say that elementary Holocaust education centers on, or even touches on, certain aspects of the Holocaust, such as concentration camps, gas chambers, or mobile shooting units. Instead, the youngest children can learn about community, neighbors, and the greater good. Students in kindergarten through grade three often focus on concepts of "fair and unfair" in their classroom communities. They make rules

together, laying out how to keep themselves, their friends and classmates, and their physical space safe and comfortable.

Such experiences are, perhaps, in line with what Totten called "pre-Holocaust education," but they are simply the starting point for developing best practices in teaching Holocaust-related material in the primary grades. There are myriad ways to engage young students in learning about "hard histories." For example, there is a striking photo that can be seen at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum that shows a young girl entering a swim club, walking past a sign that states "No Jews Allowed." This is an example of a photo that might be used in a lower grade elementary school classroom, asking students if it's "fair" that young Jewish children can't enjoy the swim club with their friends. It can be examined alongside photos of "Whites Only" drinking fountains and benches from the Jim Crow era in the United States, and students can be asked to consider how it would feel to be on the inside and the outside of these rules, and how they would feel if they needed to use a special drinking fountain or swimming pool because of the color of their skin, religion, or any number of other characteristics. It also opens up conversations about what to do if rules, or laws, are fundamentally unjust.

Because these are photos of events that took place "long ago" (in the eyes of young children, especially), they are less scary, easier to grapple with. They are not *easy*, though. It takes a skilled teacher to guide students through conversations about prejudice, racism, and antisemitism. A grounding in "fair and unfair," however, brings even these complicated conversations back to concepts young students can understand.

Such conversations open up themes that consistently run through the darker moments of history, including racism, antisemitism, xenophobia, and nationalism. Children, even our youngest children, understand these concepts; at this writing, in 2020, all of these are on the rise in the United States and internationally. While these complicated conversations are often scary for teachers, especially those that are pre-tenure, they should be considered to be imperative. Students cannot grow to counteract the dark forces referenced above without learning about them, and without learning how to engage in respectful, challenging discussions from a young age.

Additionally, in the upper elementary grades (grades three through five), students can begin to consider fiction written about the Holocaust. There are many excellent picture books and early chapter books that open up conversations about the Holocaust, including *The Butterfly*

(Polacco, 2009), *Terrible Things* (Bunting, 1989), and *Number the Stars* (Lowry, 2011). PSTs need to learn how to integrate these books into their curricula without dedicating weeks to the study of the Holocaust. These books, and subsequent discussions about them, tie into bigger, ongoing learning about fair/unfair, in/out, and lawful/unethical.

Changing the Landscape of Teacher Education

In order to implement this content and use appropriate pedagogies, the training that PSTs receive must shift. Currently, PSTs often receive training that focuses on lesson planning, unit planning, and meeting students' individual needs. All of this is important, of course; equally important is for PSTs to consider historical thinking, and how to help students grapple with becoming participatory citizens in the world.

There is little dissention over the idea that Holocaust education should occur in the secondary grades, defined here as middle and high school. Textbooks in both World History and American History touch on the Holocaust, and English teachers regularly assign books like *Night* and *The Diary of Anne Frank*. These are useful first steps, but they are just that: first steps. Pre-service teachers need to reconsider "what has always been done" and engage students with approaches that are content-rich, interdisciplinary, and meet students where they are (Dede, 2007).

To this end, *all* pre-service teachers must be prepared with appropriate content knowledge, regardless of discipline. In this way, *all* teachers can reinforce open and complicated conversations. This means the basic history of the Holocaust: who, what, where, when, why, and how. The "why" is the most complex here and also the most important for PSTs and their future students. Teacher educators need to be prepared to engage their students around the question of "why," allowing PSTs to grapple with the gray areas of this history.

This is a reconfiguration of teacher education, as well as the focus of schools. It calls for teacher educators to prepare to teach hard histories that they might be uncomfortable with themselves. Building on the themes discussed in elementary education classes, secondary teachers can work with their students to take a deep dive into hard histories, including the Holocaust but certainly not limited to it, using primary sources, fiction and poetry, art, and video testimonies of survivors, liberators, and

perpetrators. It is critical for PSTs to learn how to teach about the Holocaust in their teacher education programs so that they are well prepared for complicated conversations in their future classrooms.

In addition, Holocaust education belongs in almost all disciplines, as different disciplinary perspectives will deepen student learning. History/social studies is the most obvious discipline for the Holocaust to be studied, and PSTs who plan to become history/social studies teachers need additional coursework on the Holocaust, as well as other genocides and hard histories. They need to become comfortable using primary documents in their classrooms, including written documents, photographs, video clips, and survivor testimony. These sources help paint a more complete picture of the lived experiences of those who survived the war, and those who were murdered.

English/language arts courses, another common place to teach about the Holocaust, require that teachers not only have a grasp of the history, but understand the robust body of literature that was born of the Shoah, and in its aftermath. PSTs ought to be exposed to literature beyond the two books mentioned above and learn how to use both primary source material alongside of novels, poems, and plays written in the years following the Holocaust.

English and History are the most obvious places to integrate a study of the Holocaust, and PSTs in other disciplinary areas tend to be left out of the conversation. Good, thorough Holocaust education certainly ought to engage PSTs in other disciplinary areas. Those studying to become art teachers, for example, can examine art made during and after the Holocaust, and this might be incorporated into a broader study of art and atrocity. STEM teachers, too, can be engaged in a study of the Holocaust through examining the roles of doctors and scientists during the Shoah.

How Colleges of Education Should Prepare PSTs to Teach About the Holocaust

Colleges of Education already have critical work to do to prepare preservice teachers to take on the challenges they will face in their classrooms and school communities, even without the consideration of incorporating Holocaust education across disciplinary areas. Preparing PSTs to teach about something as nuanced and complex as the Holocaust is, without question, a crucial and complex challenge. It can, however, be accomplished and Colleges of Education needs to rise to the challenge.

For colleges responsible for training teachers, this commitment to Holocaust education needs to begin at the top. Deans and other senior administrators need to make a substantial commitment to prioritizing PST education in these subjects. This means, to put a fine point on it, that the humanities need to be prioritized in the same way that STEM subjects have been. Faculty need to adopt new approaches in order to lead the way and open themselves up to learning content and approaches that might be outside of their comfort zone.

One way to do this is to create an additional class, focused on how to teach the Holocaust alongside other hard histories, for all PSTs to take, regardless of discipline. This would be taught by a teacher educator and designed in conjunction with museum educators to integrate a wider variety of resources and methodologies. This course should focus on the complex themes that run throughout history (including antisemitism, racism, nationalism, xenophobia, and the fragility of democracy), model appropriate pedagogies, and engage PSTs in the debates around Holocaust education, and—by extension—all education about hard histories, including "when," what to teach, and what pedagogies to use. This course would teach PSTs how to facilitate open and complicated conversations with students, what resources are available to them, the key themes to bring to light in a study of the repeating themes in history, how to connect hard histories with one another, and how to talk to parents and administrators about this study.

I have taught two courses that could be replicated at other institutions and have experienced both successes and failures in this work. First, I designed and taught a course that served as my university's Introduction to Education class, where the majority of the students were freshmen or sophomores. Every PST, regardless of concentration or discipline, was required to take this course. My COE had a social justice focus, which I understood to mean a focus on equity, diversity, and access; to help teacher candidates engage with these concepts, I developed the course to examine the relationship between schools and communities. Students considered diversity in all its facets, including socioeconomic status, gender and sexuality, race, religion, (dis)ability, family structure, and immigration status. This course had many goals, but the two most important goals were a part of the "hidden curriculum": first, to inculcate a sense of curiosity in the PSTs, a desire to learn about the world around them, and second to teach PSTs to have the kind of hard conversations that have been discussed in this chapter. Students in this class crossed

cultural boundaries to learn about peers with different lived experiences than their own, had discussions in and outside of class with social justice activists, and read books and watched documentaries that challenged their understanding of concepts including racism, antisemitism, and poverty.

There was some institutional pushback to this redesign. The course that it was replacing focused on learning communities that consisted of five consecutive stages, bullying laws, and classroom design—it was, in many ways, a catchall for topics that didn't quite fit anywhere else in the curriculum. The new course drew upon a range of trade books rather than a textbook, and some faculty expressed concern that consistency across courses required more standardization. Despite these challenges, when the course ran with a focus on fostering curiosity and hard conversations, it was successful as measured by student work, student evaluations, formal and informal discussions with students, and conversations with other faculty members who were teaching the same course. Students reported in anonymous course evaluations that they felt "more prepared to work with families with different backgrounds and help students have complicated conversations about the past and present." However, when I moved from the college of education, the course reverted to the way it was before—faculty went back to doing things how they had always been done. Entrenched, often more senior, professors were uncomfortable with a new structure for an Introduction to Education course and reverted to methods they were confident in using. I did not build the buy-in needed to sustain this course without my direct involvement.

As I envisioned it, that introductory course was simply a building block. It gave PSTs critical tools for their future—namely, how to talk about complicated subjects with respect and engage in productive disagreements with other students and colleagues. A second, upper-level course I designed was intended to allow PSTs to combine hard histories and hard conversations. Called *Teaching American Studies in the Classroom*, this course featured co-teaching with a professor of history and a professor of education. It focused on complex, emotional issues in American history including the Trail of Tears, slavery, the women's movement, Jim Crow, the American response to the Holocaust, Japanese internment, and immigration policy. *Teaching American Studies in the Classroom* combined several disciplinary perspectives, taught historical thinking, and modeled strategies of successful teaching. This was an ideal model, although it faced barriers in higher education. Co-teaching courses is difficult to navigate from an administrative perspective, as two

faculty members are devoted to one course. Co-teaching models, from a teaching perspective, can be even more challenging for higher education faculty than K-12 teachers, as professors are used to an enormous amount of autonomy and freedom in their work. Nevertheless, it offered the opportunity to experiment with and implement ideas that can lead to much more effective PST training.

Perhaps an even more effective but potentially more difficult approach is to ensure that teacher educators across all disciplines and grade levels integrate Holocaust education into one (or more) existing courses. This approach would serve as a model for PSTs as they think about the integration of the Holocaust across disciplinary areas, and, therefore, can be considered to be best practice. In order for this to work, measurable objectives must be designed and assessed. The first step is to assemble an interdisciplinary team of teacher educators to develop standards, learning goals, and measurable outcomes for pre-service teachers, making sure they are in alignment with one another and disciplinary-specific. Much like in K-12 classrooms, where Holocaust education mandates need to be given some administrative weight to be enacted and taken seriously, integrating content about the Holocaust into teacher education across the curriculum is essential to developing best practice and achieving the greatest impact in teacher training.

Ultimately, in order to create this sort of change in colleges of education, administration and senior faculty need to be supportive, innovative, and willing to shift to a new model. A focus on Holocaust education, either within the context of other hard histories or on its own, is a prioritization of the humanities, something which has faded as the emphasis on STEM has come into a stronger focus. To create these changes, faculty must learn new content and, in some cases, consider new pedagogies that make them uncomfortable.

Conclusion

It is no easy task to help pre-service teachers learn how to teach about and from the Holocaust. It requires rethinking on the part of teacher educators and coordinated efforts by colleges of education. This is an exercise in backward design: first teachers, curriculum specialists, and Holocaust education scholars must work to consider what the K-12 Holocaust education curriculum should look like and what key themes should be

included. Then, colleges of education need to assemble teams to prepare PSTs to meet these curricular needs.

This chapter argued that Holocaust education be included across grade levels, beginning with the youngest students, and discussed the key themes and pedagogies that ought to be included in this instruction. It also argued the colleges of education must begin to disrupt the cycle of ineffective Holocaust education through stand-alone courses or ongoing interdisciplinary curricular modifications. All of this is possible if it is prioritized, given the same amount of careful and smart consideration that STEM education has been given, for example. Holocaust education, like all education about hard histories, has the potential to engage students in meaningful conversations that lead them to critically examine the past in order to create a better future. It is worth the struggle to get there.

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CHAPTER 10

False Dichotomy: How STEM and the Humanities Support Each Other

Darby Riley and Cayla Ritz

Introduction

In engineering, one meets a lot of one-track students. These are students who, from a very early age, found their niche in mathematics, in physics, in chemistry, in technology, and choose to stay the course. Some students may always choose to situate themselves on this single track, whatever the influences on them may be. Others might never feel the need to settle into a specialization, instead becoming a virtual "jack of all trades." Regardless of individual preference, however, the educational climate is trending toward "choosing" as early as possible (Adodo & Agbayewa, 2011; Argys et al., 1996; Burnett, 1995; Maaz et al., 2008; Stanley & Chambers, 2018; Weinstein, 1996). Students are sorted into tracked

D. Riley (✉) · C. Ritz (✉)
Department of Experiential Engineering Education (ExEEd), Rowan University, Glassboro, NJ, USA
e-mail: rileyd1@students.rowan.edu

C. Ritz
e-mail: ritzc6@students.rowan.edu

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classes in middle school or before. From those tracks, many begin prioritizing certain classes before they enter high school and cast off those classes not on their track entirely by the time they reach college. In STEM fields, this issue is felt accurately due to the demands of the disciplines and the attention STEM has received in recent decades as an aspirational career path. What results are students who, while perhaps skilled in STEM disciplines, are lacking in other areas such as social studies or language arts. The opportunity cost of this tracking approach is that it is common to encounter engineering students at the college level who have not engaged in a history or English class since their early teens. In fact, jokes about poor writing and communication skills—as well as an inability to historically contextualize scientific and mathematical advances—are so common in STEM college courses that students who do possess these skills are not just a rarity, but a shock.

The issues one-track students face are discussed frequently in various fields (Adodo & Agbayewa, 2011; Allan, 1991; Argys et al., 1996; Boaler et al., 2000; Burnett, 1995; Gamoran, 1987; Stanley & Chambers, 2018). From the perspective of an engineering student in higher education, however, there is one issue that is often overlooked: one-track students are not only missing fundamental dimensions of their education but openly disparage them to get an easy laugh. General competencies such as communication and creativity are sneered at, and knowledge of the historical and political impacts of STEM is considered superfluous to the job-specific skills called for in STEM careers. In short, one-track students stick to their track and rarely make space for interdisciplinary work or skills in their education.

Sometimes, though, opportunities arise to step outside of one's comfort zone. In our[1] senior year of college, we joined an interdisciplinary project entitled *The Warsaw Project* as part of our engineering education. It is an ongoing collaborative project between the Rowan Center for the Study of the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights, the Henry M. Rowan College of Engineering's Virtual Reality Center, and the College of Communications & Creative Arts' Biomedical Art & Visualization department. The purpose of the project was to develop an interactive and immersive digital recreation of the Warsaw Ghetto,

[1] In the context of this paper, "our" refers to the authors, Cayla Ritz and Darby Riley. We received our undergraduate degrees in mechanical engineering from Rowan University and are currently pursuing PhDs in engineering education at the same institution.

allowing users to move through and interact with a space which no longer exists. Doing so would provide a level of immersion in history which few can experience, and help to foster an emotional connection to those who lived in the ghetto. The Warsaw Ghetto, the largest established ghetto of World War II, provided a unique opportunity to examine the horrors and tragedies of the Holocaust, while also supporting a look into the humanity, culture, and life which persevered through these conditions. We were wanted for our coding skills but had to learn about the history of the space and work with history students and faculty in pursuit of the final product.

After working on this project for a full year, we found that we had developed our own strong emotional connection to the stories we were working with, and we both decided to continue to immerse ourselves in the content surrounding Holocaust and Genocide education (HGE). As part of a newly created course on Digital Humanities (i.e., the intersection between humanities and STEM), we were challenged with another interdisciplinary project. This time, we were asked to digitize the story of Sonja Spielberg, born in Kostopol, Ukraine, in 1923 to a Jewish family. Her mother, sister, brother, and infant nephew were killed after Kostopol came under German occupation, and she and her father survived the rest of the war in hiding. She was a Holocaust survivor, a mother, and the grandmother of our professor. Our job was to review the interviews, photos, and testimony from Sonja Spielberg, and sort it into a digital teaching tool to retell her story ethically, emotionally, and effectively. We were given about 15 photographs of Sonja pre-, mid-, and post-war, several contradicting ITS documents, and a 21-page interview transcript that our professor had conducted with Sonja before she passed away.

These projects, requiring both STEM and humanities expertise, straddled the line between these disciplines. We dealt with highly sensitive and personal information, and we were asked to take it and turn it into a learning tool for others. The design process for this was unlike anything we had ever encountered before, as the open-endedness of the assignments was a hurdle all its own. As Ph.D. students of engineering education, we offer this reflection on a series of educational experiences that got us "off the track" and thinking differently, as well as our recommendations to bring these experiences into the grade school classrooms where we would eventually teach. We will first examine the differences between STEM and the humanities, and the challenges at play when these disciplines collaborate. The disciplines of history and engineering

will then be examined in greater detail, with the goal of showing how the tenets of engineering education can inform history education, and vice versa. We argue that resolving this false dichotomy and blending educational techniques between these disciplines leads to greater student engagement, better performance, and additional learning outcomes which bolster educational experiences in all disciplines. For readers, we hope that by sharing our story, we encourage a sense of unity and support between these disciplines in the classroom and beyond.

Dissecting the Dichotomy

Working on a team is a skill all its own. The ability to communicate and collaborate effectively in a diverse group is valued and marketable in many workspaces, and universities often make a concerted effort to impart these abilities to their students through group work whenever possible (Burdett, 2003; Commonwealth Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs [DETYA], 2000; Council for Industry and Higher Education [CIHE], 1996; Furnham, 2006; Harvey et al., 1997). At the college level, however, group work most often occurs within discipline-specific classrooms (Palmeri et al., 2007; Ruocco & Dixon, 1997; Yamashita et al., 2021). In other words, STEM students work with other STEM students, humanities students work with other humanities students, and so on. While these groups have a certain homogeneity that aids in communication and collaboration, interdisciplinary groups (i.e., those which span the gap between STEM and humanities) have broader gaps in understanding between students (Davies & Devlin, 2007; Hall & Weaver, 2001; Klaassen, 2018). In our experience, these gaps are often so wide that they create challenges entirely unique to interdisciplinary work—though they thankfully come with a set of benefits and strengths not developed in other situations.

The first and most obvious gap we encountered was the difference in knowledge. As engineers, our talents lay in the development and use of technology. As such, we entered these projects with a level of comfort and familiarity; our experience with a wide variety of coding languages and software, as well as previous projects which required us to learn "on the job," made the process feel routine and achievable. Similarly, the humanities students were often able to recall relevant historical knowledge off the top of their heads, and could quickly and effectively put their hands on information they did not have readily available.

Despite our individual proficiencies, however, finding the right way to access appropriate knowledge from each other proved challenging. We often found that we had to develop new words, phrases, or symbols to denote concepts which spanned the disciplinary gap or needed to communicate thoughts and ideas through multiple media before a common understanding was established. For example, while the humanities students could describe what information they wanted a website to house, they found that they did not have the vocabulary to articulate how the website would display this information, or how the user would interact with it. Similarly, the engineers often struggled to ask appropriate or helpful questions regarding historical facts, as they lacked the vocabulary to properly frame their questions.

There are, of course, upsides to this divide. While the gap itself can be a troubling obstacle, the breadth of knowledge it entails can enhance the problem-solving abilities of the team and the quality of the final product. On a more individual level, students have a chance to interact with work outside of their discipline and learn new skills in a manner that is targeted and purposeful. After working on *The Warsaw Project* for a year, we felt that we had gained a comfort level with historical research and communication that we had never felt we needed. Humanities students involved in the project felt the same way about engineering, becoming more willing to explore technology without apprehension. Overall, the nature of interdisciplinary work led to a more well-rounded educational experience for all involved. From an outsider's perspective, this may be an expected or obvious result; many studies on similar interdisciplinary projects and initiatives have come to the same conclusions (de Ramirez et al., 1998; Hurst et al., 2017; McDonald, 1996; Walker et al., 1998). To us, though, the result was a pleasant surprise and an influential experience on our future career paths. We found ourselves continuing to seek projects and experiences outside of our area of expertise, and enjoying the work more and more with each new collaboration.

While knowledge gaps were conquered with relative ease, other less obvious disparities were not as simple. Over the course of our interdisciplinary working experience, subtle differences in work style and points of emphasis became more and more pronounced. The engineers, for example, placed an emphasis on iteration; a low-quality first attempt, otherwise known as a "prototype" or "proof of concept," is expected and encouraged. By contrast, the humanities students placed greater importance on planning, discussion, and theory before putting pen to paper

on a first draft. There was often a considerable clash between the engineers' fast-paced iterative process, and the humanities students' wish to take things slow and talk out all possible solutions. Neither approach was an all-purpose solution, just as neither approach was fundamentally better or more effective, but the tug-of-war between these work styles often frustrated both parties. Still, the engineers on the project grew more comfortable with taking their time and participating in longer theoretical discussions, and the humanities students started to take more chances with their work.

These different work styles reflected another key difference between the disciplines: the emotional weight of history and the hands-on focus of engineering. While working on these projects, we saw the engineers repeatedly center logical decision-making over emotional reasoning, and history students find comfort in written historical facts over practical applications. Once the initial apprehension toward seemingly "opposite" approaches is overcome, these variations on educational experiences can lead to new learning outcomes, stronger students, and better collaborators. Materials related to the Holocaust present the perfect conditions to explore new approaches: opportunities to exercise practical applications of historical analysis as conflicting stories and documents are tied together, and the chance to develop skills in emotional reasoning through the harrowing personal stories of those who lived this infamous tragedy.

Hands-On History

Engineering education began with apprenticeships (Grinter, 1955; Hammond, 1940). Although they have been through many changes and trends, engineering programs always seem to return to the cornerstones of hands-on work and concrete experiences (Stone & McAdams, 2000). Most engineering courses culminate in a design-build-test project, anything from building and coding a small robot to fully manufacturing an air-powered engine. Hands-on projects—also known as experiential learning—can provide context to theoretical work (Aglan & Ali, 1996), boost students' confidence and performance (Chen et al., 2019), increase retention (Higley & Marianno, 2001), and be more "fun" for students (Stone & McAdams, 2000), all while supporting more traditional methods of education such as lectures, exams, and reports (Aglan & Ali, 1996; Chen et al., 2019; Stone & McAdams, 2000). History

and humanities fields more broadly are not always structured in a hands-on way; rather, most history classes are founded upon lectures, research papers, and memorization of facts, without much chance to interact and engage directly (Barton & Levstik, 2003; Bolgatz, 2007; Lucey et al., n.d.; Way, 2010). When engineering students did find themselves in humanities general education courses, they quickly learned that end-of-semester projects were often slanted toward the descriptive (explaining ideas and arguing points via papers and presentations), rather than the demonstrative nature of engineering projects (displaying knowledge of principles through a working machine). While working on *The Warsaw Project* and the Survivor Story Project, the history students involved were able to participate in "hands-on history" education. So, what does hands-on history look like?

The Warsaw Project was a digital recreation of the Warsaw Ghetto as it was during Nazi occupation. A major goal of the project was historical accuracy; the team working on the project often referred to the process as "forensic reconstruction," emphasizing its basis in existing historical documents, photographs, and maps, and its similarity to the art of forensic anthropology and archaeology (using archaeological techniques to recreate scenes from the past). Though the reconstruction process began at a broad and accessible level (using historical maps to lay out the city streets, photos, and paintings to create buildings, etc.), it narrowed considerably as the team focused on the details, such as the interior of a soup kitchen or apartment. These sorts of details were not always readily accessible to those on the humanities side of the team; while many of them were able to put their hands on maps with relative ease, or even recall large-scale historical facts off the top of their heads, making the digital space feel "real" required much more targeted research.

The Survivor Story Project had a similar structure. For this project, we were asked to use the story of a single Holocaust survivor to develop a digital teaching tool—anything from websites to social media to videos/podcasts and beyond. We were provided with documents (including photographs, ITS documents, and a personal interview) detailing the experience and memory of one Holocaust survivor, Sonja Spielberg. For the engineers, this project had a certain level of familiarity; we had just spent a year working on *The Warsaw Project*, and so were growing more comfortable with the process of historical research, as well as the subject of the Holocaust in general. As engineers, we had technological training to help us through digital tool development. The

humanities students, however, were not nearly as comfortable with the task set out to them—they not only had to tackle the research and organization they were familiar with but were also expected to develop digital resources in processes entirely unfamiliar to them. The chances for frustration and burnout were high. The engineers went into the project prepared to take over all technological development and leave the history students to handle the interpretation of the materials we were provided, dividing responsibilities strictly along disciplinary lines.

However, much in the way *The Warsaw Project* gave us the direction and purpose engineers needed to learn about history, this assignment gave the history students the drive to troubleshoot digital tools with which they had little to no experience working. When asked, the history students involved with the project would often point to the need to "do justice to the story" as a reason for their tenacity. In other words, they believed their emotional connection to the people involved kept them from burning out or giving up. Despite the hours of work and frequent frustration that went into learning a new skill from the bottom up, we watched these students slowly gain confidence in not only their technological abilities but their independence in searching for answers. Requests for help tapered over the course of the semester—even though the engineers made it clear they were always available for support—and the digital tools slowly became more innovative, and more concretely realized.

This conclusion was not surprising. There have been many studies regarding the use of empathy in history classrooms and its effectiveness at bolstering interest and information retention (Bartelds et al., 2020; Brooks, 2009; Colby, 2008; Cunningham, 2009; De Leur et al., 2017; Endacott & Brooks, 2013; Yilmaz, 2007). What is interesting about this case, however, is the way historical empathy was supported by hands-on learning; while the students initially engaged with the project through empathy, it was hands-on learning that kept them motivated. This suggests that hands-on work and emotional work while seeming to "belong" to different disciplines and fields can inform and support one another. We will now examine this relationship from the opposite perspective and look for ways that engineering may benefit from empathetic and emotional education.

Emotional Engineering

History and the humanities often use emotion as a driving force behind their lessons (Fairchild, 2016; Head, 2008; Little, 2017; Martin, 2002; Wilkinson, 2015). These emotional components can develop quite naturally, as history is borne from human affairs of the past, rather than the mathematical laws of nature and design STEM disciplines are built upon. History students may find many ways to relate to historical content, whether that be through personal stories and testimony (Bertram et al., 2017; Morgan, 2020), through fiction (Rodwell, 2013), or through activities meant to simulate aspects of living in other times or places (Beidatsch & Broomhall, 2010; Simkins & Steinkuehler, 2008).

In engineering classes, however, there are few natural places from which an emotional connection can be formed. While engineers can certainly grow attached to their more intensive, long-term projects, engineering is not frequently made "personal" (Goleman, 1999; Ishkov & Magera, 2015; Martin, 2002; Riemer, 2003; Wilkinson, 2015). The closest we ever experienced to emotionally-based engineering education was through lessons on the engineer's code of ethics, accompanied by a few in-class debates about how to deal with engineering failures. The Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology, Inc. (ABET) does require that any accredited university has engineering ethics built into their curriculum, but most schools tend to use a familiar engineering failure scenario (i.e., the Challenger explosion) to educate about engineering ethics (Barry & Herkert, 2015). While ethics and empathy can certainly be linked, ethical decision-making can also be taught divorced from empathy and is taught this way in many engineering classrooms (Strobel et al., 2013).

When we first joined *The Warsaw Project*, we were wary of becoming involved with the emotional aspects of the project at all. Approaching such emotionally weighty content was more than just difficult—we were genuinely afraid of doing things "wrong" and ending up with a project that was unfit for use as an educational tool. In the earliest stages of our work on the project, we kept our heads down and did our best to avoid engaging with the ethical responsibilities that were being given to us. Over time, we found ourselves pulled into heated debates regarding the ethics of not only the project as a whole, but a great many of the details of its production. Anything from the representation of people, to the phrasing of written and spoken content within the experience, to the

way that users would interact with the project had ethical ramifications, and there were no easy or obvious solutions to be had. Learning to engage with these debates was a massive obstacle for us—not because we didn't care or understand, but because our minimal training had not prepared us for these sorts of conversations at all. Engineering education tends to skew toward an emphasis on a professional code of business and design ethics, but often lacks the personal and emotional connection that we found within our time on this project (Goleman, 1999; Ishkov & Magera, 2015; Martin, 2002; Riemer, 2003; Wilkinson, 2015).

While many small-scale discussions of an ethical nature took place daily, a few larger questions loomed throughout the project: what did we want a viewer to take away from this experience? How much information was too much? What concepts were too triggering or traumatizing? How do we make this experience not only appropriate for all ages but also informative and impactful for all ages? One recurring sticking point for the engineering team was the creation of avatars to represent those who lived in the Warsaw Ghetto. While the overcrowding of the ghetto had a huge impact on the inhabitants' quality of life (as cited by the Imperial War Museum [2021], there were over 460,000 inhabitants in only 1.3 square miles at its most populous), actually depicting these people in the same hyper-realistic manner as the environment felt like crossing a line. When working on the project, we used photographs from within the ghetto as references. Holocaust archives and records had no shortage of photographs filled with people, but was it responsible to recreate real people from that era? Was it necessary?

Once again, the engineers felt compelled to disengage with the material. It felt like too big of a question to be tackled by those without the proper expertise. The Holocaust and Genocide Education (HGE) students on our team, however, felt similarly—none of them felt comfortable determining a singular solution to the problem. Many ideas were suggested: should we use stock avatars, knowing that younger viewers may recognize inhabitants from other free-to-play video games? Should we avoid detailing by finding artistic ways to depict people, even if it came across as heavy-handed or otherwise disingenuous? Should people be removed from the simulation entirely to avoid controversy? Ultimately, the team determined that there was not one "most right" solution, and the engineers found that they were able to apply many of their previous problem-solving skills to the process. The overall process was the same: thinking through the problem definition, brainstorming solutions,

creating prototypes, and receiving feedback. The only difference was in the evaluation of the final product; while our engineering projects were tested and measured within precise boundaries, this project could only be judged qualitatively; the project could work as it was designed, and still not be the "right" way to do it.

Not knowing the "right" answer, or otherwise not finding a working solution, was a foreign concept to us; an unfinished or inoperable final product would be considered a failure to an engineer. Learning to say "I don't know" was difficult, but it helped us learn about collaboration and working with others. It can be hard to admit you don't have an answer, or that you aren't the expert you wish you were, but passing these difficult decisions on to people who are more qualified to make them is a critical component of high-quality collaboration (Davies & Devlin, 2007; Hall & Weaver, 2001; Klaassen, 2018; Little, 2017).

The Survivor Story Project reinforced these collaborative skills in much the same way but also moved into the realm of memory. While *The Warsaw Project* was based on the history of a place, the survivor story project examined the memories of an individual. Students working on this project learned that the products would not only be used as teaching tools but would also be shared with members of Sonja's family. This added a layer of personalization that was new and challenging to handle. It was up to us to determine the best way to tell the story of Sonja Spielberg with our limited information. As we worked through the materials, we also found conflicting information and historical inaccuracies. Finding the right way to present the personal (and, at times, dubiously accurate) recollections of a survivor alongside information sourced from historical texts was a logistical and emotional challenge; the more we worked, the harder time we had drawing a definitive line between history and memory. Though this disagreement is the subject of much research and debate in the community of Holocaust and Genocide Studies (Craps & Rothberg, 2011; Rich, 2020), this was the engineers' first experience in this type of decision-making and problem-solving. It was an exercise that, while bearing a familiarity to the complex problems and innovative solutions found in engineering education, felt entirely new and somewhat daunting. Again, learning to be confident in not knowing was critical to the success of this project.

Exploring these stories and tools together necessitated a level of emotional honesty among student teams that led to more open discussion, stronger support, and a more understanding outlook in class discussions that followed. While it is certainly possible that these students would

have naturally drawn together over time, this project was the strong push some needed to open up and engage more intimately with the content, and with each other. Narratives—especially those which are personal and relatable—provided internal, authentic motivation for students of all disciplines (Glover Frykman, 2009; Lwin, 2012; Nathanson, 2006; Roussou, 2001; Szurmak & Thuna, 2013; Zanzanian, 2016). The drive to do justice to a real person's story, and to make this story last, was more powerful than any of us could have predicted; it pushed students out of their comfort zones, encouraged them to think more deeply and creatively about their own specializations, and acted as a catalyst for strong inter-student relationships.

Recommendations

There is no denying the differences between STEM fields and the humanities. They require different skill sets and interests (Korn, 2019; Tsang, 2019), and attract different types of students and instructors (Sanders, n.d.; Vaziri et al., 2019). Despite these differences, the disciplines have more to learn from one another than they do separating them; a thoughtfully structured history classroom can incorporate many foundational principles of engineering education, and vice versa. Here, we outline some ways that all educators can bring these experiences into the classroom, regardless of budget or access to technology. We also hope to present ways to bring these experiences from higher education into younger classrooms.

Emotional Connection and Relatability

Creating an emotional connection between the student and the content is another great way to increase student motivation and encourage creativity (Berne, 2018; Carrell et al., 2020; Hudson et al., 2014; McCurdy et al., 2020). Finding stories of "average people" can help students relate more deeply to history that can otherwise feel distant. Students can draw on family stories, and educators can use first-person accounts written by individuals who experienced history. These personal connections to people from other times and places allow students to forge a broader connection with history itself, providing them with internal motivation to learn, research, and deliver material in a way that does justice to the content, and makes them proud of the final product.

To leverage emotional connection and relatability most effectively, it will be important to gather stories of and references to average people (i.e., those who are not major historical figures) for students to engage with. While some students may have parents, grandparents, family friends, etc., who can give first-person accounts, not all will. Having alternative sources for these assignments is critical. Otherwise, this type of work bears many similarities to more common reading and research assignments, and similar lesson plans of analysis and engagement mesh well.

Restoration and Re-Creation

The process of restoration and recreation can reveal a lot about the details of life in other times and places (Cranton, 2011; Haverkos, 2015; Pond & Childs, 1995). While few schools have access to the virtual reality tools we utilized, there are many other ways to incorporate restoration into the classroom. Helping students recreate and analyze historical meals (such as those provided to ghetto residents), learn about games, pastimes, and cultural traditions (such as Jewish holidays), or otherwise explore aspects of the past in a tangible way can be incredibly powerful. Even more traditional assignments can be given a restoration-based twist (e.g., translating part of a Polish reading assignment into English using an online translation service), allowing students the chance to dive as deep as they would like in a quest for historical accuracy.

An experience like those described above can be as labor-intensive as is reasonable. While some of these examples require access to more resources than others (e.g., a kitchen to cook food, materials to recreate games and pastimes, etc.), restoration-focused activities can be made inexpensive and simple. For example, sharing passages from popular fiction of the time can help immerse students in a different perspective. In some cases, sharing photos of daily life may even be enough; taking the time to discuss what clothing and living spaces looked like, for instance, can be grounding and familiarizing.

Emphasize Student Similarities and Differences Through Collaborative Assignments

One lesson that students learn from working in interdisciplinary teams is the ability to defer to those with more experience (Johnson et al., 2007; Michaelson & Sweet, 2008; Wiegant et al., 2012).

In our case, engineers needed to learn when and how to ask questions of history students on our team, and vice versa. In other classrooms, this divide may not be as clear, but student teams will still be composed of diverse students with a multitude of talents. Encouraging students to become "experts" in their talent areas, and to help other students learn more about things they do not know, can teach students the value of expertise (Johnson et al., 2007; Michaelson & Sweet, 2008; Wiegant et al., 2012). Holocaust education often presents conflicting accounts and perspectives (e.g., the Nazi perspective vs. the Jewish perspective), and even simple collaborative assignments can help students understand how conflicting viewpoints arise, how they can be resolved into a cohesive narrative, and the inherent biases certain perspectives may hold.

This is likely one of the simplest techniques to integrate into the classroom, as it requires no special resources to be effective. Many courses already include some amount of group work or collaboration, and beginning a group assignment with a discussion about how to work productively in a team is a small change. In some classrooms, it may be helpful to lead a discussion on student strengths and weaknesses when working in a team, as well as what experiences and interests may influence the way they work.

Unique Media and Platforms

While writing a paper or creating a slide presentation is a trusted standby, there is something more tangible about creativity in presentation (Buijs & Admiraal, 2013; Donnelly, 2004; Duenkel, 2013). The simple choice to work with a different platform or media type can give students an additional challenge, as well as an additional motivational boost (Kuh et al., 2004)—one that might be missing from other assignments. Instructors may prescribe a particular medium for their students to learn or allow students to select their own. Students might be able to communicate the information in a slide presentation, website, audio recording, video demonstration, or dedicated social media page. Papers might work as blogs, forum posts, or moderated in-class discussions and debates.

Much like the restoration activities, this adjustment to classroom practices can be as big or as small as is reasonable. Computer access—whether that be personal computers or a school computer lab—can open up a lot of interesting possibilities for students. If computer access is not guaranteed, students can still find ways to work with different mediums. For

example, written assignments may be presented in a narrative form, or with predominantly pictures, spoken presentations can be delivered as plays or poetry, etc. In general, familiarity with the medium on the part of the teacher is recommended.

Conclusions

There are a multitude of pressures causing students to sort themselves onto disciplinary tracks early in their education careers (Adodo & Agbayewa, 2011; Argys et al., 1996; Burnett, 1995; Maaz et al., 2008; Stanley & Chambers, 2018; Weinstein, 1996). Research shows that this early decision impacts much of a student's continuing education (Adodo & Agbayewa, 2011; Allan, 1991; Argys et al., 1996; Boaler et al., 2000; Burnett, 1995; Gamoran, 1987; Stanley & Chambers, 2018), and has slowly established an artificial divide between STEM and the humanities. STEM students are usually placed on a STEM track in early high school, and so their education in history, communication, and literature may take a backseat to science and math classes. We argue that interdisciplinary projects provide an opportunity to become more well-rounded and become better engineers, better STEM students, better team members, and better humanists. For us, this interdisciplinary work came through a unique project blending STEM and history into one experience: to piece together an accurate recreation of the Warsaw Ghetto from which others could learn.

The blending and blurring of disciplinary lines benefit all and encourage the educational development of many types of students (Davies & Devlin, 2007; Hall & Weaver, 2001; Klaassen, 2018; Little, 2017). While these different fields still have many things which set them apart, there are some foundational skills and learning styles that STEM and humanities students have in common: hands-on work, empathetic learning, and the ability to collaborate within a diverse team. Providing opportunities to experiment with the epistemologies of other disciplines can give students confidence when approaching unfamiliar situations, as well as enhance their skills within their own discipline (Korn, 2019; Tsang, 2019).

When humanities students worked with technology through hands-on activities, they found that their retention and comprehension of the information increased as expected (Barton & Levstik, 2003; Bolgatz, 2007; Lucey et al., n.d.; Way, 2010). However, these students also found

that the emotional connection they had with the material was deepened through this work, as their drive to do justice to these historical figures helped them work through frustration and burnout (Bartelds et al., 2020; Brooks, 2009; Colby, 2008; Cunningham, 2009; De Leur et al., 2017; Endacott & Brooks, 2013; Yilmaz, 2007). Similarly, when STEM students were given the emotional anchor necessary to form connections with the subjects of their work, they were not only motivated by the narrative and the relatability of the stories they worked with (Glover Frykman, 2009; Lwin, 2012; Nathanson, 2006; Roussou, 2001; Szurmak & Thuna, 2013; Zanzanian, 2016), but also found their understanding of the content became more robust (Cranton, 2011; Haverkos, 2015; Pond & Childs, 1995). All students involved found that the necessary interdisciplinary collaboration helped them to develop better interpersonal skills, including communication and empathy (Davies & Devlin, 2007; Hall & Weaver, 2001; Klaassen, 2018; Little, 2017). Overall, the experience of true interdisciplinary work broke down the barrier between the disciplines, and resulted in more well-rounded and confident students (de Ramirez et al., 1998; Hurst et al., 2017; McDonald, 1996; Walker et al., 1998).

The dichotomy which exists between STEM and the humanities is not as tangible as it might seem. Much like the false distinction between "left-brained" and "right-brained" people (Allen & van der Zwan, 2019; Corballis, 2007), there are many skills which cross the barrier between these disciplines. Over the past two years of working in integrated multidisciplinary teams, we have seen tremendous growth from all students involved, both within their area of expertise and beyond. This growth speaks to the work which could be accomplished if opportunities for collaboration were more abundant, and more consistently woven into education from an earlier age. Giving students a chance to get "off the track" can enhance their education, encourage them to think differently, and teach them to collaborate more effectively.

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CHAPTER 11

Keeping It Authentic: Harnessing Technology to Teach the Complexities of the Holocaust

Matthew Hensley and Noelle Smith

What was the Holocaust? Addressing this seemingly simple question with P-12 students is one of the most complex endeavors a teacher can undertake in the field of education. It requires responsible and conscientious pedagogical decision-making to effectively strike a balance between accurately examining history in which millions of people were dehumanized and murdered, while at the same time maintaining a healthy and safe classroom atmosphere where students can engage in inquiry and critical thinking skills. Inquiry and historical thinking work in tandem (Coiro et al., 2016) involves students pursuing questions (usually crafted by the students) related to a topic of study (Coiro et al., 2016). Students may then use historical thinking skills (e.g., contextualizing, evaluating, and synthesizing, and reasoning) to solve their inquiries (Wineburg, 2010).

M. Hensley (✉)
East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, TN, USA
e-mail: mhensl13@vols.utk.edu

N. Smith
Greenville High School, Greenville, TN, USA
e-mail: smithn@gcschools.net

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Thus, teachers should not only possess robust content knowledge and pedagogical strategies, but more importantly the ability to demonstrate a high degree of sensitivity and awareness of the topic. This is paramount to safeguard lessons and legacies from the Holocaust against being trivialized or taught as ephemeral pieces knowledge that might potentially undermine the complexity of the subject matter.

While tending to those factors while teaching about the Holocaust can seem daunting for many teachers, the knowledge and potentially transformative lessons that are possible for students to learn from studying this hard history is invaluable. Genocide and the Holocaust education pose difficult questions about human nature, as well as the context in which complex choices were made by real humans (Karn, 2012). According to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's (USHMM) guidelines for teaching the Holocaust, "Focusing on these decisions leads to insights into history and human nature and fosters critical thinking (USHMM, 2020)." Learning about the Holocaust in this way not only emphasizes historical thinking skills and inquiry. Additionally, it presents a window for students to view the impacts of morals and values on human decision-making, which is necessary to prepare students to recognize the urgency of values and moral choices in their own lives (Karn, 2012; Manfra & Stoddard, 2008).

Unfortunately, despite the importance of genocide and Holocaust education and the field of social studies education's movement toward a more inquiry-based social studies curriculum (NCSS, 2013), a 2018 study commissioned by the Claims Conference reported a growing worldwide Holocaust knowledge deficit among millennials (Rich, 2019; Schoen Consulting, 2018). This is alarming, especially as educational researcher, Jennifer Rich's (2019) study concurred with the Claims Conference study and reported a stark knowledge deficit among 200 U.S. preservice teachers. Some of the findings from this report from the preservice teachers included, placing the Holocaust in the wrong century, not knowing the political party behind the Holocaust, and limited knowledge of concentration camps beyond Auschwitz, other genocides, and the approximate number of humans victimized by the Holocaust (Rich, 2019). Fortunately, given the advantage of Web 2.0 technologies, there are more relevant and relatable ways to ameliorate the Holocaust education knowledge deficit without sacrificing higher-order thinking and the morals and values-based essence by trivializing the subject matter (Manfra & Stoddard, 2008; Rich, 2019). Web 2.0 refers to technologies that

surpass basic information retrieval, but rather allow for interactivity and engagement from the user (Pan & Franklin, 2011). Manfra and Stoddard (2008) recommend leveraging technology resources and strategies that engage students in authentic learning experiences.

Authentic learning experiences are cultivated through the authentic instructional practices, which include (1) Construction of Knowledge, (2) Disciplined Inquiry, and (3) Value Beyond School (King et al., 2009). With the constant development and innovation of technology, Web 2.0 tools allow for greater accessibility to robust and high-quality content resources (e.g., digital primary source documents) and interactive opportunities for students to practice historical thinking and inquiry skills, while also developing new digital literacy skills. Employing authentic instruction as a framework to guide technology use when teaching about the Holocaust affords students the opportunity to couple historical inquiry with digital literacy skills. When facilitated appropriately, teachers can innovatively situate students to begin grappling with the complexities of learning about sensitive history. Still, teachers using technology must make sound, pedagogically coherent decisions when selecting and facilitating technology use, especially when it involves hard history and sensitive topics like genocide and the Holocaust. If teachers are to transform their students' knowledge from Holocaust lessons and legacies to be able to recognize the urgency of values and moral choices in their own lives (Karn, 2012; Manfra & Stoddard, 2008), it is imperative that social studies teachers consider the instructional and pedagogical implications of leveraging technology to facilitate the teaching and learning of this sensitive subject matter in contemporary classrooms.

The purpose of this chapter is to inform social studies teachers' practice by presenting objective considerations for teaching and learning about the Holocaust by leveraging Web 2.0 technology resources that engage students in authentic learning experiences. To do this, we first begin by defining authentic instruction and how the specific criteria of the framework (e.g., Construction of Knowledge, Disciplined Inquiry, and Value Beyond School) result in highly skillful, meaningful, and intellectual student work related to Holocaust education. From there, we describe the value of Web 2.0 tools for teaching and learning with primary sources. Finally, we provide a succinct and general informational guide for facilitating Web 2.0 technology tools for teaching and learning with digitized primary sources (paper, art, and voice) from the Holocaust. In doing this, we aim to not eliminate the knowledge deficit completely, but share how

students can engage in historical inquiry in Holocaust studies in ways that are attentive to the history, while also maintaining focus on the ways the Holocaust informs our understanding of our current context.

Defining Authentic Instruction: A Framework

In their 2009, education researchers, King, Newman, and Carmichael presented a t framework for facilitating authentic instruction specifically designed for meaningful social studies teaching and learning. Their framework suggested specific criteria of: (1) Construction of Knowledge, (2) Disciplined Inquiry, and (3) Value Beyond School (King et al., 2009). Specifically, authentic instruction in social studies involves original application of knowledge and higher-order thinking skills, rather than repetitive use of facts, dates, names, and procedures (King et al., 2009). It also involves careful study and critical awareness of the details of specific subject areas, which ultimately affords students the opportunity to engage in highly skillful, meaningful, and intellectual work that has grander meaning beyond solely success in school (King et al., 2009). The three criteria are not meant to be mutually exclusive; rather, they form an educational ecosystem to provide a solid foundation for students to effectively engage in meaningful and complex intellectual work (King et al., 2009). Authentic instruction is appropriate for teaching and learning about sensitive history like the Holocaust. It allows teachers to transform pedagogical strategies into meaningful tasks that challenge students to dig deep into the content to reach understanding that can be transferable to their lives beyond school.

Our chapter is certainly not the first account where authentic instruction has been applied to frame and support technology integration to teach about sensitive history like the Holocaust. In fact, Manfra and Stoddard (2008) applied the authentic instruction framework when sharing digital multi-media resources (e.g., audio/video first person accounts, streaming video/audio first person accounts, and interactive maps) for teaching about genocide and the Holocaust. In this chapter, we focus specifically on authentic instructional strategies that leverage Web 2.0 tools for teaching and learning with three types of Holocaust primary sources (paper, art, and voice). Social studies education's movement toward a more inquiry-based learning approach coupled with the constant innovation of technologies and continued scholarship in the field have opened the floodgates for authentic instructional opportunities that

leverage the functionality of Web 2.0 technology to offer an enriching and authentic learning experience for teaching the Holocaust (King et al., 2009; Manfra & Stoddard, 2008). We provide a brief description of each of the criteria that make up the authentic instruction framework below. Then, we discuss specific Web 2.0 tools that can be used to facilitate authentic instructional strategies for teaching and learning with digital Holocaust primary sources.

Construction of Knowledge

At its core, construction of knowledge refers to authentic instruction where students are invited to build meaning and produce knowledge using a variety of disciplinary skills, such as organizing, interpreting, evaluating, and synthesizing information (King et al., 2009). Construction of knowledge is best learned through learning experiences that call for cognitive skills to be applied to solve inquires related to the content, not by explicitly teaching the disciplinary skills independently (King et al., 2009). For example, social studies texts and curricula often times cling to dominant narratives that can overgeneralize or simplify complex histories, which involved complex decisions made by real human beings. Thus, social studies teachers are typically tasked with teaching students how to craft new narratives or unveil hidden ones. By leveraging the disciplinary skills (e.g., organizing, interpreting, evaluating, and synthesizing information), teachers can demonstrate the importance of constructing knowledge from multiple perspectives to support their crafted narrative.

Given the complexity of Holocaust history education, construction of knowledge is a valuable form of authentic instruction for teaching and learning about the subject matter as has been discussed in other chapters in this volume. Teachers can engage students in a safe learning environment where they can form inquiries and apply the transferable analytical skills necessary to begin solving them. Moreover, by applying these skills and working with multiple types of sources of information, students are situated to better contextualize Holocaust history and understand how to balance the perspectives related to the history, which are goals of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. In fact, the USHMM provides explicit guidelines on their website for employing these practices when teaching and learning about the Holocaust.

Disciplined Inquiry

While knowledge construction is valuable for teaching and learning social studies, it can be inadequate if it is not guided through disciplined inquiry (King et al., 2009). Disciplined inquiry refers to authentic instruction that offers voluntary guidance to aid in the pursuit of knowledge (King et al., 2009). It involves formulating thoughtful questions, practicing critical thinking, applying disciplinary skills to gain a deeper understanding of the content, and ultimately developing ideas and findings that offer solutions to initial inquires through effective communication (King et al., 2009; NCSS, 2013). Thus, this authentic instructional approach engages students in more highly skillful work than knowledge construction alone. It affords students the opportunity to not only gain an in-depth awareness and understanding of the subject matter, but also situates students to grapple with the complexity of social studies topics by letting inquiry guide their learning.

Given the voluminous collections of primary sources, documentation, and narratives linked to the subject matter, disciplined inquiry is a valuable authentic instructional approach for teaching and learning about the complexities of genocide and the Holocaust. Given the reality that most documentation recorded about the Holocaust comes from Nazi perpetrators (USHMM, 2020), disciplined inquiry allows students to seek, propose, and test relationships among key facts, events, concepts, and claims related to the Holocaust. Through this process, students are engaging in highly skillful work by crafting new narratives and unveiling hidden ones that respond to the initial inquires. Moreover, they are understanding that the lessons and legacies from the Holocaust, as well as the skills they are using to learn about the subject matter, have value beyond the social studies course in which they are learning it.

Value Beyond School

Lastly, genuine authentic instruction in social studies education should have personal value to students beyond school. How students demonstrate their knowledge and findings from inquiry is essential. Students' tasks to demonstrate their learning should not be quizzes, reading comprehension questions, or standardized tests as these forms of assessment are designed to measure the learner alone (King et al., 2009).

Rather, social studies learning tasks should challenge the learner to investigate the ties between academic awareness and situations outside the classroom in ways that build context and value for that awareness (King et al., 2009). Moreover, activities should not only be of concern to students, but should include specific academic issues and inquiries that, if successfully addressed, would have significance for students beyond the expectations of assignments activities, and other assessments created by the teacher (King et al., 2009). For example, when using the testimonies from a survivor of genocide in the classroom, the teacher can leverage the survivor's story and experience to stimulate a discussion of similar contemporary issues around the globe and what they might do to address them.

Value beyond school is an appropriate authentic instructional approach for social studies educator teaching about genocide and the Holocaust. According to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's guidelines, the lessons and legacies of the Holocaust are not meant to be ephemeral. Assignments and projects related to the Holocaust where students demonstrate their knowledge and understanding should be designed for more than documenting competency levels. Rather, they should have embedded messages related to morals and values that contribute to helping students recognize the importance of decisions made by people of the past as well as how that awareness can help them make better informed decisions themselves. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, lessons and activities related to the Holocaust should present a window for students to view the impacts of morals and values on human decision-making, which is necessary to prepare students to recognize the urgency of values and moral choices in their own lives (Karn, 2012).

Web 2.0 Tech Tools for Teaching and Learning in Social Studies

Examples of Web 2.0 technologies include Google tools, interactive maps, databases, and websites with interactive features for the user. Given the continuous advancement and innovation of Web 2.0 technologies, teachers have the ability to leverage current web tools to facilitate pragmatic and engaging pedagogical strategies that promote authentic learning experiences in social studies (Lee & Molebash, 2014; Miller & Cinnamon, 2013; O'Brien et al., 2013). Lindsay (2016) divided Web 2.0 functionality into four categories that teachers may use to foster

authentic instruction, which include: task-based activities, information access, creative production projects, and communication. Teachers have autonomy regarding how they facilitate the use of Web 2.0 technology and leverage its multimodal functionality to foster authentic instruction.

It is worth stating that use of Web 2.0 technologies to supplement the teaching and learning of social studies does not inevitably mean that students are engaged in authentic learning. Rather, authentic learning and instruction with Web 2.0 technology happens when students leverage the technology in a way that allows them to achieve any of the aforementioned authentic instruction criteria (e.g., knowledge construction, disciplined inquiry, and value beyond school) (King et al., 2009). This requires purposeful planning on behalf of the teacher to ensure that the technology being used is acting as the appropriate tool for students to engage in higher-order thinking as a result of the authentic instruction. Essentially, the teacher must ask themselves, what can I achieve through the use of this tool that I can't in another fashion? One way that authentic instruction can be fostered and facilitated using Web 2.0 Technologies is through teaching and learning with primary sources.

The Holocaust is one of the most well-documented historical events (Rich, 2019). That being said, it is important to be cognizant of the types of sources being used in the classroom. We caution teachers against the use of graphic or visceral imagery. When examining sources, a teacher may select photographs taken by Nazi oppressors of the ghettos and camps, telegrams from Allied forces (e.g., Reigner Telegram), or artifacts from Jews and non-Jews that document their experiences. Following the war, additional primary sources avail themselves as survivors recount their experiences in a litany of modes. Effective teaching involves curating appropriate materials needed to meet learning objectives, and every teacher makes these important choices, which fundamentally affect the opportunities afforded to learners (Sarhi, 2019). In the following sections, we aim to share teacher-tested strategies that leverage technology to facilitate authentic learning experiences using three specific types of primary sources (voice, art, and poetry) related to Holocaust history education.

Technology Strategies for Facilitating Authentic Learning Using Primary Sources

By sharing these teacher-tested strategies, we aim to demonstrate how leveraging technology to teach and learn with these primary sources opens a multimodal pathway for students to experience success with Holocaust educational learning goals. Additionally, we hope to inspire other social studies teachers to consider using technology to enhance their own content knowledge and engage their students in meaningful and complex work that has value and relevance beyond the classroom.

Voice

> *Why did the Germans never see in me a human being? I had eyes. I had feelings. I had dreams.*
>
> —Gita Cycowicz, Birkenau Holocaust Survivor, 2019

When teaching about what happened to European Jews during the Holocaust, learning communities should examine real people's experiences and how victims were affected in their own world. Only when the victim's voice is propagated, can the vastness of this tragedy be comprehended. Highlighting human faces to accompany personalized Holocaust stories affords students an opportunity to grow and become the messenger's messenger.

Suggested Activity for Using Testimonies

In 2018, *Schindler's List* celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary. This film explored the true story of Oskar Schindler, a man who saved more than 1200 Jews from peril during the Holocaust. Schindler's story is complicated and offers students opportunities to ruminate about the dynamic nature of personhood. While *Schindler's List* does not lend itself well to a classroom film due to length and adult content, certainly curating clips from the film is advantageous. Video clips found on the internet under the title, "Whoever saves one life saves the world entirely." The title is extracted from the Talmud, and students might consider the verse's meaning. Additionally, students might analyze the director's intended impact on the audience by including this rich statement concerning saving the world. As students view the clip, teachers may consider exploring the

concepts of choiceless choices, as the Holocaust forced many to decide between a bad choice and an even worse one.

"Choiceless choices" is a concept coined by Professor Lawrence Langer in 1980. Examining the role of Sonderkommandos in Auschwitz, these Jewish victims were charged with burning Jewish victims or being slain themselves. In Lawrence's essay "The Dilemma of Choice in the Death-camps," Langer (1980) wrote,

> A perfect example of [choiceless choices are] how mothers of newborn children were given the choice to either give up their newborn child so that it could be killed or accompany their child to the gas chamber; whichever was their decision their child was to be murdered. Here, the mother did not really have a logical choice. Her child was still going to be killed as well as she would. She might have had survived longer, but due to the extreme circumstances of an inhumane lifestyle, she would eventually also die. (Langer, 1980, p. 54)

Additionally, teachers may pull the article entitled, "Oscar Schindler"found on the USHMM's website and upload it into a slideshow and have students digitally annotate the text. In Table 11.1, we share a suggested codebook for historical annotations that students may use when working with digital slideshows. Annotating texts like this allows students to comprehend more deeply and facilitates better recall, as students are actively engaged in the reading (Tovani, 2011). This internal note-taking procedure using close reading promotes slower interactions with texts and develops intentional historical thinking practices, such as sourcing, contextualization, and corroborating (Shanahan, 2013).

Following this close reading activity, students can then use their digital annotations to help them answer the following critical thinking questions outlined on the USHMM website, (a) "What pressures and motivations may have influenced Schindler's decisions (USHMM, 2020)"? (b) "Are these factors unique to [Holocaust] history or universal (USHMM, 2020)"? (c) "How can societies, communities, and individuals reinforce and strengthen the willingness to stand up for others (USHMM, 2020)"?

Relatedly, Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Center in Israel, documents and researches the Holocaust. Yad Vashem offers educators resources including an extensive testimony collection to explore a wide array of Holocaust-related topics. Two of Schindler's survivors featured in the testimony collections include the married couple, Genia

Table 11.1 Sample codebook for historical annotations

Code	*Meaning*	*What this looks like*
#	Begin the annotation journey by quickly numbering the paragraphs	Numbering paragraphs helps students quickly refer to the paragraph in which they cite during discussion
CT	Connect Text to Self, Text to Text, Text to World	Student to use code and write connection with a word or phrase to quickly recall the relationship between the text and another mode of learning. Students might begin with "This reminds me of…"
?	Questions or uncertainty in reading	Student to use code and record a question they generated or what was confusing
!	Shift Occurs or a Key Turning Point	Student to jot down the shift in Schindler' s character arc
	Words Unknown	Students to look up words using the internet
	Important People	Students box names that appear in the text. Can the student explain the relationship between the historical people mentioned?

and Nahum Manor. Students may access, view, and record the Manor's thoughts and experiences in Poland in the 1940s using the interactive testimony guide in Fig. 11.1. To conclude this testimonial learning about Holocaust Upstanders, students might examine Yad Vashem's criteria for individuals being named a Righteous Gentile. The four criteria featured on their website outline the basic conditions for granting the title, which include (1) active involvement in rescuing Jews from the threat of death, (2) the rescuer risks their life, liberty, or position, (3) the motivation behind rescuing Jews is altruistic, (4) testimony of those who were rescued establishing the circumstances (Yad Vashem, 2020). While Oscar

Interactive Testimony Guide

Genia Manor	1. Hometown? 2. Family? 3. What was life like in the Ghetto? 4. What were her memories from Schindler's factory?
Nahum Manor	1. Hometown? 2. Family? 3. What was life like in the Ghetto? 4. What were his memories from Schindler's factory?

Fig. 11.1 Interactive testimony guide

Schindler was added to Yad Vashem's *Righteous Among Nations* in 1993, students might explore on what merits was Mr. Schindler inducted for this honor? After all, Schindler was a complex character who colluded with Nazis and benefitted financially from the Regime but saved Jews from perishing under the fist of fascism and antisemitic practices.

Art

When I perish, do not allow my pictures to die with me. Show them to the people.

—Felix Nussbaum, Murdered in Auschwitz, 1944

An under-utilized primary and secondary source is art (Lucey & Laney, 2017; Mattson, 2009). Students can experience success as art is subjective and transcends language. Using the See-Think-Wonder strategy aids students in analyzing art and may be considered as an introductory or

concluding learning task. As students examine artistic renderings, students record what they physically *see* in the frame by creating a list. Thinking requires students interpret art and make connections with self, prior learning, and/or the world. Wondering induces curiosity and propels learning through inquiry.

During the Holocaust, art was often used as a protest or a means by which to capture the emotions of the experience (Luckert, 2020). Artists sometimes used artistic mediums as a weapon to communicate the Jewish reality. Liz Elsby, Artist and Guide at Yad Vesham, offers teachers a video series in which she implores teachers to weave art into lessons. Ms. Elsby asks that teachers examine three questions in concert with study: (1) Sourcing—who is the artist and what is his/her story? (2) Contextualize—how was the art made and under what circumstances? and (3) Location—where was the art found?

Suggested Activity for Using Art

Figure 11.2 is an etching and aquatint by Leo Haas entitled, *Jewish Children Marching in Terezin* (1942). Using the website, *Learning about the Holocaust Through Art*, teachers can locate the digital rendering of this art piece, as well as many others. Haas was born in Czechoslovakia, and later, he became a painter and graphic artist in Germany. During World War II, Haas' artistic skills were used by Nazis for both personal and official renderings. Arrested by the Gestapo in 1942 under false claims, Haas and his family were deported to Terezin/Theresienstadt where Haas created the art for this study. As Haas was a prisoner who saw firsthand and created this art within the confines of this camp, this piece is considered a primary source. Haas survived the Holocaust, but his wife was murdered in Auschwitz (Yad Vashem, 2020).

Leo Haas' *Jewish Children Marching in Terezin* (1942)

By using Haas'' *Jewish Children Marching in Terezin* (Fig. 11.2), students can begin their artistic journey by *seeing* and listing what is visible in the artwork. Teachers can offer students an opportunity to upload their observations to a digital sticky note using a web tool, like Padlet. Using Padlet, students can communicate, collect, and collaborate in a way that allows anonymity and confidence building when studying the artwork. For example, students may record their observations of the image on their digital sticky notes listing explicitly what they see (e.g., a building, children, a woman, two soldiers, a gun, lattice windows, and so on).

Fig. 11.2 "Jewish Children Marching in Terezin" by L. Haas, 1942 ([Painting found in Beit Lohamei Haghetaot, Israel]. Retrieved October 21, 2020, from http://art.holocaust-education.net/explore.asp?langid=1&submenu=104&id=78&referer=s)

As students shift from listing what is visible to *thinking* about the piece, students might connect that the solider is a Nazi, that the window may be a prison, and that the children may be being led somewhere and appear hungry, scared, and worried. Some may imagine the room with the lattice windows being cold at night/in the winter. Again, using a category to indicate thinking as the goal, students could compile their thoughts on a Padlet digital sticky note adding to the conversation and creating a thought board if projected on the board for the entire class to see.

As this thinking continues, students may *wonder* where the children are going. Encourage curiosity and prompt wondering that they can document through the digital sticky note. Students may be intrigued by the location of Terezin, especially if students notice the title of the painting. Some inquisitiveness might be heightened about the adult in the front. Students may be interested in the colors used in the art as the artist selects to use black and white composition matter. The teacher may ask students to consider what Haas was trying to communicate to the viewer about this moment in time. No answers are wrong, and every student has an entry point in the conversation.

Padlet digital sticky notes easily embeds into learning software with a digital link or QR code. The teacher might connect how a piece of art could generate a litany of thoughts and offer feedback to aspiring art critics for their ease in analyzing this primary source document. Some additional Jewish Holocaust artists to consider highlighting to extend this activity may include Felix Nussbaum, Ilka Gedo, Leo Haas, Fritta Bedrich, Moritz Muller, and Petr Ginz. Digital gallery walks could continue to use digital sticky notes to allow students to comment, read, reflect, and continue the dialogue of discovery and sensory learning.

Poetry

> *There is no way historians can penetrate the opaque center of the Holocaust…one must go to the poets.*
> —Jackie Metzger, 2019

Poetry in Holocaust Education seeks out the poet's inner world, as a poet attempts to figure out the world around them. Poetry conveys social emotional meanings to help the reader understand broad concepts. Like art, to fully understand the poem, the reader must first better know the poet's story. Sourcing, contextualizing poems, close reading, and corroborating allow the reader to draw stronger conclusions about the poem's intent and meaning. Teachers should allow students to make sense of the poem and guide students through thinking by asking questions.

Suggested Activity for Using Poetry

Like art, students can have varying levels of entry points and all students can experience success with poetry. Using Dan Pagis' poem, *Testimony*,

the reader first considers the title and defines the word testimony. The teacher might ask students to predict how the title shapes the tone of the poem. Testimonies are statements used in a legal proceeding and this noun shapes the poem's mood. Subsequently, the dialogical conversation ensues between the writer and reader, as if the reader entered an ongoing conversation in which the poet's voice offers an answer to a previously posed question. Using small groups of four or so, students might evaluate the point of view of the person on trial, the accusation made, witnesses to the event, and judge's position. Citing evidence from the poem and weaving background knowledge, students act as investigators to history unfolded.

Testimony

No no: they definitely were
human beings: uniforms, boots.
How to explain? They were created
in the image.

I was a shade.
A different creator made me.

And he in his mercy left nothing of me that would die.
And I fled to him, rose weightless, blue,
forgiving – I would even say: apologizing –
smoke to omnipotent smoke
without image or likeness. (Mitchell, 1989)

An extension activity to the aforementioned learning task might include creating black out poetry. Black out poetry is an interactive method for students to use text to explore stronger connections to the learning (Tovani, 2000). Through this activity, students are provided a page of digital text embedded onto a Google slide pertaining to the Holocaust. The text selection should be rich and dense with words. For example, teachers may provide excerpts from a secondary source explaining the Holocaust or pages from Elie Wiesel's novel, *Night*. Students would then summarize *Testimony* by deconstructing the original text to create new text. Locating impactful words through the new text and placing text boxes around the words within the text is the start. Subsequently, students are asked to darken all text not boxed to reveal a new subtext. Showing

students how they could cover less important words by darkening text with black boxes or heavily weighted links births an artistic rendering of Dan Pagis' personal account. Teachers can also enhance student's creativity by asking them to overlay symbols (e.g., Star of David or a gavel) to further design an emotional connection to the new literature.

Culminating Task that Link Voice, Art, and Poetry

Should a teacher want to approach these learning activities as a mini unit, we suggest engaging students in the creation of BookSnaps as a culminating activity. A BookSnap is essentially a digital tool where students use slideshow software, i.e., Google Slides and pull images from the web, create their own pictures via selfies, add text and annotation, think bubbles, Bitmojis, emojis, and they can collaborate with others (Martin, 2020). Considering the USHMM article, *Oskar Schindler*, the digital testimony provided by the Genia and Nahum Manor, Leo Haas' art, *Jewish Children Marching in Terezin* and Dan Pagis's poem, *Testimony*, students could create a BookSnap using digital slideshow software where students are given the autonomy and creative freedom to create their own designed BookSnap, while adhering to the following guidelines.

1. Type the name Testimony in a central place on the document. This word should be bolded and be readily present on the document.
2. Create a border around the document—consider color choices and how the border design sets the tone for the BookSnap.
3. Quote a phrase or line from the article, testimony, or poem and, using a textbox, explain its meaning.
4. Use clipart or snip an image online that represents the article, testimony, art, and poem (the BookSnap should have a total of four images). Write a brief description for the pictures explaining your inspiration using a textbox.
5. Using a cloud bubble, explain the common thread that unites these four pieces of study.
6. Using your own words, define three vocabulary words that you did not previously know.
7. Explain how you personally connect with this primary source collection.
8. Using a text bubble, explain why using different modes of learning (article, testimony, art, and poetry) is beneficial in learning?

9. Students should consider the flow and organization of the information. Boxes, tables, SmartArt, shapes, Bitmojis, and pictures will aid in the student's ability to create, connect, and communicate their thinking and learning.

Conclusion

Humanity was in danger during the period of the Holocaust. During a 2019 lecture, renowned Holocaust historian and scholar, Yehuda Bauer posed this thought, "The horror of the Holocaust is not that it deviated from human norms; the horror it that it didn't" (Sarhi, 2019). Navigating students' emotional well-being safely into Holocaust studies and carefully out of them is a skill set that necessitates teachers thoughtfully source and cultivate materials useful for study. In this chapter, we aimed to share teacher-tested strategies that leveraged technology to facilitate authentic learning experiences using three specific types of primary sources (e.g., voice, art, and poetry) related to Holocaust history. More importantly, by sharing the strategies we strived to approach Holocaust education with fidelity, while also being cognizant of the emotional well-being of students and the overall sensitivity of the subject matter. Inviting students to explore individual stories and art and case studies wrapped in historical context create frames for meaningful student learning.

Primary sources embedded in knowledge acquisition affords personal connections that resonate deeply within students. Offering students opportunities to explore and learn with primary sources requires students to work as budding historians in the field. Learning to source, corroborate, and contextualize history while wrestling with overarching questions such as, "What does it mean to be human?" and "How might I bear witness?" help anchor dark periods of history throughout the scope and sequence of the coursework. When leveraged appropriately, technology allows teachers to engage their students in authentic learning exercises that allow careful study and critical awareness of the Holocaust and ameliorate knowledge deficits, while also learning skills that have value, relevance, and applicability beyond the classroom.

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CHAPTER 12

Teaching the Holocaust with Elementary Students Using Content Area Picture Books

Deborah Wooten and Heather Matthews

Introduction

As a professor of literacy education, and a doctoral student of literacy education, with more than 25 years combined, we have observed that many teachers are uncomfortable broaching the topic of the Holocaust with young students. Teachers are often apprehensive about incorporating books about the Holocaust into curriculum for reasons that often boil down to "feel[ing], at times, inadequate, or, at least, uncertain, about whether or not they are treating the subject fairly and how best to present the material" (Glantz, 1999, p. 548). In their 2007 book "Teaching the Holocaust," authors Schweber and Findling (2007) explained that these feelings are compounded for elementary school teachers, who often

D. Wooten (✉)
University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN, USA
e-mail: dwooten1@utk.edu

H. Matthews
Knoxville, TN, USA
e-mail: hmatthe9@vols.utk.edu

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also feel as though teaching the Holocaust is developmentally inappropriate, and may upset students who are not emotionally prepared for such a topic. This chapter will describe how using credible content-area picture books (referred to as picture books for the remaining part of the chapter) and primary sources can guide appropriate and accurate Holocaust education for K-5 students. The picture books we are showcasing are approximately 32 pages, which is the traditional picture book length (Horning, 1997). Most of the books are longer because of back matter that can include author statements, glossaries, maps, bibliographies, and photographs. All of the books are illustrated with artwork that works in concert with the text.

In this chapter, we will be showcasing each of the selected texts and their uses in the curriculum. We will provide that picture books and strategies are excellent sources of information for Holocaust education and provide many titles of picture books that we would recommend for this use. We invite teachers to join us in thinking deeply about Holocaust education for elementary school children.

Literature Review

As educators, our working definition of "Holocaust education" is to provide historically accurate background information regarding the events which would later become known as the Jewish Holocaust. Occurring across Europe from 1939 to 1945, the Holocaust was a systematic attempt to annihilate all members of a religious group, perpetrated by Hitler and his regime. Despite the fact that the Holocaust was an integral part of World War II and must therefore be addressed in many social studies courses, it is often glossed over by many teachers, or taught in a way that is inaccurate and inconsistent with historical facts (Lindquist, 2009). This is evident through a review of high school history textbooks to explore the way the Holocaust was treated. David Lindquist found that some texts contain information that is not necessarily accurate. For example, Lindquist found that many textbooks inaccurately portray the role of Hitler, and inferring that Hitler was the sole cause of the Holocaust. Textbooks included such phrases as "Hitler's actions," "Hitler's Final Solution," and "Hitler's army," all which reinforced this inaccuracy (2009, p. 301). Other common errors were a lack of historical contextualization (especially when concerning antisemitism), referring to Jews as a "race" of people, and other factual and inferential inaccuracies

(Lindquist, 2009). These inaccuracies affect both the quality of education for students and may damage a teacher's confidence in teaching the Holocaust (Lindquist, 2009), or may inhibit the teaching of the Holocaust altogether. Furthermore, despite the Holocaust being mandated curricula for many teachers, many are largely unprepared to teach the Holocaust and find little guidance within their state or district (Eckmann et al., 2017; Frolick, 1992; Ressler & Chase, 2019).

Beyond the necessity of historical education, the Holocaust also falls under what many call moral education (Holroyd, 1995; Lindquist, 2011a). As pointed out by Father Peter Holroyd in his 1995 NAASP Bulletin article "Lest we forget: The importance of Holocaust education," the Holocaust is the paragon of moral apathy; by studying the Holocaust, one can learn the warning signs, or to become a more proactive, better informed, citizen. Holroyd (1995) explains the experiences about life learned from the Holocaust, about race and religious bigotry, as well as dangerous political rhetoric. Holroyd goes to state that the lesson to learn here is to avoid these pitfalls. David Lindquist (2011a) also postulated that Holocaust education is a moral duty for teachers to comply with, and that the topic of the Holocaust provides an example of human behavior to better teach students about lessons of morality. Lindquist (2011a) saw Holocaust education as being a "moral imperative" due to the fact that never before and never since has there been an event that encourages students to "wrestle with the concept of humanity's potential for inhumanity, an ultimate statement of moral culpability" (p. 27). However valiant these goals, without proper training, teachers may feel underprepared to bring moral education into their classrooms with regard to the Holocaust. Despite this, there is a general lack of research studies about teaching the Holocaust with elementary school students, both as a moral imperative and as a mandated curriculum topic. While there are many organizations and institutions that do not recommend Holocaust education for students in lower elementary school, we would argue that the inclusion of Holocaust education is a way to frontload complex societal issues, so to lead to a more robust understanding of the topic when it is included in middle and high school coursework.

A solution to the feeling of under-preparedness of teachers, we posit, is the use of historically accurate picture books, primary sources, and effective teaching strategies to use with them. Of course, the potential barrier to this is how teachers can choose accurate and appropriate picture books to enhance their teaching of the Holocaust. This requires teachers to

become familiar with books about the Holocaust, which can be overwhelming; we have vetted and provided such books and primary sources in this chapter. Children's literature about the Holocaust is often thought of as too graphic for many young students (Ingall, 2012). These books often cover themes of death, violence, starvation, and abuse and are not appropriate for younger students. However, after extensive research, we discovered many appropriate picture books regarding the Holocaust that do exist. Furthermore, by grouping Holocaust picture books into smaller text sets, organized by their intensity and proximity to the Holocaust, teachers are able to make responsible choices for their students. By being aware of the graphic details included, and the general content, teachers can make informed decisions.

Organizing Our Texts

Established by Eric Kimmel (1977), Holocaust literature for children is often categorized into five concentric circles. Kimmel clearly organizes Holocaust literature for juveniles into several similar groups, based on the intensity of setting, as well as the characters who are involved; more specifically, how the Jewish characters are centered in the text, if at all. Kimmel describes these circles as akin to Dante's Inferno, reaching deeper into hell itself. By being aware of these categories, teachers can have a historically accurate framework.

The first level, "resistance novels with passive Jews," features novels set in Nazi-occupied countries and details the stories of young non-Jewish people who are acting in opposition to the Nazi regime. Refusing to be bystanders, these characters take an active role in saving Jews; as a result, however, "the Jews in these novels are seldom major characters but rather helpless unfortunates…" (Kimmel, 1977, n.p.). This level of books often features messages of optimism and tell of young people struggling against the odds to come out victorious.

The second level of books, refugee picture books, shifts Jews into active positions. Often, biographical or based on true stories, refugee novels tell of families or individuals who must flee their homes. Kimmel (1977) notes that these books often include "sudden changing of roles; schoolchildren, teachers, doctors and housewives become soldiers, spies and saboteurs" (n.p.). The Jews in these books plan their own escapes, are faced with challenges to overcome, and then build a

new life at a new home—they often do not return to where they fled.

Moving further toward the center, level three books are occupation books, which include novels that tell of Jews hiding in occupied spaces. The Jews featured in these books are not actively involved in resisting Nazi control so much as they are focused on surviving. Sometimes, these novels are set right before the occupation, so to illustrate the gradual loss of rights that Jews experienced. Jews at this level are actively involved in their own survival, though they are often portrayed as scared and fleeing their homes, and popular themes include a character's will to survive in extreme situations.

The fourth level of Kimmel's model is Jewish resistance. Unlike level 1, this level features Jews in positions of action and power, despite finding themselves in dangerous situations. Characters featured at this level are often determined and take action despite their fear. These books often tell two stories: one of "tak[ing] up gun and grenade and physically fighti[ing] back. Anther – equally heroic – is to go on living with decency and hope…" (Kimmel, 1977, n.p.). Thus, stories may not feature actual fighting and may instead focus on individuals who find ways to resist and to help others. They may feature an underground organization or uprising or may be smaller efforts of individuals or families. In any form, however, to fall into this level, a book must feature resistance with active Jewish participants, who take their futures into their own hands, as opposed to waiting to be saved.

The final level of Kimmel's model "brings us to the bottom, to the eerie, silent world of gas, ashes, and flames" (1977, n.p.); stories set in the concentration camps. Kimmel (1977) writes that the "smoking chimneys of Birkenau are at the center with the lesser hells ringed around it in ascending order" (n.p.); he also states that these books are far and few between, as the topic of mass murder is not typically the topic of picture books, though we found this not to be true. However, as opposed to being set directly inside the concentration camps, these level 5 books skirt the camps, as opposed to being set directly inside the camps (Kimmel, 1977, n.p.).

We have imagined our books categorized similarly to Kimmel's model, but have turned the concentric circles to a side-view, and instead of reaching into the hells of concentration camps, we imagine our books reaching up and out. This framework allows students to be scaffolded

into more graphic details of the Holocaust, while still maintaining accuracy and integrity. The size of each step of the pyramid is not indicative of the number of books available which feature specific characters or plot lines, nor the quality of the books. Our step pyramid is in Fig. 12.1.

Using Kimmel's category description, our books are sorted in the diagram below. Each book listed is based on true stories, as well as contemporary. Books in levels 1, 2, 3, and 5 are based on real people (Table 12.1).

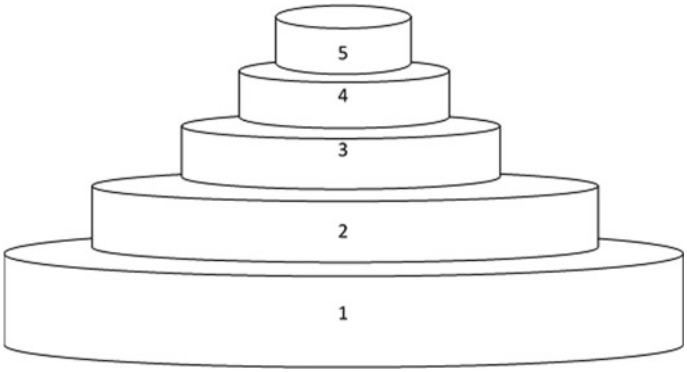

Fig. 12.1 Literacy step pyramid

Table 12.1 Modified levels

Level 1	*Level 2*	*Level 3*	*Level 4*	*Level 5*
Resistance (Passive Jews) • *Benno and the Night of Broken Glass* • *Whispering Town* • *Jars of Hope*	Refugee • *The Journey that Saved Curious George*	Occupation • *The Cat Who Lived with Anne Frank*	Jewish Resistance • *The Cats of Krasinski Square*	Concentration Camps • *Luba: The Angel of Bergen-Belsen*

How to Teach

In teaching about the Holocaust, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) states 10 guidelines that act as guiding principles for many authors and researchers of Holocaust education. These guidelines are as follows: define the term "Holocaust," do not teach or imply that the Holocaust was inevitable, avoid simple answers to complex questions, strive for precision of language, strive for balance in establishing whose perspective informs your study of the Holocaust, avoid comparisons of pain, do not romanticize history, contextualize the history, translate statistics into people, and make responsible methodological choices (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2019). Each guideline aligns with our beliefs of Holocaust education and guided our selection process and organization of selected picture books. For example, the inclusion of *Benno and the Night of Broken Class*, seen below, aligns with the guideline of contextualizing history, with the event which marked the beginning of the Holocaust. The proposed books and the following activities comply with the USHMM's standards for Holocaust education.

Launching the Holocaust Study

As a way to begin a literature unit of study about the Holocaust, we recommend first situating students into the historical background of the Holocaust, so that they can understand events in context. For example, *Benno and the Night of Broken Glass* (Wiviott & Bisaillon, 2010), a book told from the viewpoint of a stray cat, illustrates the event that many consider to be the beginning of the explicit violence of the Holocaust—Kristallnacht, or the Night of Broken Glass. During this event, under command from officials, gangs of ordinary citizens, true believers, and youth destroyed Jewish-owned stores, synagogues, and homes, all while leaving non-Jewish property intact. Detailing the loss of normalcy for all involved, Benno, a frightened cat, observes the world around him change, as the Holocaust had truly begun. By using this picture book, teachers can encourage students to consider the political climate of Germany in World War II, and the factors that created an environment that allowed for events like Kristallnacht or the Holocaust to happen (Fig. 12.2).

The benefits of building background knowledge are well documented (Anderson, 1977; Coppola, 2014; Ferris & Fuhler, 1994; Glaser & Strauss, 1967), and we recommend using *Benno and the Night of Broken*

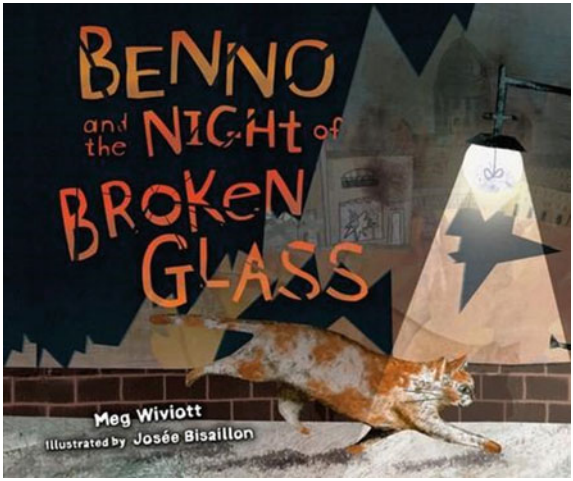

Fig. 12.2 *Benno and the Night of Broken Glass* (book cover) (Cover of the book "Benno and the Night of Broken Glass" by Meg Wiviott, illustrated by Josee Bissaillon (c) 2010 appears with the permission of Kar-Ben Publishing, www.karben.com)

Glass not only to build background knowledge, but also to invite learners to examine the events that preceded the Holocaust as a way to begin considering the following question:

1. What was happening or had happened at this time in Germany that allowed for events like Kristallnacht to happen?
2. Why did non-Jews not help their Jewish neighbors during and after Kristallnacht?
3. Why did the Jews not run away or hide during or after Kristallnacht?
4. Why did the attitudes and perspectives of Jews and non-Jews seem to change after Kristallnacht? How might this foreshadow the events of the Holocaust?

These questions will help students begin to consider the Holocaust as not just a single event, but one that also had situational and contextual factors. Only by understanding events like Kristallnacht can students begin to create meaning and understanding of the Holocaust. After

reading *Benno and the Night of Broken Glass*, teachers and students can then examine the roles that victims, perpetrators, and bystanders (or ordinary citizens) played during the Holocaust. To borrow the terminology from the USHMM, a victim is, simply put, those who the Nazis hurt. This could include Poles, the LGTBQ+ community, Roma, and the different abled, but our chapter will focus specifically on the Jews, which the Nazi party focused much of their attention and hatred toward, a perpetrator could be members of the SS, a guard in the Nazi regime, another high ranking Nazi officer, or even Adolf Hitler himself; however, a perpetrator could also be scientists within the concentration camps, citizens who turned in their neighbors, or a variety of other acts that aided the Nazi regime, and a bystander, which is "a catch-all term" that refers to ordinary citizens who, while responding to various pressures, fears, and motivations, might have actively supported or passively allowed events to happen.

Level 1 Resistance (Passive Jews)

Level 1 focuses on passive Jews resisting arrest during the Holocaust. It should be emphasized to students that six million Jews were killed during the Holocaust, although a handful of Europeans silently helped many escape. The two books in this text set collection highlight people who assisted with their escape. In addition to the two picture books is an article titled "Rescue in Denmark" from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

The two picture books in Level 1 are based on real accounts of those who helped hide and smuggle Jews to safety. These were very heroic but dangerous deeds for those Europeans since being caught helping Jews meant prison and/or death. These books tell true stories of those who risked their lives in order to help Jews escape.

In *Jars of Hope: How One Woman Helped to Save 2,500 Children During the Holocaust* (Roy & Owenson, 2016), Irena Sendler, who was not Jewish, smuggled 2,500 Jewish children out of the Warsaw Ghetto in Poland to families and orphanages. In order to set the mood of the picture book biography there are murky illustrations for this difficult yet hopeful story. The aftermath offers more information that adds to the authenticity to the narrative. In addition to the story, there are an index, glossary (that includes terms such as Ghetto, Nazi, and Gestapo), and source notes that support the text.

After reading this book, lead a discussion about its content so you can make sure students understand the events that took place. You might want to draw a timeline on the board because key dates are included in the story. Following the discussion, some suggested questions are listed below:

- Why was it so important for Irena to separate children from their parents and smuggle them out of the Ghetto?
- Why do you believe Irena did not consider herself a heroine?
- Have you ever had to keep a secret? How difficult is it to not divulge information that would lead people to know your secret? Think about the consequences Irena had to endure in order to save lives of children and adults.

The next book in the text set is *The Whispering Town* (Elvgreen & Santomauro, 2014). It is set in a fishing village in Denmark where Danes were able to smuggle 1,700 Jews into safety in Sweden. The book tells the story of one family that hid Jews and assembled a plan for other villagers to guide them—using whispering cues on a moonless night—to the harbor where a boat waited to take them to Sweden. The illustrations are outlined with thick black lines accentuating the seriousness of the story. After discussing this simplistic historical narrative, provide the following guided questions (Fig. 12.3):

- What risky words did Anett say to people in the community when running errands?
- Would publicly telling people that her family was hiding "friends" have been an option in *Jars of Hope*? Why or why not?

Share a map of Europe with the class and point out how close Denmark is to Sweden. Although Denmark was occupied by the Germans, Sweden was a neutral country. Then, embark upon a discussion that Denmark was the only country occupied by Germans that overtly resisted Nazi forces and attempted to smuggle Jewish citizens to safety. The link below, "Rescue in Denmark" from the United States Holocaust Museum, is about the Danes rescuing the Jews, https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/rescue-in-denmark. It has a brief student-friendly overview of the Danes' efforts to transport 7,500 Danish Jews to safety.

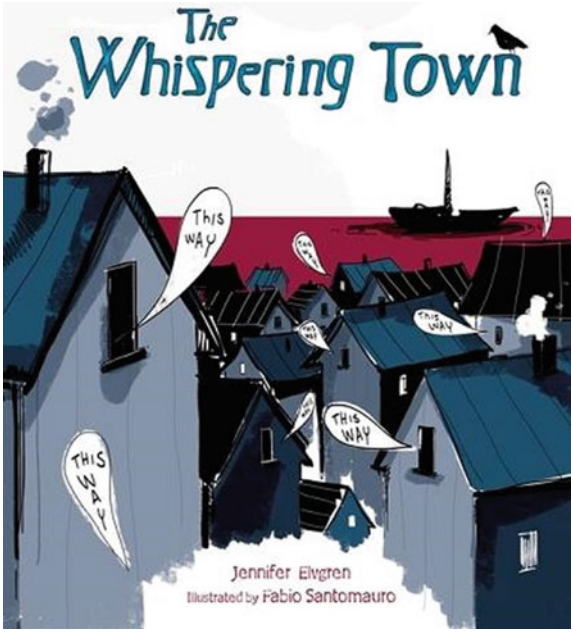

Fig. 12.3 *The Whispering Town* (book cover) (Cover of the book "The Whispering Town" by Jennifer Elvgren, illustrated by Fabio Santomauro, (c) 2014 appears with the permission of Kar-Ben Publishing, www.karben.com)

After reading the article, have students discuss why it was easier to smuggle Jews out of Denmark compared to other countries? It should be emphasized that the Danes worked together to smuggle them to safety. Have students compare the smuggling operations from "Rescue in Denmark," *Jars of Hope* (Roy & Owenson, 2016), and *The Whispering Town* (Elvgreen & Santomauro, 2014).

Level 2: Refugees Escaping

This level focuses on books that detail the Jews' dangerous escapes from the Nazis—escapes that can be described as akin to miraculous. *Hedy's Journey: The True Story of a Hungarian Girl Fleeing the Holocaust* (Bisson & Ramon, 2017) and *The Journey That Saved Curious George: The True Wartime Escape* of Margret and H. A. Rey (Borden & Drummond, 2010)

tell accounts about how Hedy and the Reys escaped during the Holocaust. Hedy is a young girl who bravely travels alone across Nazi-occupied countries, from Budapest to Lisbon, to be united with her family before they depart for New York. In *The Journey That Saved Curious George* (Borden & Drummond, 2010), the story is told about Margret and H. A. Rey's narrow escape from occupied Paris on bicycles to a coastal town in France and continuing with their boarding ships headed to Rio de Janeiro and finally New York. An interesting part of the famous Reys escape depicts H. A. Rey quickly getting a few necessary items to carry on his bicycle in Paris, including artwork that would later become the beginnings of the Curious George books. Rey published his first Curious George book one year after he arrived in America in 1941.

Book Discussion and Activity for Level 2

After reading and discussing the picture books have students reflect about each book separately and then respond to the guided questions below for both books. Be sure when you share the books to include a discussion of the back matter that includes letters, maps, and a timeline. Below are guided questions to pose after reading and discussing both books.

- Describe the emotional and physical journeys to freedom in each book. How were they the same? How were they different? Refer to the maps in each book for guidance.

Activity: Packing for the Escapes

- Think about Hedy and the Rey's life threatening journeys to freedom and what they might have carried with them. What would you bring if you had to leave home quickly probably never to return? Remember, this will be a dangerous journey, and you will need to be self-sufficient. Make a list of what you would need to bring and what you would want to bring. Be prepared to explain your reasoning for each item. Remember that you will be in charge of carrying your own belongings in a backpack and/or small suitcase. You can pretend that your parents will travel with you but will not be in charge of carrying what you decide to bring.

Once students have responded to the guided probe have them share their lists with partners. Ask them to compare lists and perhaps add or take away items if they want. Encourage students to explain why they have chosen each item. Then, lead a whole group discussion about what to bring on their journey. List the items on the board. Think about the choices they make. What types of choices do you believe Hedy and the Reys had? Think about the details in both books. Are there any clues as to what they might have brought?

After studying both books, have students recount the different escapes. Encourage a discussion about how important refugees are. Just think: We might not have the Curious George books were it not for America accepting the Reys as refugees.

Level 3: Occupation

This level describes when the Jews had to escape and move to another area in their country. Most of them lived in crowded and challenging conditions, such as the attic where Anne Frank's family hid, or farms and other rural places if they were fortunate enough to be transported there. The text set for this level is, *The Cat Who Lived with Anne Frank* (Miller et al., 2019) (Fig. 12.4).

Miller and Rubin's account of Anne Frank is through the perspective of a cat named Mouschi. Through the cat's travels, readers see life in the attic where Anne is in hiding and also beyond, in Nazi-occupied Amsterdam. Glossy illustrations portray the cramped conditions in the attic as well as the terror and fear that filled the streets of the city. The story is supported with quotes from Anne's diary, which adds life to this biographical account. The afterword offers more information about Anne and her tragic death in the concentration camp.

It is important to reread the story and pause and discuss the quotes on each page from Anne Frank's diary. For example, the conditions while living in the attic could be discussed with the quote, "Mouschi (the cat) has now proved, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that having a cat has disadvantages as well as advantages. The whole house is crawling with fleas!" This must have made life miserable because there was probably very little they could do to get rid of the fleas. There were other conditions expressed in the book that can provide students with examples of the suffering Anne and the other seven Jews experienced while hiding.

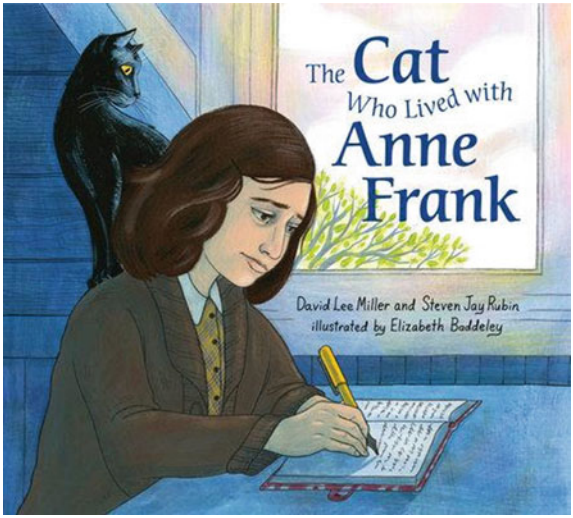

Fig. 12.4 *The Cat who Lived with Anne Frank* (book cover) (Used with permission from Penguin Random House LLC)

This culminating assignment for Level 3 has students create a journal or diary entry that would be a message of hope to others. For ideas, students can use or modify the quotes from Anne Frank's diary from the picture book. The more difficult quotes can be turned into hopeful ones, just as like Anne wrote them in her journal—such as her hopeful quote: "I still believe, in spite of everything, that people are truly good at heart." Students' entries should include examples in order to add specificity to their work, e.g., a student could mention that a classmate let them use their pencil or shared their snack as an act of kindness. This type of character trait could lead students to think about being a kinder and more giving person like the people who hid Jews.

Students can use a web-type graphic organizer to brainstorm their ideas for their entries. They can work in pairs, conference with the teacher, and review the book if that will help them accomplish this assignment. After students have completed their entries, they can share them with the class. In addition to students empathizing with Anne, this activity should encourage a more hopeful and positive learning environment.

Level 4: Jewish Resistance

Level 4 describes the unimaginable battle the Jews experienced while resisting the Nazis during the Holocaust. After extensive research, *The Cats in Krasinski Square* (Hesse & Watson, 2004) was the only picture book we found that addressed Level 4 for elementary level students. The story takes place in Warsaw, Poland, and is based on the true story of a young girl's role in outwitting the Nazis' attempts to arrest people who were trying to smuggle food into the Warsaw Ghetto. This was accomplished by deterring the Nazis and their dogs from identifying smugglers by releasing cats into the train station. In the back matter, Hesse and Watson (2004) discussed her research about the story and how the Jews fought back even though it was a hopeless battle (Fig. 12.5).

Strategies

After reading the story and reviewing the afterword, write the word "ghetto" on the board and have students brainstorm its meaning. A ghetto during the Holocaust was different from one in America today

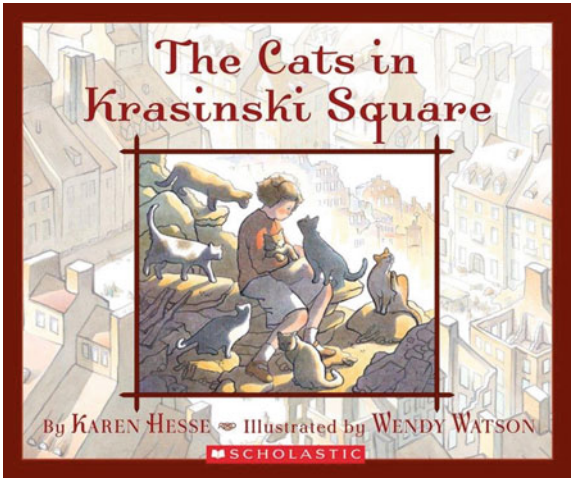

Fig. 12.5 *The Cats in Krasinski Square* (book cover) (Used with permission from Scholastic)

although there are slight similarities. They were under deadly circumstances; Jews were forced into restricted areas away from non-Jews. In Europe, there were more than 1,000 ghettos during the Holocaust and three types, according to the USHMM website: https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/types-of-ghettos.

- Open ghettos that had travel restrictions (without barriers).
- Ghettos closed by walls, or by fences with barbed wire.
- Destruction ghettos where Jews were tightly restrained for six to eight weeks while waiting to be either deported—or shot.

This website has helpful information along with a short video of Jews moving into the Krakow Ghetto, which was also in Poland. The Warsaw Ghetto was the largest of all ghettos in German-occupied territories. Deportation of Jews to death camps "started at the rate of 2,000, then 10,000, then 20,000 per day" (Hesse & Watson, 2004). We categorize the Warsaw Ghetto as a closed ghetto, due to the fact that is was enclosed with walls and barbed wire.

After discussion about the Warsaw Ghetto, ask students if they could think of creative ways to get food and supplies to the Jews, like how the characters in the book used baskets and cats. Then, discuss ways students could combine their efforts to help others, as in the story. Discuss local shelters and food distribution centers and brainstorm creative ways of donating needed items to them. Then, collect items as a class and later donate them to a local shelter or rescue center.

Level 5: Concentration Camps

Luba: The Angel of Bergen-Belsen is an autobiographical account told by Michelle McCann (2003). Luba Tryszynaka-Frederick was a Jewish prisoner at the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp where she rescued 54 Dutch Jewish children who were left outside in the winter weather to freeze to death. She was able to keep all but two of the children alive for months until British soldiers liberated the survivors in 1945 (Fig. 12.6).

Before reading the story, start with reviewing the front and back matters. The beginning pages have an author's note, list of the 54 children's names, and prologue. The back matter has an epilogue,

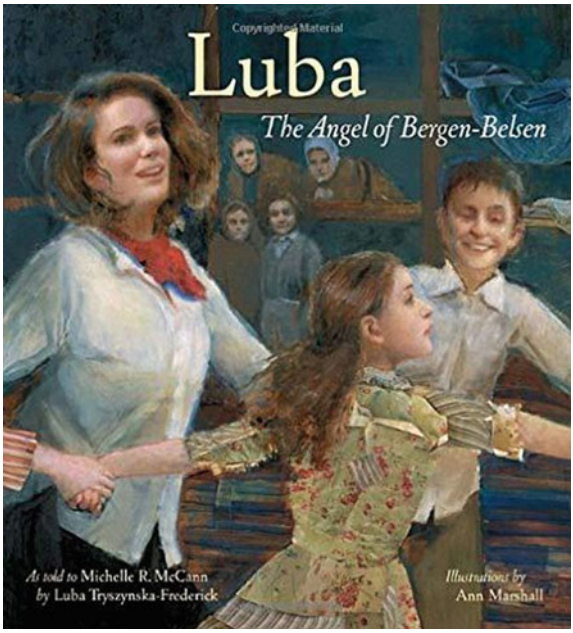

Fig. 12.6 *Luba: The Angel of Bergen-Belsen* (book cover) (Used with permission from Penguin Random House LLC)

photographs, map of Europe, and bibliography. This information complements the picture book in order to create a text set.

After reading the book aloud and having a discussion, have students look at the photograph of the children in the concentration camp. Have them describe what they see. Ask them how old each child might be. Students should note that there is a barbed wire fence in front of them. Have them observe and discuss other details in the photograph such as facial expressions. What do you think these children would want to do after they are liberated? What would students want to do after being liberated from a situation like this?

There are two quotes by Luba on the front and back end pages in the book. Read the first one and have a conversation about what it means to be a hero. Do you believe she was a hero and why? List reasons to support your statements.

Ask students if there are other heroes or heroines about whom we have studied in the previously read books. Why were they heroes? Record students' responses about who is a hero in the stories that have been shared in the other levels. Then have them list characteristics of being a hero both from the books and in their lives. Ask if they have those characteristics. At the close of this discussion ask students what they can do to be a hero?

Closing Activity

The events that occurred during the Holocaust are inhumane and wicked. In this closing activity, students will use the "Inhumane Meter" taxonomy as a tool to document the events during the Holocaust. This activity is a way for students to actively review what they have learned; it also asks students to make connections among the books and events. Students will support their findings from the books and what they have learned during their studies. The meter is divided into eight hierarchical levels. Level 1 would represent the beginning of the Holocaust and Level 8 is death. Students will need to include why their person or event represents each level and confirm this by listing evidence from texts (see figure below). One way to incorporate this strategy is to have students work in small groups, review books, and complete a "Inhumane Meter." Next, have them share their levels and evidence with the class and explain why they determined their answers (Table 12.2).

Most people who were not Jews did not intervene to stop Hitler and the Nazis from persecuting, arresting, and killing Jews. Those people were called bystanders. Students need to think about when they have watched another person being mistreated and have not stepped in to help that person. This is where hate begins to penetrate our families, friends, classrooms, communities, and the world.

Conclusion

In considering this chapter, the delicate balance between moral and curriculum mandated education versus protection of children was paramount. However, the point stands that the Holocaust is a topic which can and should be taught at the elementary school level, in a way that is appropriate, accurate, and approachable. By using the recommended texts above, as well as other recommended texts (see Appendix), we believe

Table 12.2 Inhumane meter

	Inhumane meter taxonomy	*Text(s)*	*Support*
Level 8	Death		
Level 7	Jews are sent to ghettos and concentration camps		
Level 6	Jews flee their countries for safety		
Level 5	Jewish families are separated		
Level 4	Jews go into hiding in their communities		
Level 3	Jews are arrested		
Level 2	Destruction of personal belongings, synagogues, and businesses		
Level 1	Non Jewish people are no longer friendly to Jews	*Benno and the Night of Broken Glass*	No one would speak to Inge at school

that elementary teachers can teach about the Holocaust successfully and create an environment where the Holocaust can be examined and learned from without inspiring fear. Broaching the topic of the Holocaust can be uncomfortable and daunting, but as the old adage states, we should never forget the Holocaust, nor the lessons learned. It is vital that teachers of all children must do this difficult work, and that researchers continue to consider this topic and better guide educators in making curriculum choices. The selected picture books and texts in this chapter will allow students to examine the Holocaust in a way that is developmentally appropriate, while maintaining accuracy.

Acknowledgement We would like to thank Scholastic Publishing, Kar-Ben Publishing, Creative Publishing, and Penguin Random House Publishing to allowing the use of their cover art images in this chapter.

Appendix 1: Additional Texts

While seeking out quality picture books, there were picture books that we were unable to include in this chapter, yet have great value to teachers

and students. We would recommend some of these texts as suggested readings to further enhance Holocaust education units in the elementary school classroom. Books in the "unleveled" category did not neatly fit in to any leveled category, but are still useful teaching tools. Some of the "unleveled" texts can be used to build background knowledge, some draw comparisons to the Holocaust using ideas or people that students may already be familiar with, and still others speak to how the Holocaust is remembered after it ended.

Level	*Picture book title*
Level 1	Polacco, P. (2000). *The butterfly*. New York, NY: Puffin Books
Level 2	Yolen, J., & Greene, K. M. (2015). *Stone angel*. New York, NY: Philomel Books
	Zee, R. V., & Innocenti, R. (2003). *Erika's story*. Mankato, MN: Creative Paperbacks
Level 3	Russo, M. (2011). *I will come back for you: A family in hiding during World War II*. New York, NY: Schwartz & Wade
	Vegara, M. I. S., & Dorosheva, S. (2019). *Little people, big dreams: Anne Frank*. Minneapolis, MN: Frances Lincoln Children's Books
Level 5	Lehman-Wilzig, T., & Orback, C. (2004). *Keeping the promise: A Torah's journey*. Minneapolis, MN: Kar-Ben
	Johnston, T. & Mazellan, R. (2008). *The Harmonica*. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge
Unleveled	Bunting, E., & Gammell, S. (1989). *Terrible things: An allegory of the Holocaust*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press
	Churnin, N., & Nayberg, Y. (2019). *Martin & Anne: The kindred spirits of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Anne Frank*. Berkeley, CA: Creston Books
	Gottesfeld, J., & McCarty, P. (2016). *The tree in the courtyard: Looking through Anne Frank's window*. New York, NY: Knopf Books for Young Readers
	Innocenti, R., & Gallaz, C. (1985). *Rose Blanche*. Mankato, MN: Creative Paperbacks
	Littlesugar, A., & Low, W. (2006). *Max and Willy: A Holocaust story*. New York, NY: Philomel
	Zee, R. V., Sneider, M., & Farnsworth, B. (2007). *Eli remembers*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Books for Young Readers

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United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. (2019). *Guidelines for teaching about the Holocaust*. Retrieved from https://www.ushmm.org/teach/fundamentals/guidelines-for-teaching-the-holocaust

Children's Literature

Bisson, M., & Ramon, E. P. (2017). *Hedy's journey: The true story of a Hungarian girl fleeing the Holocaust*. Capstone Press.

Borden, L. W., & Drummond, A. (2010). *The journey that saved Curious George: The true wartime escape of Margret and H. A. Rey*. Boston, MA: HMH Books for Young Readers.

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CHAPTER 13

Going Forward

Jeffrey Parker and Anthony Pellegrino

Undeniably, educators that engage deeply with teaching and learning about the Holocaust think about it as a unique topic in their classes, one that holds power and potential, yet requires great care and thought. In navigating the entanglement of considerations required to teach about the Holocaust well, many often elevate it out of its historical context into an almost sacred status, treating it with such awe that they abandon their disciplinary lenses in favor of an approach that places tremendous weight for both them and students. In some cases, the Holocaust is held in such reverence or thought of as so complicated and meaningful that teachers choose to avoid addressing it in their classes. Mostly though, the Holocaust is integrated into instruction, not because of special reverence, but simply because it's part of the curricular canon. So, many teachers simply appeal to the middle, choosing to acknowledge the Holocaust for a portion of a period in a world history class while teaching about

J. Parker (✉)
Levine Institute for Holocaust Education, Washington, DC, USA
e-mail: jtparker@ushmm.org

A. Pellegrino
St. Augustine, FL, USA
e-mail: apelleg2@utk.edu

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World War II; or having the students read *The Diary of Anne Frank*, but relying on rhetorical analysis while glossing over the historical context. In our minds, these approaches fall short of the power and potential Holocaust education can offer. Therefore, we wanted to work with a variety of experts involved in Holocaust education to help us consider how we can appropriately honor this history while taking lessons from it inform who we are today.

This book was first conceived of as a result of a conversation about the place of Holocaust education in the curriculum, how young teachers were being prepared, and what can we reasonably expect Holocaust education to do. We came at it from two distinct perspectives: a former classroom ELA teacher and a history methods professor. The questions we asked about preparation and practice were similar, but the lenses we examined them through were quite different.

We realized that despite the best efforts of educators, ourselves, and those with whom we have worked, the ways that Holocaust education had grown in response to a wide variety of contexts, the ways that the Holocaust itself has become politicized, and Holocaust education lay at a crossroads. What initially began, almost 50 years ago, with a few teachers who felt compelled to address this history in detail has grown into a topic which is required in a growing number of states as education mandates and is the focus of myriad professional development opportunities. We have now moved beyond initial debates of whether the Holocaust should explicitly be taught; students should interact with this history and there is enormous potential for learning about the best and worst of humanity, as well as having students confront moral and ethical challenges. The rationales that teachers first identified—the Holocaust was "a watershed moment in history" or students should "think about the use and abuse of power"—have changed into rationales which identify empathy and activism as of increasing importance. These are material transitions that we must acknowledge clearly in order to leverage effectively in classrooms.

While the ability to bring survivors or other primary witnesses into classes is rapidly fading, more resources are being discovered and developed that will help support Holocaust education. These include the potential of virtual survivor interaction, which is an opportunity that is just beginning to emerge. Other histories of genocide and social justice compete for similar places in the curriculum as examples of hard histories. In this volume, for example, Dr. Mitchell Patterson refers to the "oppression olympics" and calls for teachers to avoid this damaging competition.

Teachers must contend with distance learning models, underfunded schools, and models of education which are hampered by standardized testing and broad mandates. Students from diverse backgrounds, engaged with social media, realistic gaming, and a world of polarization find it more difficult to find relevance in an event that occurred more than 80 years ago. Yet, antisemitism is on the rise, white nationalism is gaining power in pockets across the nation, and conspiracy theories such as those coming from QAnon ask people to question the very basis of truth. In that context, the approaches for what Holocaust education can provide is immense, but the bell placed around the neck of Holocaust education is a weighty one: to make students more empathetic, understand the fragility of democracy, see the relevance in the world around them, and become upstanders.

Throughout this volume, the various authors have examined questions of relevance and approaches to the teaching and hopefully, surfaced important questions while providing some guidance about what Holocaust education can look like in our current context. We would like to close this book by making an argument for Holocaust education, not because of what it can teach students about the world and human behavior, but because of what a study of the Holocaust can teach us about the nature of education. To us, this focus helps us think about moving forward, asking "where do we go from here?" The scholars in this volume have outlined broad perspectives and articulated specific practices in Holocaust education that attend to the complexities of this history. But becoming oriented to these approaches requires us to continue thinking about questions that drive us to be better educators. Based on what these chapters have offered us, we look to some of those questions below.

What Does It Mean to Teach About the Holocaust?

Since its inception, there have been two major perspectives with respect to teaching the Holocaust: those that favored teaching about the Holocaust as a unique event which could only be understood in a specific context and those that believed that the Holocaust could be taught as a difficult history in order to illustrate important lessons about humanity and human behavior. Along with the tensions these perspectives created was a separate debate concerning whether the primary focus of this debate lay in the practice of education with disciplinary aims (e.g., viewing the Holocaust as a "tool" that illustrates conceptual knowledge) or wanting students

to understand the meaning of the Holocaust (e.g., that students should become more empathic, moved to activism, or reflect deeply on ethical questions from studying the Holocaust). These are not dichotomies though; most teachers see value in both.

At its heart, teaching about the Holocaust is teaching about the human condition. People are active and have complex reasons for doing things. Pressures, motivations, and fears—some evergreen, some context specific—inform our actions. Nevertheless, there are layers of interpretation that exist between what historians know and come to understand, how that is synthesized by the public, and what is distilled into lessons for the classroom. If the average high school student or young adult is asked "What have you learned about the Holocaust?" the following narrative will likely emerge: *Hitler and the Nazis were responsible for the Holocaust. They rounded up all the Jews and tried to kill them in gas chambers, like Auschwitz, in Germany. People in Germany were Nazis and hated the Jews, but didn't know much about what was happening and the Jews didn't fight back. When the Americans entered the war, they liberated the people in the camps, Hitler was defeated, and everything good triumphed*. If pressed, Anne Frank, Oskar Schindler, or *Boy in the Striped Pajamas* may emerge as anchors as well.

From a factual standpoint, there are definitely misunderstandings with which teachers must contend. Popular culture has elevated the Holocaust to a status that removes proper historical context and renders it almost monocausal. The resulting problem lies in the linear, easily digestible story that while horrible in its implications is manageable. This story allows us to think of the Holocaust as an aberration and something that happened to those people, over there, way back when. It can be broken down into key events in which people fell into discrete categories: perpetrators, victims, witnesses, bystanders, resisters, and rescuers took part. These, of course, contain some truth, but are dangerously devoid of agency. The reality is much messier and more challenging to grapple with. And, like most of history, this is where the opportunity lies.

For students, we want them to know that choice was possible and there were a wider range of choices and responses than previously considered. We examine the choices that people made to help to reinforce the idea that choice was possible, but that it also presents a challenge because we know that so few people actually made those choices. It reframes the existing, simple narrative that people were brainwashed, forced by others, acted only on fear, and self-interest, and would have been killed if they

didn't go along. From this, students are prompted to consider the past in a historically empathic way and—often implicitly—think about what is happening around them and in the world.

Knowing that many teachers do not have a deep background in Holocaust education and may not have more than a day or two to cover this in class, what does this mean for curriculum and instruction? First, explore the people and the narratives behind the statistics. Many individuals actively participated in the stigmatization, isolation, impoverishment, and violence culminating in the mass murder of six million European Jews. Many others supported the perpetrators from the sidelines, tolerated their actions, or benefited from them. Still others disapproved of what they witnessed, sometimes silently, sometimes by publicly speaking out, and sometimes by helping the victims, in lesser or greater ways. Choose photos, testimonies, and documents that examine the stories of individuals and look at the community level, asking "how did communities break down or support their neighbors?".

Second, strive for balance in establishing the perspective which informs a study of the Holocaust. Most documentation (e.g., photos, film, memos, written policies) about the Holocaust comes from the perspective of the perpetrators. Additionally, many of the graphic photos show victims in manners which do not represent them fully nor do they depict them in ways they would likely want to be remembered. So, how should those considerations play into a teacher's preparation, planning, and delivery? In contrast, survivor testimonies and collections humanize individuals in the richness and fullness of their lives. These raise a host of questions about the active and passive roles of ordinary people in all walks of life.

Next, choose words carefully and focus on precise language. Words that categorize human behavior often have multiple meanings. The term "bystander," for many people, carries the connotation of passivity. Even the term "witness," while more active, is broad in scope; a person may have witnessed Jews being led out of town or witnessed Jews shot by local police. Neither tells us much about the relationship that existed—either could have been a close neighbor or Nazi official. By focusing on more precise language—which is informed by what we can hear or see—such as a "helpful classmate," "opportunistic neighbor," or "sympathetic policeman," we steer students away from the temptation to generalize and distort facts in order to make some broader point.

Along with this, aim to avoid stereotypical descriptions. Though all Jews were targeted for destruction by the Nazis, the experiences of all

Jews were not the same. Likewise, all Germans cannot be characterized as Nazis, nor should any nationality be reduced to a singular or one-dimensional description. Remind your students that, although members of a group may share common experiences and beliefs, generalizations about them without benefit of modifying or qualifying terms (e.g., "sometimes," "usually," "in many cases but not all") tend to stereotype group behavior and distort historical reality.

Finally, contextualize the history. Events of the Holocaust, and particularly how individuals and organizations behaved at that time, should be placed in historical context. The Holocaust should be studied in the context of European history as a whole to give students a perspective on the precedents and circumstances that may have contributed to it. Only then can students truly apply the critical thinking skills we want to foster and begin to create more meaningful understanding from the myriad of facts that are presented.

The Holocaust was, by many accounts, the most documented event in history. The sheer amount of primary documentation (photos, videos, diaries, memoranda, orders, physical objects, recordings, and so forth) is immense. As a result, the Holocaust uniquely positioned as a "hard history" to allow a critical examination from multiple points of view: perpetrator legislation and memos, victim diaries, survivor testimony, witness photographs, and myriad other perspectives. While other hard histories, such as slavery, the civil rights movement, or the Rwandan Genocide might have authentic documentation as well, the volume of collected and curated resources related to the Holocaust, which can be critically analyzed is unparalleled. Therefore, by confronting difficult knowledge and hard histories through the Holocaust and engaging students with documents that examine concepts, such as racial antisemitism, students can be more prepared to address other histories. To that end, given the opportunity to examine the many and varied resources, interpret that evidence mindful of context, and recognize the agency of the people who were affected, Holocaust education can act as a bridge to deeper learning unlike any other topic.

As the events of the Holocaust recede further into the past and there are fewer and fewer primary witnesses still alive to bear witness to the horrors of the Holocaust, it becomes imperative that educators bring to bear best practices that will allow students to examine the history of the Holocaust in ways that are relevant to their lives. Ask them to grapple with questions that do not have easy answers. Present opportunities to

confront difficult knowledge with historical thinking. Paradoxically, it is by examining the history of the Holocaust through rigorous disciplinary lenses and seeing it within the context of history that it can retain its uniqueness as the big questions of history and human behavior become meaningful and have authentic touchstones.

The opinions of the authors belong to those individuals and do not reflect the views of the institutions with which they currently are or have been affiliated.

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