

Jeffrey Glanz

Why Studying and Teaching About the Holocaust Is a Moral Imperative— Philosophical Questions and Methodological Approaches

During the summer of 1999, I set out on a journey to Israel to continue my studies on the Holocaust and Holocaust education as well as to conduct research at Yad Vashem (Israel's memorial to the Holocaust). A couple of weeks before I began my journey, I attended a wedding of a close friend; as I sat at a table and conversed with some friends, the conversation inevitably turned to our respective summer plans. "What are you doing this summer, Jeff?" queried one friend. "Oh, I am going to Israel to study at The International School for Holocaust Studies," I replied. This friend then posed another question seemingly so simplistic, yet I did not or could not immediately respond. Bewildered about my excursion, he asked, "What more could be said or studied about the Holocaust? What more is there to learn?" I smiled sheepishly, hesitated, and changed the topic abruptly.

As I traveled on El Al Airlines headed for my seminar in Israel, my friend's innocuous query haunted me. Moreover, my reticence in responding forthrightly was troubling. "Why was I spending five weeks of my summer

vacation without my family studying the Holocaust—a historical event that has been scrutinized and analyzed more than almost any other topic of its kind? What more could be said? What could I contribute to the vast literature of Holocaust scholarship? What more could I learn about Holocaust education? Indeed, why was I spending the better part of the summer in a monastic-type existence?"

Actually, I stayed in a hotel room for the duration of my seminar attending classes five days a week from ten to twelve hours a day, listening to and learning from some of the most prominent Holocaust scholars in the world. On selected evenings and Fridays I spent many hours conducting my personal research on clandestine schooling among Jews during the Holocaust. My time in Israel was both intellectually stimulating and emotionally draining. I had much time to contemplate my friend's troubling question.

Why Did I Go?

For the past few years, I have tried to apply whatever expertise I have developed to

teach the Holocaust to teachers. I hope that these teachers can and will inspire and teach others about this period in world and Jewish history and, perhaps, relate the Holocaust to the universality of human suffering and oppression. Teaching and writing about the Holocaust is a moral and personal imperative. It is my way of honoring my father and those others, living and dead, whose lives were forever defined by this event. (Now why didn't I at least say that to my curious associate at the wedding dinner?)

More fundamentally, I think we are obligated to adhere to the Biblical injunction of Zachor—to remember. One of the 613 commandments that observant Jews follow is stated in Deuteronomy 25:17-19: "Remember what Amalek did unto you on the way, as you came out of Egypt Do not forget it." The eminent scholar, Rabbi Chaim Soloveichik of Brisk teaches that this commandment not only applies to the nation of Amalek, which cannot be definitely identified today with a group of people, but it applies equally to any nation that follows in Amalek's footsteps. Nazi cruelty and oppression against Jews certainly qualify as an Amalek-like injunction thus invoking the admonition to "remember." Parenthetically, the injunction to "remember" is stronger than just merely to "not forget." This is true in the sense that the former implies a requirement to act, not merely to recall. Those who remember are involved in activities (e.g., attending commemorations, establishing memorials, writing articles/books, making movies, providing oral testimonies, teaching, and so forth) that serve as constant reminders of the tragic events of the Nazi era. Although the Holocaust is now a central part of American life, it was not always so and no guarantees can be proffered that ensures future interest (Novick, 1999). Remaining vigilant and arousing awareness of the Holocaust are all the more necessary. Public outrage and revulsion at the Holocaust are potent weapons in preventing its recurrence. I believe that NATO's reaction to events in Kosovo were possible and ultimately successful because we "remembered" Remembering is thus our collective moral imperative.

On a personal note, I am a second-generation child of a Holocaust survivor. I also consider myself a survivor of sorts, even

though no one can truly comprehend what real survivors underwent. I consider myself a survivor because I was dramatically affected by the Holocaust via my father's experiences. In fact, I only recently have concluded that the Holocaust has been the defining feature of my life. Late last year, I decided to retrace my father's early life and learn more about the Holocaust by traveling to Europe, where the Holocaust began (my father passed away at age 84 two years before my journey to the camps). I prepared to set out on a journey that would take me to five major cities in three countries visiting five former ghettos, one concentration camp, one labor camp, six death camps, and one villa where the bureaucratic arrangements for the murder of 11 million Jews were made over lunch. I researched the dates, places, and events. I arranged my own self-guided tour, based upon my studies. I was on the road and on my own for two and a half weeks where it all happened.

Why did I go?

I didn't go only because I am a Jew—although that would have sufficed.

I didn't go only because I am the Associate Director of the Holocaust Resource Center at Kean University—although that would have sufficed.

I didn't go only because I teach a course entitled "Teaching the Holocaust"—although I will probably be a better teacher for having gone.

I went to understand more fully and confront certain issues that arose as I was growing up. My father would have been happy and proud that I cared enough about him to learn more about his early life and about the ordeals he endured.

The journey jarred me to my very core. A day has not gone by since my return that I do not think about some aspect of what I experienced. That journey compelled me to undertake this past summer's trip to Yad Vashem in Israel. Studying, researching, and thinking about the Holocaust are not constraining or draining, but curiously energizing and redemptive. It is redemptive in the sense that the Holocaust should be studied, remembered, and acted upon not only by Jews but by all people. Its messages, lessons, and meanings are compelling and all too contemporary.

Writing an article about my visit to the camps was influenced by my need to articulate in some formal way what I experienced. I also realized that we must remain vigilant and proactive. Merely reciting platitudes like "Never again!" or "Those who forget the past are condemned to repeat it" may lead to a redemptive vision based on unbridled optimism that reason and good intentions will prevail, but that is not enough. If my study of the Holocaust taught me anything, it is that each of us in our own way must do something. Whether this entails becoming more religious, studying martial arts, becoming more politically active, joining a local diversity council, confronting racism and bigotry directly, or teaching others about the Holocaust and its consequences, we must do something. Each of us in our unique way should act. Knowledge alone does not, in my estimation, equal power. Rather, knowledge and action are necessary.

My study of the Holocaust has also underscored the importance of education that trains our children in positive character traits: to be kind to others, to respect our fellow human beings, to care, to remain sensitive, and, yes, to love. I remain moved by the incident related in the Talmud about a time when an individual approached Hillel the Elder. "I want to convert to Judaism, but only on the condition that you teach me all of the Torah (Bible) while standing on one foot." Hillel immediately responded, "That which is hateful unto thee, do not do unto another. This is the whole Torah; the rest is commentary. Go and study." If Holocaust study reinforces the truism that we should treat others as we would like to be treated, then Holocaust education should, indeed, be mandated not only in seventeen states, which it currently is, but in every state in the nation.

Moreover, the Holocaust is a compelling history that reveals, among other important lessons, the roots of hatred, the persistence of intolerance, the insensitivity to human suffering, the ephemeral nature of human existence, and, yet, the triumph of hope, courage, and will. The Holocaust tells us as much about ourselves as it does about society then and now.

Questions to Ask of Oneself

I now realize that I had a moral obligation to learn as much as I could not only about my father's past, but about events in the twentieth century that defined what it means to be a human being. Based on my journey, I raise these philosophical questions that I believe each one of us needs to ask him or herself:

- What am I doing "to remember"?
- Can I be silent?
- What is my moral obligations to those who perished in the Holocaust and in genocides?
- What is my moral obligation to myself?
- What is my moral obligation to my students?
- Is my educational legacy relegated merely to transmitting knowledge devoid of character development?
- How might the study of the Holocaust and genocides contribute to my understanding of human nature and behavior?
- How will educators perpetuate Holocaust memory when, unfortunately in not too many years, survivors have passed on?
- What must I and other educators do to combat those individuals or forces within society that seek to dehumanize people based on ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, or religious affiliation? And, finally,
- How might I on a daily basis champion justice, equality, and opportunity?

While these questions, which I contemplated on my recent journey to Israel, are certainly important and need clarification and discussion, educators are equally concerned about practical issues relative to teaching such subject matter. The remainder of this article tries to contribute to the literature on teaching the Holocaust by first presenting some overarching philosophical approaches to Holocaust study and then offering some practical suggestions that I thought about on my journey this past summer.

Methodological Approaches

Although school textbooks have usually given scant attention to the history of the Holocaust, Holocaust education has gradually increased as state and local education de-

partments have developed curricula, especially for middle and high school students (Dawidowicz, 1992). This increased attention to teaching the Holocaust was recently affirmed by Samuel Totten (1998a):

Over the past decade and a half, interest among educators in teaching about the Holocaust has surged. Not surprisingly, the development and publication of Holocaust-related materials and resources have proliferated Various organizations such as state departments of education and Holocaust resource centers in the United States and elsewhere have been active particularly in the development of Holocaust curricula for the upper elementary through high school levels of schooling. (p. 148)

New Jersey is one of seventeen states that mandate Holocaust education. The New Jersey state legislature enacted a law that mandates that "every board of education shall include instruction on the Holocaust and genocides in an appropriate place in the curriculum of all elementary and secondary schools pupils" (New Jersey Statute, 1997). More and more teachers are incorporating lessons on the Holocaust as part of their middle and high school curricula, not only in history and the social studies, but in subjects such as English literature and mathematics.

Yet, as more and more educators are teaching the topic, many of them at times feel inadequate or, at least, uncertain, about whether or not they are treating the subject fairly and how best to present the material. I have written this portion of the article, in large measure, to present some general instructional guidelines for those who teach either a course or a unit about the Holocaust at her or his school and an outline of significant topics that should be included in the curriculum.

Holocaust education should not, in my opinion, be formally introduced until the 4th or 5th grades. In earlier grades, however, students can deal with issues of friendship, respect, trust, and community. One of the better articles on incorporating Holocaust education into K-4 curricula was recently published by Sepinwall (1999). The discussion in this article focuses on methodological guidelines for upper grades.

My suggestions and philosophical approaches are based on my experiences in teaching the subject to middle school students in a public school setting and graduate students at the master's degree level in a university. Among the criteria I used for selecting these suggestions are as follows: grounding any work about the Holocaust in sound pedagogical theory; preparing students to grapple cognitively with the subject by connecting previous learnings and conceptions to new content; encouraging active and meaningful learning activities; presenting information about the Holocaust within a cultural, political, and social context; and relating the teaching of the subject to one's own educational philosophy.

I hope this article furthers the discussion on alternative ways of teaching the Holocaust to students. While the literature of the Holocaust is vast, books and articles on teaching the subject are scant by comparison (For some of the better sources, see Dawidowicz, 1992; Shawn, 1995; Totten, 1998a; United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1997; Wegner, 1998; Glanz, 1999).

A Hands-on/Minds-on Approach: Developing a Conceptual Framework for Learning and Teaching

How do people learn best? John Dewey (1899) wrote that people learn best "by doing." Hands-on instructional tasks encourage students to become involved actively in learning. Active learning is a pedagogically sound teaching method for any subject. Active learning increases students' interest in the material, makes the material covered more meaningful, allows students to refine their understanding of the material, and provides opportunities to relate the material to "broader contextualized settings" (Singelis, 1998, p. x). Svinicki (1991), drawing from cognitive theory, maintains that each of these aforementioned benefits of active learning, by themselves, increases the actual learning that takes place.

More specifically, students who are encouraged to "gather, assemble, observe, construct, compose, manipulate, draw, perform, examine, interview, and collect" are likely to be engaged in meaningful learning opportunities (Davis, 1998, p. 119). Stu-

dents may, for example, gather facts about the rise of Nazism in Germany by exploring the Internet¹ and compose essays about key figures in the National Socialist Party. Students may become involved in cooperative group activities aimed at learning more about resistance efforts toward Nazi oppression. In personal reaction journals, students may record their thoughts and reactions relative to selections they read and video segments they have viewed. Students may construct posters demonstrating antisemitic² propaganda, while teams of students may interview Holocaust survivors at a local senior citizen residence.

Many of us would applaud such efforts because students are actively involved in meaningful and relevant learning activities. However, as O. L. Davis, Jr. (1998) has reminded us, hands-on “activities that do not explicitly require that pupils think about their experience” can simply mean “minds-off” (p. 120). Davis explains further:

Raw experiences comprise the grist for thinking. They are necessary, but not sufficient, instructional foci. For the most part, hands-on activities must include minds-on aspects. That is, pupils must think about their experience. They must, as Dewey noted, reflect about what they have done. Consciously, they must construct personal meanings from their active experience. (p. 120)

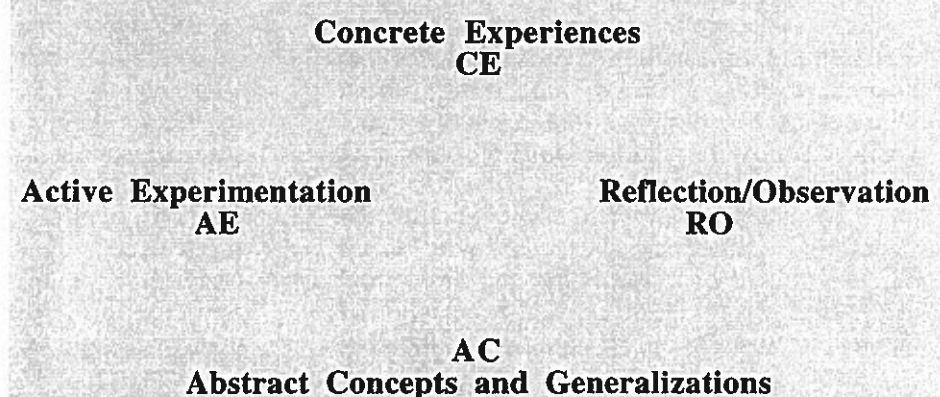
Constructivist learning theory that supports both “hands-on” and “minds-on” activities is essential in teaching Holocaust studies. Catherine Twomey Fosnet (1996), drawing on cognitive psychology, philosophy, and anthropology, defines constructivism not as a theory about teaching, but about knowledge and learning. Knowledge is defined as temporary, developmental, socially and culturally mediated, and nonob-

jective. Learning is “a self regulated process of resolving inner cognitive conflicts that often become apparent through concrete experiences, collaborative discourse, and reflection” (p. 92). In other words, meaningful learning centers on the learner and is best constructed through collaboration and reflection based on personal experience.

According to constructivist theory, then, people learn best when they are given opportunities to construct meanings on their own. How best to accomplish this lofty goal becomes paramount. Simply leaving students “on their own” is a wholly inefficient and ineffective way of stimulating reflective thinking. Teachers must guide students and provide thought provoking questions or frameworks as they engage in these “hands-on” activities. Davis amplifies this key instructional component: “Indeed, for hands-on activities to qualify as educationally appropriate tasks, teachers must work with pupils before, during, and after these engagements so that pupils maintain a minds-on awareness of their unfolding experiences” (p. 120).

Therefore, viewing an age and content appropriate videotape on the Holocaust

Figure 1 Kolb's Experiential Learning Model



and/or going as a class on an exciting field trip to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D. C. are valuable experiences when teachers provide “minds-on” preparations and post-analyses so that

critical thinking is promoted. Providing exercises and planned activities around, for example, the prevalent antisemitic culture that pervaded Europe prior to the Holocaust is essential insofar as focused discussion ensues that allows students to process what they have experienced. As Singelis (1998) cautions, "If sufficient time to process and discuss an exercise is not used, its effectiveness may be diminished or lost entirely" (p. xi).

Although these aforementioned experiences are important, developing a conceptual framework, so that hands-on and minds-on activities can be fostered, is critical. I have found David Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Model particularly helpful in providing such a conceptual context. Kolb's framework, in brief, assumes that experience is the cornerstone of learning.

Instruction proceeds, according to Kolb, as a four-phased cycle of learning. (See Figure 1.) All learning begins with concrete experiences (CE) such as poetry readings, art explorations, artifact and archival examinations, and guided writing assignments. During this CE phase, students are encouraged to express their "feelings" about what they have experienced: "How do you feel about the video episode we have just viewed?" and "How would you have felt, as a Jew, reading newspaper articles denouncing you as an 'unpatriotic, bloodsucker?'" are examples of some questions a teacher might pose during this initial phase. Student responses that attempt to critically analyze or form judgements should be discouraged during this initial phase. The expression of feelings and emotions (e.g., "I felt sad when I saw how badly Jews were treated during *Kristallnacht*") assumes priority. Students, during this first stage, are actively engaged in learning activities rather than abstractly considering various facts about the Holocaust from, for example, a lecture. Students, during this phase, should be encouraged to be open-minded and adaptable to change.³

Building on concrete experiences, the learner is now encouraged to reflectively observe (RO). Once feelings are uncovered, students proceed to learning through observations and thought provoking discussions. The teacher facilitates discussion by posing

such thought provoking questions as "Why do you think Jews at Babi Yar, by in large, went to their death without a fight?" or "How was it possible for a soldier from the *Einsatzgruppen* to shoot a woman and her child at close range and then go home for a hot meal and play games with his children?" Providing time for students to observe videos, testimonials, and artifacts and reflect upon their meaning based on the teacher's prompting is the major emphasis during this phase. In this stage of the learning cycle, students are encouraged to rely on their own thoughts and feelings to form opinions. Logs, journals, discussions, brainstorming, and questions are used to enhance observations and reflections.

The next phase in Kolb's system is known as abstract conceptualization (AC) during which students' feelings and observations are now brought to a higher level of thinking by emphasizing logic, theory, and ideas over feelings and sensations. During this phase, teachers may involve students in activities that require analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of materials or subjects. Teachers may, at this time, ask students more clearly to define "justice" or "hope" as related to the experiences of Jews during the Holocaust. Students may be asked to answer the following question: "What lessons are there from the Holocaust for my generation today?" Students also may be encouraged to develop theories and explore ideas to solve particular problems or areas of concern.

Kolb calls the final stage in instruction, "active experimentation" (AE) during which students may be asked to take some action as a result of what they have learned in the unit. Examples of activities might include confronting one's parents or relatives about some antisemitic comments made at last year's Thanksgiving dinner or forming an anti-hate group that writes letters in response to local Neo-Nazi activities. Role playing and case study analyses are helpful at this stage.

Kolb's paradigm makes sense for teaching the Holocaust because it provides for both hands-on and minds-on experiences. As students are sensitized to their feelings about the content, they continue to critically think through observations, then develop abstract concepts and theories, and finally actualize what they have learned by actively experi-

menting with some aspect of the curriculum. Developing some sort of conceptual framework is a methodological imperative for teaching this subject matter.

The K-W-L Strategy Approach

K-W-L is a strategy developed by Donna Sederburg Ogle (1986) that models active thinking needed before, during, and after learning. The letters K, W, and L stand for three activities students engage in when learning: recalling what they KNOW, determining what they WANT to learn, and identifying what they have LEARNED.⁴ See Figure 2.

Using K-W-L to begin a class, teachers should encourage students to write out what they know about the Holocaust, what questions they want answered, and what they have learned after a particular unit of instruction. I have used this strategy as I begin my course in Teaching the Holocaust by asking students to write all they know about it.⁵ Research confirms the importance of prior knowledge or schemata in determining how learners will interpret what they learn (Anderson, 1977). (I sometimes administer a brief quiz to determine their prior knowledge or lack thereof; see next methodological approach). Once students are conscious of their prior understandings, new information and meanings may replace prior knowledge that may be based on factual errors or misinterpretations. Moreover, students who realize how little they know about the Holocaust may develop higher levels of motivation and eagerness when learning the new content. One student wrote in her journal: "I never realized how little I knew about the Holocaust. I'm anxious to learn as much as I can this semester."

Students then brainstorm specific topics they want to learn about and questions they want answered. A teacher who involves students in charting the nature of content to be learned is more likely to motivate them

to search for and discover answers. Some of the questions my graduate students have posed are as follows:

- Why was it called the Holocaust?
- How did the Nazis come to power?
- How, why, and when did the Nazis develop a policy of total annihilation of the Jews in Europe?
- Who was responsible for the Holocaust? Were "ordinary" Germans to blame? How could people do such a thing without any remorse?
- Why did a higher proportion of Jews survive in Fascist Italy than in Poland?
- Were most Poles vehemently antisemitic?
- Why do the Jews appear to have offered so little resistance?
- How could God have allowed this to happen?
- What was the reaction of the Church to the Holocaust?
- How were people able to survive this horrendous experience?
- How were people liberated?
- How do survivors cope with life after the Holocaust?
- Is this catastrophe an incomparably unique historical phenomenon or is it a case within the category of genocide?
- How could the world have stood by and not intervened?

Figure 2 A K-W-L Strategy Sheet after Donna Ogle (1986)

What I Know	What I Want to Learn	What I Learned

- How does one react to the deniers of the Holocaust?
- Could it happen again?
- What advice can you give us for teaching the Holocaust?

One student reflected in her journal:

I wonder why if Hitler believed in Aryan superiority, and that everyone should have blond hair and blue eyes, why didn't he? How did he excuse the millions of Germans who were dark-haired? I sometimes wonder what would have happened to me if I had lived in Germany at that time. Although I'm half-German, I'm very dark, and I'm also Catholic. I heard Hitler hated Catholics . . . why? I just thank God that all of my German relatives came to this country before World War II so they were not involved. I think that it would be quite difficult to deal with if you knew that you had a Nazi in your family!

We actually developed a list of forty-five questions from this activity. I then reviewed the questions starting the ones we would cover in class and assigned, on a voluntary basis, questions that teams of students could research for oral class presentations. This activity allowed us to develop an organizational framework for the course. Student expectations for the course were reviewed and matched to mine. Students felt excited about the course and what they were about to learn. Having them participate in the development of the course objectives increased motivational levels.

After each major unit and as a culminating activity of the course, I employed the final stage of K-W-L as a review strategy. I asked students to list what they had learned. Students individually or in small groups recorded their responses and then shared their information with the class.

Another way of reviewing what has been LEARNED is to incorporate a technique known as "reciprocal teaching" (Palincsar & Brown, 1984). After having completed a unit in which a great deal of content was covered I at times ask my graduate students to close their notebooks. I have them pair off with a neighboring student and they arbitrarily decide who will be "Student A" and who will be "Student B." All "Student Bs" in the class

must then tell "Student As" everything they recall from the previous lessons in the unit. "Student A" is to listen intently and record the information dictated by "Student B." Then when "Student B" has finished, "Student A" must tell "Student B" what was omitted or was reported erroneously. At that point, both students review their summaries of the content and share what they have developed with a neighboring pair. Class resumes with different groups reporting what they have learned while the instructor or her/his representative records the information on the chalk board or overhead transparency.

Students in my graduate course appreciate this activity as an effective way to review content-laden units or subjects. One student stated that "I can't wait to try it with my class. It's a wonderful way to review what has been learned." After using the technique, one student reported that "my students retain information much more than ever before and test grades are markedly raised by those students who take this activity seriously."

The K-W-L activity is valuable because it activates students' own knowledge of the topic under study. Students have the opportunity to share in the development of topics and objectives. Finally, they are encouraged to summarize or review what they have learned.

The Pre-quiz Approach

Many students have little, if any, understanding of the history of the Holocaust period. When I incorporate the K-W-L activity described earlier, I often give the following brief pre-quiz to ascertain my students' knowledge of some aspects of the Holocaust. I find students are more readily interested in learning about the period as a result of seeing how they do on such a quiz.

The Pre-quiz

Answer True or False to each of the following items; if an item is false explain why.

1. The term antisemitism was first used during Roman civilization.
2. There were approximately 200 concentration camps.

3. Although Hitler bragged that the Third Reich would last 1,000 years, it in fact lasted only 12 years, from January 30, 1933, to May 8, 1945.
4. The Nazis intended, from the start of their takeover, to murder all Jews in Germany, throughout Europe, and eventually throughout the world.
5. Hitler served in World War I and won the Iron Cross for bravery.
6. As the Nazis rose to power in Germany, the Nazi party never got a majority of the German vote.
7. Prior to the war, Jews only made up one percent of the German population.
8. All of the following statistics are true: More Jews were murdered in the Holocaust than there are Jews currently living in the United States; more Jewish children were murdered during the Holocaust than there are attending public schools in New Jersey or New York City.
9. Albert Einstein was a German Jew who was forced to leave Germany before World War II.
10. Among those individuals who held the most vociferous antisemitic views were Martin Luther, Erasmus, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Voltaire, Richard Wagner, and Martin Heidegger.
11. Auschwitz was the first and most horrific concentration camp.
12. After the Evian Conference in 1938 only the Dominican Republic agreed to increase its quota of new Jewish immigrants.
13. On November 7, 1938, a Jewish youth named Herschel Grunzpan shot to death a member of the German Embassy in Paris, Vom Rath, whom he mistook for the German ambassador. This incident precipitated what has become known as Kristallnacht. Nazi officials, in fact, used the Grunzpan incident, as an excuse to terrorize German Jews. Ironically, Vom Rath, whom Grunzpan killed, was actually an opponent of the Nazis.
14. The Holocaust against the Jews resulted in the death of more people than any other event against a single group in the twentieth century.
15. By and large, Jews offered little, if any, resistance against the Nazis.
16. The Holocaust was an invention of Zionist propaganda motivated by Jewish greed for money.
17. At best, two percent of the total population of non-Jews under Nazi occupation helped rescue Jews.
18. The Nazis used the fat from Jewish corpses to make soap.
19. Auschwitz, the most notorious camp, was actually comprised of two camps: Auschwitz I, a camp for Jews, Poles, and other war prisoners, and Auschwitz II, Birkenau, a murder camp exclusively for Jews.
20. Raoul Wallenberg and Oskar Schindler, both non-Jews, are famous for their bold attempts to rescue Jews during the Holocaust.

Answers

1. *False.* Wilhelm Marr, a German journalist who founded the League of Antisemites, did not coin the term until the 19th century, 1879 to be exact. Prior to that "hatred of Jews" sufficed.

2. *False.* There were nearly 1,000 camps; not all, of course were killing centers. In fact, students think that all camps were killing centers when in fact most were labor camps. There were basically six mass murder camps: Auschwitz, Belzec, Chelmno (the first of its kind), Majdanek, Sobibor, and Treblinka.

3. *True.* January 30, 1933, was the date Hitler assumed the Chancellorship of Germany and May 8, 1945, (V-E Day) marked the end of the war in Europe.

4. *False.* The Nazi plan to annihilate every Jewish man, woman, and child developed gradually and culminated with the Wannsee Conference in January, 1939.⁶ What distinguishes the Holocaust from other genocides was that when the decision was made, a systematic process was set in motion to murder every Jew in Europe. As John Weiss (1996) stated in his important, yet overlooked, volume, *Ideology of Death*: "Never has the extermination of an entire people, coupled with the technology of industrialization been attempted so systematically as an end in itself. Never has mass murder been so efficiently, so scientifically perpetrated. Never has the annihilation of a race been so central to an ideology" (p. 15).

5. *True.* Although Hitler's youth and early years were inauspicious he was indeed awarded the Iron Cross for bravery during his brief stint in World War I.

6. *True.* The Nazis, at their height, only garnered 43.9 percent of the vote; large enough, however, to assume power.

7. *True.* Most Jews in Europe lived in Poland (3.2 million). Six hundred thousand Jews lived in Germany (one percent of the population). Interestingly, more than 100,000 Jews fought in World War I for Germany, while 12,000 lost their lives and 35,000 were decorated (including 12,000 promoted to officers and 23,000 receiving awards for bravery). Out of the 600,000, about 330,000 Jews would flee between 1933 and 1939. (Albert Einstein was one of these people.) Today, only 30,000 Jews live in Germany; more than half of them are from the former Soviet Union. Only 15 percent of Jews are native Germans. Most Jews living in Germany are not affiliated with any Jewish religious group. Millions of Germans under the age of 21 have never known, seen, or spoken with a Jew. Someone recently said, "There are no more German Jews" (Frank, 1996, pp. 323-324).

8. *True.* There are currently approximately 5 million Jews living in the United States. 1.5 million Jewish children were murdered in the Holocaust. New Jersey schools have 1.2 million students and New York City has about 1 million. Overall, "the Nazis killed 6 million out of 15 to 17 million Jews in the world, that is, close to 40 percent of world Jewry (and approximately 65 percent of European Jewry)" (Katz, 1994, p. 68).

9. *True.*

10. *True.* Erasmus, for instance, said, "If to hate Jews is to be a good Christian, then we are all good Christians."

11. *False.* Although Auschwitz-Birkenau may have been one of the most horrific camps, it was not the first camp. The first camp was opened in Dachau on March 22, 1933, with its first prisoners being primarily political prisoners. Chelmno was the first mass murder camp.

12. *True.* Although the Dominican Republic increased quotas, only about 1,000 Jews ever made it to that country (Bauer, 1989).

13. *True.*

14. *False.* The uniqueness of the Holocaust cannot be assessed by merely quantifiable evidence (Katz, 1994). Although more Jews were murdered than individuals from the Armenian tragedy between 1915 and 1917, the

Cambodian purge from 1975 to 1979, the Bosnia-Herzegovina "ethnic cleansing" murder of non-Serbs, and the genocide of the Hutus against the Tutsis in Rwanda, more people were, in fact, killed in this century during the willful Stalinist reign of terror between 1929 and 1939 during which as high as twenty million died. Moreover, the Chinese Communist regime between 1949 and 1975 was

"The fact that too few people acted to rescue Jews is one of the most troubling issues we all must face not only in examining the past, but in coming to grips with atrocities and genocides that post-date the Holocaust."

responsible for over twenty million deaths. (See answer to question number 4 above.)

15. *False.* The view that Jews were mere victims who went "as sheep to the slaughter" is erroneous and stereotypical. Various forms of resistance were employed, and any study of this period should evidence this fact (see, e.g., Landau, 1994). However, addressing the view that Jews passively accepted their fate, Bauer (1989) notes astutely that few people ask why two and a half million Russian war prisoners, three million non-Jewish Poles, and thousands of other people of all nationalities who were murdered by the Nazis offered no resistance. As Bauer (1989) re-