

SOLIDARITY FOREVER: A CALL FOR INCLUSIVE HOLOCAUST MEMORY AND
COALITION BUILDING AMID FORGETTING & DENIAL

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DENIAL

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North Dakota State University's regulations and meets the accepted
standards for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

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ABSTRACT

According to a recent survey, less than half of American Millennials can name a Holocaust concentration camp. More than two-thirds of the respondents did not know the number of Jewish people the Nazis killed in the camps. This lack of knowledge happens in a world where some people do not even admit the Holocaust event happened. This thesis will first lay out the current state of Holocaust remembrance in education, memorialization, and popular culture, particularly in America. A primary focus is how these remembrances overlook or silence certain victims of the Holocaust, such as LGBTQ+ victims. The second chapter explores the motivations and ideologies scholars have disregarded about deniers thus far. The final section will examine ways coalitions working in solidarity to make and reproduce inclusive Holocaust narratives can combat Holocaust denial and forgetting.

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There were people I have connected with on the internet who helped along the way. @GradSkoolStruz helped validate my feelings. The MuggleNet team gave me a year and a half of camaraderie. Danika Stone helped keep me positive, putting writing encouragement and general happiness in social media posts.

To Anne, Justin, Morgan, and Matt, who were the people who put me on the path to graduate school in the first place within the walls of campaign headquarters and opened my eyes to all the different career possibilities that a person could take. And for generally being awesome people who showed me what it meant to be a supportive coworker and manager.

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happy place and hot cocoa and gelato supplier. Visiting Charli for retail therapy at Tuesday Morning always brought a smile to my face – as did the Butler’s chocolate. My cohort was the best group of students to learn with I have ever had and created the most fun, engaging classes I’ve had in grad school. Jordy, Alex, David, and John are the best people a friend could have in their life.

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DEDICATION

To my Minnesota Grandparents, Paul & Marie Cravens, who always supported my dreams, big and small. None of my dreams big or small – such as wearing red sparkly shoes, dancing at Disneyland, attending “Latin camp,” or exploring Europe – would have been possible if you had not vowed to leave the farm.

This degree, and every degree, is in honor of the late, great Marie Cravens, who always encouraged me to get the education economic conditions and societal expectations denied her.

“Well, anyway,” off to the thesis...

PREFACE

I understand that some scholars within Holocaust Studies may not openly embrace these ideas, but I ask any who read this to have an open mind. I wrote this thesis in the spirit expressed by Elizabeth Alexander in her interview with Stephen Colbert on the episode of *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*, which aired April 8th, 2022:

Colbert: “[T]his common human experience that is being alive itself is a struggle and then how strange it is to be anything at all is something that we’re always experiencing. ... What do you imagine is the value that some people see in racial division? Because it seems like a great loss not only for those who suffer it but in some ways for those who practice it because they lose their own humanity.”

Alexander: “That is a very profound question, and I completely agree with you. I think that actually the profounder loss of the humanity of human beings who would demean or enslave others, who would believe mythology...What would it mean – Toni Morrison asked these questions – to have been told and believed that you were a superior being and to somehow discover that you weren’t? So, I think to have a mentality of society as being not a zero-sum game, but rather there is enough soup for everybody...I think if we operated in that way and if we told the truth about history – as you know, I was a professor for many years and teaching African-American studies to mixed classrooms and hearing so often, ‘why wasn’t I taught that? Why was that kept from me? I didn’t know.’ We have to teach people the truth. We can hold it, we human beings, we can hold complexity, we can hold contradiction, we can hold grief and joy at the same time. We need to honor that possibility within us – we have it within us.

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INTRODUCTION

“You see, hate does not exist in a vacuum.”

-Nikole Hannah Jones¹

The past few years have certainly been a testament to Jones’s assertion. The Southern Poverty Law Center has found evidence of over 1,220 hate groups and pro-fascist groups active throughout all states in America.² Hate crimes against the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community went 150% in 2020.³ Since 2013, the Human Rights Campaign has tracked violent murders of transgender and gender non-conforming individuals, and 2021 was the deadliest number of recorded deaths.⁴ Racism and white supremacy in policing became an international conversation after police officers and vigilantes murdered Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, Amon Aubrey, and many other Black individuals.

Isolated incidents of violence escalated into a white supremacist act of force when thousands of domestic terrorists came to Washington DC to storm the United States Capitol Building on January 6th, 2021. Some insurrectionists carried signs and flags promoting other white supremacist organizations and sold t-shirts declaring, “Trump those bitches” with Kamala Harris and Joe Biden’s image.⁵ Others entered America’s house with “Camp Auschwitz” emblazoned on their clothes.⁶

¹ Jones, Nicole Hannah.. “Yes, Black America Fears the Police. Here’s Why.” *Pro Publica*. (New York, NY), March 4, 2015.

² Southern Poverty Law Center., “Active Anti-Government and Hate Groups In the United States in 2021” Pamphlet, April 25, 2022.

³ Yam, Kimmy. “Anti-Asian hate crimes increased by nearly 150% in 2020, mostly in N.Y. and L.A., new report says.” *NBC News* (New York, NY), March 9, 2020.

⁴ Human Rights Campaign., “Fatal Violence Against the Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming in 2021.” Infographic Mailer.

⁵ Klepper, Jordan., “Jordan Klepper Sees It all at the Capitol Insurrection.” The Daily Social Distancing Show, January 12, 2021, YouTube video, 0:21 to 0:35, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YVDJqipoohc>.

⁶ Katkov, Mark. “Man Photographed in ‘Camp Auschwitz’ Sweatshirt During US Capitol Riot is Arrested.” *NPR*. (Washington D.C.), January 13, 2021.

Memorabilia with a call to resurrect concentration camps and the uptick in so much hateful action reflect the moral responsibility to “never forget” the Holocaust is as urgent as it has ever been. Holocaust survivors Manfred Goldberg and Frieda Wineman worry about what will happen when Holocaust survivors pass on. They are concerned people will not believe stories about the Holocaust without first-hand testimony.⁷ Their fears are not unfounded. According to a recent survey about the Holocaust made up of Americans between the ages of ## to ##, “nearly half of U.S. respondents could not name a single [concentration camp or ghetto].”⁸ Part of that could be because school districts across America have banned books about the Holocaust, from *The Diary of Anne Frank* to *Maus*.⁹

Holocaust educators, museum workers, and memorial makers have faced an additional problem for decades: Holocaust denial. While the first pieces of Holocaust denial emerged in the 1970s, denouncing the numbers who died in camps, the claims have grown crazier. Not even six months ago, a school district in Texas urged teachers to include the “opposing view” of the Holocaust in their curriculums.¹⁰ Former Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad denied the Holocaust was an event that happened during an NPR interview in 2009.¹¹ The most famous Holocaust denier, David Irving, claimed that Hitler did not know about the Final Solution. As late as fall 2021, he took people on tours of concentration camps to argue that Jews did not die

⁷ Masters, James., & Darwish, Muhammad., & Kosztolanyi, Boglarka. *CNN*. “Death camp survivor fears Holocaust deniers are winning.” *CNN*. (New York, NY), January 30, 2018.

⁸ Ramgopal, Kit. “Survey finds ‘shocking’ lack of Holocaust knowledge among millennials and Gen Z.” *NBC News*. (New York, NY), September 16, 2020.

⁹ Hernandez, Joe. “A Tennessee School District has Voted to Ban the Holocaust Graphic Novel ‘Maus’.” *NPR*. (Washington D.C.), January 27, 2022.

¹⁰ Hixenbaugh, Mike., & Hylton, Antionia. “Southlake school leader tells teachers to balance Holocaust books with ‘opposing’ views.” *NBC News*. (New York, NY), October 14, 2021.

¹¹ Whitelaw, Kevin. “Ahmadinejad: Holocaust ‘Opinion of Just a Few.’” *NPR*. (Washington D.C.), September 25, 2009.

there because the camps did not have gas chambers.¹² Some of Irving's ilk are also not just Holocaust deniers entangled in other nefarious ideologies and actions like storming the Capitol.

Eventually, the onus to educate individuals about the horrors of the Holocaust and combat Holocaust forgetting and denial will rest solely on education systems, cultural institutions, and memorials such United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C., the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin, and Yad Vashem in Israel. At present, many Holocaust museums and monuments in Western culture, especially America, separate memory by their victimhood – that the Nazis targeted them because they were Jewish, Eastern European, disabled, Roma, Sinti, LGBTQ+, a political dissident. This separation created a dominant account centered around Jewish suffering and death, which Holocaust deniers then exploited and distorted to create their own nefarious narratives. Prominent Jewish individuals and scholars, including Elie Wiesel and Manfred Gerstenfeld, argued anything but Jewish-centered representations undermine the anti-Semitism of Nazi Germany and undermine the unique nature of Jewish suffering within the Nazi regime.¹³ However, this thesis acknowledges the fears about a representation that undermines Jewish suffering. But it also offers a counterpoint: acknowledging, creating, and propagating inclusive narratives to include all victims of the Holocaust creates opportunities to combat denial. Additionally, a nuanced repudiation of Holocaust deniers and a path to redemption could be one of the strongest lines of defense against Holocaust misinformation and forgetting.

The Auschwitz Memorial Museum stated, “Auschwitz is not only the story of the tragic past. It is a powerful warning of what human hatred may bring. It is a call for moral

¹² Epperlein, Petra., & Michael Tucker. “We Caught ‘Historian’ David Irving Denying the Holocaust on a Hot Mic.” *Daily Beast*. (New York, NY), August 13, 2021.

¹³ Gerstenfeld, Manfred. *The Use and Abuse of Holocaust Memory*. (Washington D.C.: Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs / Anti-Defamation League, 2009), 79.

responsibility. Today [and] in the future.”¹⁴ The Nazi regime exemplifies the idea hate doesn’t exist in a vacuum, and an intersectional narrative places Jewish victims within the context of a regime intent on destroying many populations in Europe because of hateful ideologies. Inclusive public presentations and narratives of the Holocaust create coalitions based on shared authority and bolster public awareness of the Holocaust. These coalitions can work together to spread messages about the devastation of Nazi atrocities and the whole nefarious nature of deniers. Then the Holocaust deniers’ arguments do not pass muster because a person knows the full extent of the denier’s prejudices and knows all of those who died from hateful beliefs in the Holocaust.

Historiographical Context

The first well-known Holocaust publications and scholarship focus on Jewish suffering. While some Holocaust-related publications came out shortly after the war had ended, like *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Holocaust remembrance began in earnest in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Jewish Holocaust survivors like Primo Levi, Theodore Adorno, Elie Wiesel, and Otto Frank were among the first who worked to bring what they and their families had experienced to the forefront of Holocaust conversations in Western Europe and America. Alongside Holocaust survivor and Nazi hunter Simon Wiesenthal, these men pushed for memorials and places for Holocaust memory throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Their efforts culminated in creating Washington DC’s Holocaust Memorial Museum, Yad Vashem, and monuments across the globe.

The scholars leading discussions on Holocaust memorialization are Jewish. James Young’s most prominent arguments are that memorialization occurs in different ways in

¹⁴ Auschwitz Memorial. Twitter Post, March 2021, 10:54 a.m., <https://twitter.com/AuschwitzMuseum/status/1502689614552698884>

different geographic areas.¹⁵ Jennifer Hansen-Glucklich's work is that the monuments memorialize Jewish suffering or Jewish liberation.¹⁶ Scholar Norman Finkelstein argues these monuments and museums become an industry to exploit Jewish suffering.¹⁷

Holocaust denial emerged in the 1970s, and deniers professionalized in the 1990s by creating the Institute of Historical Review. When the deniers professionalized, the academic community started publishing on denial. Vidal Naquet was among the first to write about denial, speaking on the role of free speech and academic freedom in denial.¹⁸ However, the scholarship around Holocaust denial is relatively limited and primarily focuses on biographies of Holocaust deniers worldwide and their anti-Jewish and racist stances.¹⁹ Deborah Lipstadt writes that deniers are racist and anti-Jewish because deniers claim Israel should not exist, and many deniers openly affiliate with Neo-Nazis.²⁰

The final aspect of Holocaust scholarship relevant to this thesis is LGBTQ+ Holocaust experiences and remembrances. Early scholarship, such as Duberman's edited collection *Hidden from History*, contextualizes LGBTQ+ through global history.²¹ Florence Tamagne's *A History of Homosexuality in Europe* places LGBTQ+ Holocaust experiences within LGBTQ+ history in Europe's past.²² But Richard Plant's *The Pink Triangle* was among the first books which relayed

¹⁵ Young, James. *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning*. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1993).

¹⁶ Hansen-Glucklich, Jennifer., *Holocaust Memory Reframed*.

¹⁷ Finkelstein, Norman. *The Holocaust Industry: Reflections on the Exploitation of Jewish Suffering*. (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2014).

¹⁸ Vidal – Naquet, Pierre., *Assassins of Memory: Essays on the Denial of the Holocaust*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992).

¹⁹ Wistrich, Robert. *Holocaust Denial: Politics of Perfidy*. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2012).

²⁰ Lipstadt, Deborah. *Denying the Holocaust: Assault on Truth and Memory*. (New York: Penguin, 1993.)

²¹ Duberman et al (ed). *Hidden from History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past*. (New York: Meridian Books, 1989).

²² Tamagne, Florence., *A History of Homosexuality in Europe: Berlin, London, Paris, 1919 – 1939 Volume 1*, (New York: Algora Publishing, 2003).

the collective gay Holocaust victim experience on its own terms.²³ The books that include primary sources about the Nazi's views and plans for the LGBTQ+ populations focus on gay men's experiences.²⁴ The most cited memoirs of gay Holocaust survivors are the works by Heinz Heger (the pseudonym of Josef Kohout) and Pierre Seel.²⁵ Few scholars have researched LGBTQ+ Holocaust memory. The only academic work this author explicitly found on the subject was one dissertation by Isabel Meusen about the lack of lesbian remembrances and memorialization.²⁶

The lack of scholarship and memorials for Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender + victims challenges Jewish Studies Professor Oren Baruch Stier's assumption, "There is nothing we know about the Holocaust that has not already been mediated for us by some interpretive methodology and or some cultural form."²⁷ This thesis will rectify two gaps in memorialization and scholarship. The first gap is the separation and silence in Holocaust museums, memorialization, and representations in the popular culture surrounding different groups – i.e., non-Jewish – Holocaust victims. The next gap is looking at Holocaust deniers and negative behaviors such as anti-LGBTQ+ and misogyny. The thesis will then present ways educational and cultural institutions can address these gaps.

A Final Note

While mainstream Holocaust memory excludes many victims, this thesis focuses on the exclusion and silence of LGBTQ+ victims. There are a couple of reasons for this, none of which

²³ Plant, Richard., *The Pink Triangle: The Nazi War Against Homosexuals*. (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1986).

²⁴ Schoppmann, Claudia (ed.), and Grau, Günter (ed.) *Hidden Holocaust? Gay and Lesbian Persecution in Germany 1933 – 1945*. (Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2013).

²⁵ Setterington, Ken. *Branded with the Pink Triangle*. (Toronto: Second Story Press, 2013).

²⁶ Meusen, Isabel., "Unacknowledged Victims: Love between Women in the Narrative of the Holocaust. An Analysis of Memoirs, Novels, Film and Public Memorials," PhD diss., (University of South Carolina, 2015).

²⁷ Baruch Stier, Oren., *Holocaust Icons: Symbolizing the Shoah in History & Memory*, (New Brunswick New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2015), 4.

come out of a place of purposeful neglect or malice. The first is reason derives from a need to have a narrow scope to make this a manageable thesis. The next is because the LGBTQ+ community is the group directly tied to the author's lived experiences and research expertise and did not want to speak for others. Hopefully, those with direct connections to Roma, Sinti, Jehovah's Witness, and Eastern Europeans can take the ideas presented and create coalitions and solidarity with others in their communities.

Additionally, the LGBTQ+ population has been the most marginalized and persecuted group both before and after the events of the Holocaust, and LGBTQ + experiences are vastly underrepresented in Holocaust memory. For example, the United Nations Outreach Programme on the Holocaust has done exhibits for Holocaust Remembrance Day since 2006. Two exhibitions have been about the Roma/Sinti experience. Thus far, LGBTQ+ people have not had an exhibition.²⁸ Based on Edward Linenthal's observations, President Carter commissioned the creation of a Holocaust museum and assigned an executive board to implement plans. Initially, all the board members were Jewish, but the board added Roma and Polish representatives within the first few years. Seemingly, there was never an LGBTQ+ representative at the table at this time.²⁹

However, the author did make three conscious language choices. These choices are examples of ways the author works to have open and inclusive language beyond public memory but in all aspects of work and life. Using anti-Jewish instead of antisemitic comes from the

²⁸ United Nations, "Exhibitions," The United Nations Programme on the Holocaust, Accessed January 18, 2022, <https://www.un.org/holocaustremembrance/exhibit>.

²⁹ Linenthal, Edward., *Preserving Memory: The Struggle to Create America's Holocaust Museum*. (New York: Viking, 1995), 38 -51.

discussions that some scholars deem both antisemitic and anti-Semitic problematic since the term Semitic is not wholly synonymous with Judaism but with a region and language.³⁰

The choice to use anti-LGBTQ+ instead of homophobic is because the author agrees with actor and activist Riz Ahmed's statement that he doesn't like to use the terms homophobia or Islamophobia. In his words, it "legitimizes it as a pathological fear like arachnophobia."³¹ Additionally, in this thesis, homophobia is a restrictive term because Holocaust memorialization excludes all the LGBTQ+ population, just as Holocaust deniers normally do not just target discriminate against same-sex couples; they target anyone in the LGBTQ+ community.

Chapter Outline

Chapter one focuses on Holocaust memory. The chapter will explore the intentionally curated Jewish dominant narrative in Holocaust remembrances – especially in predominantly English language contexts – in museums and memorials. Education and popular culture reinforce the Jewish-dominant narrative and reinforce the separation of Holocaust memories between Jewish & non-Jewish victims.

Chapter two does a systemic analysis of how the American academic community has responded to Holocaust deniers. Scholars have said a lot about denier's anti-Jewish and racist ideologies. But examining the complete personalities of Holocaust deniers reveals that these men are misogynists and anti-LGBTQ+ and participate in other anti-fact movements – which those fighting against denial can use to discredit denier's words and actions.

Chapter three elaborates on using inclusive narratives to make Holocaust remembrance an act of solidarity between groups with coalitions for Holocaust Remembrance events. It also

³⁰ Jikeli, Günter. "Why is There Resistance to a Working Definition of Antisemitism?" Association for the Study of Middle East and Africa, (Washington D.C.), January 15, 2021.

³¹ Ahmed, Riz "S9 Ep 7: Riz Ahmed" Table Manners with Jessie and Lennie Weir, (podcast), March 17, 2020, 18:34 -18: 40, <https://play.acast.com/s/tablemanners/s9ep7-rizahmed>

shows examples of revamping and supplementing school curriculums and examples of literature to reinforce that the Nazi regime killed many people for many reasons.

CHAPTER ONE: THE CURRENT STATE OF HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE

"Our ashes are mingled in the ovens. Why should that be remembered separately?"

– Dr. Ian Hancock, Romani political Activist³²

Competing Definitions Conundrum

When the Holocaust first entered the public domain, reference works defined it strictly as the death of six million Jews.³³ Now Oxford English Dictionary defines the Holocaust as "the killing of millions of Jews and others."³⁴ The Encyclopedia Britannica is more precise and calls the Holocaust "the killing of six million Jews and millions of others."³⁵ Some institutions are reflecting this definition change a bit more proactively than others. Auschwitz openly states that they post Jewish victims on their Twitter page because most people sent to the camp were Jewish. Yet the USHMM states, "The Holocaust was the systematic, bureaucratic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of six million Jewish men, women, and children by the Nazi regime and its collaborators...During the era of the Holocaust, Germany also targets and killed other groups."³⁶

Scholar Erna Paris declares that when it comes to the Wall of Remembrance at the USHMM, "No one has been entirely left out."³⁷ But is having a mention enough anymore? Does it seem right to keep memories of the Holocaust separate? Dr. Marla Morris does not seem to think so, declaring, "It makes little sense to separate out racism, sexism, homophobia, and

³² Linenthal, 245.

³³ Lipstadt, Deborah. *The Holocaust: An American Understanding*, (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2016), 1.

³⁴ *Cambridge Dictionary*. (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press), "Holocaust."
<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/holocaust>

³⁵ *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Berenbaum, Michael, "Holocaust." (London, UK), July 1, 2021.
<https://www.britannica.com/event/Holocaust>.

³⁶ The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. "Documenting the Number of Victims of the Holocaust and Nazi Persecution." (Washington D.C.)

³⁷ Paris, Erna. *Long Shadows, Truth Lies & History*, pg 343.

antisemitism. I think we get a fuller picture of the Holocaust when a multilayered approach is taken."³⁸ As the dictionary definitions expand their definitions of the Holocaust, it is time for educational and cultural institutions to recognize and reconcile that the lack of representation intentionally leaves groups of the narrative because of bias and sexism and follow suit.

A Jewish Dominant Narrative of The Holocaust

A pattern quickly emerges when one examines Holocaust memory and memorials, especially in Western culture: there are Jewish memorials and separate memorials to victims who were not Jewish. For example, a spacious park is dedicated to the Memorial to the Murdered Jews in Berlin. The memorial to the gay victims is much smaller and across the street. There are places to learn about and memorialize Jewish Holocaust victims across the United States: the New England Holocaust Memorial in Boston, Massachusetts, the William Breman Jewish Heritage & Holocaust Museum in Atlanta, Georgia, to the Desert Holocaust Memorial in Palm Springs.³⁹ While the federally recognized Holocaust memorial is USHMM in Washington D.C., the memorial for the LGBTQ+ Holocaust victims, Pink Triangle Park, is across the country in San Francisco, California.

Ricoeur's Phenomenology

This separation goes hand in hand with Ricoeur's interpretation of phenomenology. Ricoeur argues that personal and public memory are linked through language and shared experiences. Shared experiences then become collective memory after the memories get recorded

³⁸Morris, Marla. *Curriculum and the Holocaust: Competing Sites of Memory and Representation*, (New York: Routledge, 2006), 24.

³⁹ Jewish Virtual Library, "Holocaust Museums & Memorials: US Holocaust Museums and Memorial," American Israeli Cooperative Enterprise, Accessed March 26, 2021, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/holocaust-museums-monuments-and-commemorations>

and spread.⁴⁰ In terms of Holocaust memory, separation in memory occurs because the Jewish individuals created a collective, community memory about their experiences. They also created their own term for their experiences in their own language: Shoah. The immense number of books, films, and oral interviews of Jewish survivors gave the Jewish experience became embedded into society's memory of the Holocaust.

Frankly, one could take Ricoeur's ideas a step further and make the case of largescale traumatic events like the Holocaust individuals remember events differently because they experienced them differently. Anne Frank had a different Holocaust experience than Martin Kapel and his sister. The two were among the children of the Kindertransport. A British family in Coventry, England, fostered the two while the rest of their family died in concentration camps.⁴¹ Women had a different experience than men because women voyeur guards and sexual abuse were commonplace.⁴²

Victims had different experiences based on their victimization after their liberation as well. After liberation, some concentration camp survivors went on to have comparatively typical "American Dream" style lives with their trauma lingering in the background – like Art Spiegelman's father.⁴³ Other Jewish victims, such as Primo Levi and Theodore Adorno, became renowned academics. Karl Gorath was a German gay man sent to Auschwitz and Neuengamme during WWII. After the war, the German police reincarcerated Gorath under the same penal code that had sent him to the concentration camps – and the same judge had tried both cases. When

⁴⁰ Ricoeur, Paul. *Memory, History, Forgetting*. Translated Kathleen Blamey and David Pellaur. (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2004), 96 -108.

⁴¹ The Holocaust Exhibition and Learning Center. "Martin Kapel: Expelled from Germany," *Holocaust Survivors' Friendship Association*, (Leeds, UK), accessed January 15, 2022. [https:// holocaustlearning.org.uk/stories/martin-Kapel/](https://holocaustlearning.org.uk/stories/martin-Kapel/).

⁴² Waxman, Zoë, *Women in the Holocaust*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 89-94.

⁴³ Spiegelman, Art. *The Complete MAUS: A Survivor's Tale*, (New York City: Pantheon, 1996).

Gorath was released, he could not find a job for ten years. The German government reduced his retirement pension because he was unemployed for so long and spent time in the camps.⁴⁴

One tenant within Ricoeur is that individual memories are collected to record and become part of community memory.⁴⁵ One of the ways community memory manifested in Holocaust memory has been Holocaust Remembrance Day. Shortly after Israel's creation, their parliament (Knesset) set aside one day of the year for Yom HaShoah – Hebrew for Holocaust Remembrance Day. Most businesses close, and there are two minutes of silence.⁴⁶ There is also the globally recognized January 27th as Holocaust Remembrance Day. But this day is still propelled by Jewish memory, as the 2022 White House Press Release attests. The release began with, "Today, we attempt to fill a piercing silence from our past—to give voice to the six million Jews who were systematically and ruthlessly murdered by the Nazis and their collaborators."⁴⁷

Ricoeur can also explain this separation because part of his theory is that memories get edited. He asserts that aspects of memory get left out organically or purposefully.⁴⁸ People who were not family and friends or central to their experiences slipped through those cracks as time passed. Or governments and people purposefully edit out perspectives for a specific agenda.

Silencing

This editing, particularly if intentional, falls into what Michele Rolph Trouillout calls silencing. Silencing is mainstream presentation and narratives excluding some voices that were part of the experience.⁴⁹ The Holocaust memory has silenced some of the groups the Nazis killed

⁴⁴ Working Class History. Instagram Page, June 2021, <https://www.instagram.com/p/CP94FJgITxp/?hl=en>

⁴⁵ Ricoeur, 125 -132.

⁴⁶ "Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day)." Shiva.com: The Resource for Jewish Morning. Access March 18, 2022. <https://www.shiva.com/learning-center/commemorate/jewish-holidays/yom-hashohah/>

⁴⁷ Biden, Joseph. January 27, 2022. "Statement by President Biden on International Holocaust Remembrance Day," <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/01/27/statement-by-president-biden-on-international-holocaust-remembrance-day/>

⁴⁸ Ricoeur, 449.

⁴⁹ Trouillout, Michel-Rolph. *Silencing the Past: Power and Production of History*. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995).

during the Holocaust. One of the most silenced groups is the LGBTQ+ victims. The USHMM has three references to LGBTQ+ experiences in its permanent exhibition.⁵⁰ The USHMM's 450-page book of educational material to help schools commemorate the 50th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz only has one page which mentions the LGBTQ+ victims to note that doctors at Buchenwald experimented on homosexuals.⁵¹

The Department of Defense Guide for Annual Commemorative Observances for Holocaust Remembrance Day also participates in silencing. The DOD defines the Holocaust as "the annihilation of six million Jews." It then says that the "Holocaust is not all terrors of World War II."⁵² The booklet also used the derogatory term gypsy instead of Roma/Sinti. The DOD publication completely overlooks LGBTQ+ victims. The publication silences these people in favor of devoting time to the US Army's role in liberating the camps and ending Jewish suffering – which is perhaps unsurprising as it is a pamphlet for the US military by the US military.

The Elephant In The Room: Intentional Separation

A deep dive into the creation of Holocaust memory reaches an uncomfortable conclusion. Historian James Young states, "Memory is never shaped in a vacuum; the motives are never pure."⁵³ In the case of Holocaust remembrance, the separate memories of victims have been intentional for two reasons. Historian Peter Novick argues that Holocaust remembrance took off in America because "Holocaust awareness was promoted to mobilize support for a beleaguered

⁵⁰ Linenthal, 305.

⁵¹ United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. *Fifty Years Ago, Darkness Before Dawn Planning Guide for Commemoration Days of Remembrance Sunday, April 3 through Sunday, April 10, 1994*, (United States Holocaust Memorial Council: Washington D.C., 1994), 216.

⁵² United State Department of Defense, *Days of remembrance of the victims of the Holocaust : a Department of Defense guide for commemorative observance*, (Washington D.C.: Office of Department of Defense, 1989).

⁵³ Young, James. *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials & Meanings*, pg xi.

Israel."⁵⁴ In essence, Holocaust remembrance in America focused on Jewish suffering to reinforce that Jewish people needed a place where they could live without fear of persecution.

The second motivation is tied to the first because the early flag bearers discussed the Holocaust through the lens that Jewish people were victims of the Holocaust because society and the political leaders were anti-Jewish. When Holocaust memorialization and scholarship became embedded into mainstream academia, few welcomed anything but Jewish scholarship. In the 1970's Holocaust scholar Joan Ringelheim tried to create a conference about women and the Holocaust. Many scholars, including women, pushed back against Ringelheim and told her that the victim's Jewish identity superseded all other identities.⁵⁵

This motive is also where the conversation becomes increasingly uncomfortable. One realizes that the Holocaust survivors who contributed to the creation of the USHMM had prejudices and biases that impacted the exhibitions created and artifacts selected for display. As James Young said, "Holocaust memorials are built for different reasons in different places and say things about the times they were written in."⁵⁶

President Carter founded the President's Commission on the Holocaust in 1978. Many suspect it was a way to appease the American Jewish population after he started discussions with the Palestinian Liberation Organization and the Neo-Nazi march in Skokie, Illinois, during the same year.⁵⁷ But the commission truly started creating the USHMM during the 1980s and the 1990s: a time that was profoundly anti-LGBTQ+ and racist. The museum's approach to inclusion reflects that sentiment. The Board of USHMM created exhibits on the assumption that "Jews

⁵⁴ Novick, Peter., *The Holocaust in American Life*, pg 268 – 269.

⁵⁵ Waxman, 1-7.

⁵⁶ Young, James. *The Texture and Memory of Holocaust Memorials & Meanings*, 2.

⁵⁷ Linenthal, 18.

were Holocaust victims, others were victims of Nazi terror."⁵⁸ Wiesel even stated at the commission's first meeting to create the USHMM that including non-Jewish experiences was "a generosity extended to all others."⁵⁹ One scholar ruminated that the section of the Wall of Remembrance at the USHMM that "details the suffering of Poles, homosexuals ... recently unresearched in Holocaust studies, are given their due...space they managed to obtain."⁶⁰ The phrases "generosity" and "managed to obtain" imply that those who made those claims did not think that these groups' experiences did not inherently deserve and were not worth the same as Jewish experiences. This language also reinforces the biases that prove America still struggles with racist and anti-LGBTQ+ biases and prejudices.

"And Others"

The phrase "Jews and others" is commonly used in Holocaust remembrance. This othering is problematic in several regards. The first is that othering came about because some of the USHMM board members who built the museum had the mentality "Jews died for who they were, everyone else for what they did."⁶¹ This mentality perpetuates the idea that being gay is a choice or being disabled is a personal failing or the parents' fault for bad genetics.

It is also dehumanizing because they have no identity besides "other." Other has no face, no characteristic beyond not Jewish. In this telling, anyone who died in the Holocaust who was not Jewish has no attributes except for being dead. There is no explanation given as to why these non-Jewish people died. Dehumanizing these people delegitimizes their victimhood delegitimizes their trauma. Society already marginalizes these traumatized groups. "And Others"

⁵⁸ Linenthal, 54.

⁵⁹ Linenthal, 53.

⁶⁰ Paris, Erna. *Long Shadows, Truth Lies & History*, (New York: Bloomsbury, 2001), 343.

⁶¹ Linenthal, 119-120.

is dangerous because it implies that some people and groups should be considered less than others. Ultimately, a hierarchical ranking of individuals leads to the Holocaust in the first place.

Uncomfortably, the hierarchy mentality presented by the board creates the memory that favors some groups and mirrors behaviors at the camps. Richard Plant discovered that gay men had the highest ratio of deaths of any victim group of the Holocaust. Nazi officers gave gay men, known in the camps for the pink triangles on their uniforms, the worst camp assignments and living conditions possible.⁶² Doctors in the concentration camps also conducted medical experiments on gay men to find the "cure" for homosexuality. Himmler thought only 2% of homosexuals were innately homosexual, and there was a cure for the other 98% of homosexuals.⁶³ But no matter what the gay men endured at the camps, their experiences are still classified as "others."

"What They Did" Fallacy: Persecution Before And After The Holocaust

"Others [were persecuted] for what they did" is also dangerous discourse because it is simply not true. These "others" encompass a very diverse group of people persecuted for how they were born (both in terms of physical ability and skin color), their lives, and who they loved. While the anti-Jewish attitude was a major societal ill in the 20th century and was a massive motivation for Nazis in the Holocaust, it was not the only malicious mentality that existed within the Nazi party. The Final Solution involved racism, ableism, sexism, and anti-LGBTQ+ ideology and those hateful sentiments impeded many groups' ability to live in Europe during the Nazi regime freely and safely.

Some of these negative sentiments existed across the world and well before the Nazis came to power. In 1871 the German government added Paragraph 175 to its Penal Code, which

⁶² Plant, 14.

⁶³ Tamagne, 384.

specifically criminalized male homosexuality.⁶⁴ There was also Paragraph 183, which was an "obscenity law" banning cross-dressing. It policed gender expression, impacting the lives of those who called themselves transvestites. According to Queer history scholar Dr. Laurie Marhoefer, in early to mid-20th century Germany, "transvestite" was an umbrella term for those who sometimes dressed outside of gender expectations and for those whose birth-assigned sex did not align with their true sex.⁶⁵

Unfortunately, this type of behavior was common in other nations. As French writer and queer theorist Guy Hocquengh stated, "[T]he massacre of the homosexuals had to be kept secret especially since it would reveal a similarity between Nazism and those who claimed to be its judges and its mortal enemies."⁶⁶ However, other nations allowed scientific study without persecution because sexology was a popular field of study at the time. Three years after WWII ended, American biologist Alfred Kinsey published a study with 5300 white male participants and concluded that 10% of men were exclusively homosexual.⁶⁷

The trauma of being a gay man and being in the camps was just as life-altering as any Holocaust survivor's experience. Pierre Seel was a Frenchman sent to Schirmeck camp for being homosexual. Seel was so traumatized he was convinced he could not live as a gay man after liberation. He spent the next 30 years in heterosexual relationships – including marriage and children.⁶⁸ After the marriage failed, Seel finally reconciled his trauma and spent the rest of his

⁶⁴ Settingington, 123.

⁶⁵ Marhoefer, Laurie. "Transgender Identities and the Police in Nazi Germany." YouTube Video. May 2, 2019. 9:52-12:18. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-NhJVtMGONk>.

⁶⁶ Hocquengh, Guy. *The Men of the Pink Triangle*, (Paris: Editions Persona, 1981), 11.

⁶⁷ Kinsey, A. C., Pomeroy, W. B., & Martin, Clyde. E. *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*, (Philadelphia, PA: Saunders., 1948).

⁶⁸ Seel, Pierre. *I, Pierre Seel, Deported Homosexual: A Memoir of Nazi Terror*, (New York: Basic Books, 1995), 100-114.

life seeking reparations for gay survivors. Germany did not purge the Paragraph 175 convictions of Holocaust survivors and offer reparations until 2017.⁶⁹

Additionally, the "what they did" logic crumbles when one learns about the full breadth of Nazi plans. Historian Timothy Snyder admits that "Hitler wanted not only to eradicate the Jews...If the German war against the USSR had gone to plan, thirty million civilians would have died in the first winter."⁷⁰ The USHMM even prescribes to this produced the book *Nazi Ideology and the Holocaust*, which elaborates on who Nazis targeted and why the Nazis persecuted them. The publication stated that killing the mentally and physically disabled "was a central component of the Nazi quest to purify the Aryan race."⁷¹ They also wrote that "Hitler viewed Slavs as a barbaric, uncivilized horde."⁷² The same book also states that Nazis created plans to supply Poles "meager food rations and meager living conditions – to result in their inevitable demise as an independent people."⁷³

Separate Memories And Jewish Dominant Narrative Reified In Classrooms & Culture

In Classrooms

The author attended Fargo Public Schools (FPS), the largest school district in North Dakota at that time. The FPS curriculum surrounding the Holocaust reifies the Jewish-centered dominant narrative. FPS students read as many books about the Holocaust in their K-12 education as they read Shakespeare plays. In late elementary school, students read either *Behind the Bedroom Wall*, *Number the Stars*, or *When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit*. Those stories are all about Jewish children. In sixth grade, students read *The Devil's Arithmetic*, a book about a

⁶⁹ BBC News Staff. "Germany quashes gay men's convictions and offers compensation." *BBC*. (London), June 23, 2017.

⁷⁰ Snyder, Timothy., *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*, (New York: Basic Books, 2010), ix.

⁷¹ United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, *Nazi Ideology and the Holocaust*, (Washington D.C.: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2007), 76.

⁷² United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 53.

⁷³ United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 59.

Jewish family grappling with generational trauma around the Holocaust. In eighth grade, students read *The Diary of Anne Frank* play. In ninth grade, students read *Night* by Elie Wiesel and watched the Oprah special where she and Wiesel visit Auschwitz. Additionally, David Faber – who survived nine concentration camps, gave lectures at the Fargo middle schools and the greater Fargo community in 2004, 2006, 2007, and 2009.⁷⁴

In Fargo high schools, teachers did little more than acknowledge Hitler's plans to kill millions happened during rampant anti-Jewish sentiment, racism, and nationalism. The teachers know students read multiple books about Holocaust experiences before taking their European history class and use their class time to discuss ideas students have not learned about before. A decade after the author graduated, the Holocaust is still barely a footnote in FPS AP European history class because those books are in previous grades' curriculums, and FPS teachers feel it is better to spend class time discussing ideas, people, and concepts unfamiliar to students that will be on the AP exam.⁷⁵

In Popular Culture: Books

People also learn about the Holocaust through popular cultural interpretations of the event. Historians and memorialists need to consider these interpretations as literary theorist Kenneth Burke notes popular culture is "society's equipment for living." Individuals utilize what they consume in the media to know what they need to know about how the world works and how they should live.⁷⁶ Ergo what people without a direct connection to the Holocaust know about it and how they interact with the subject is from the media they consume about it. Popular culture

⁷⁴ Bergeson, Steve., "Holocaust survivor to speak at NDSU." *NDSU News*. (Fargo, ND), September 17, 2009.

⁷⁵ Interview with John Johanson. January 30, 2022.

⁷⁶ Brummett, Barry. *Rhetoric and Popular Culture*., (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc, 2011), 14.

also reinforces the Jewish dominant narrative. That narrative means a Jewish-centered understanding of the biggest atrocity in Western civilization.

Hundreds of Holocaust-related books exist in various genres for young and old readers. Yet the books that are most published and the most read about the Holocaust in the English language are about the Jewish experience: suffering in the camps, helping Jews escape Nazi terror, life for Jewish people after liberation, or the trials of those who committed atrocities against Jewish people. Of the top 100 Holocaust books shelved on Goodreads, only eleven books had no direct connection to the Jewish Holocaust experience. Most of these books were about life in Vichy France, or other areas the Nazis occupied during the war, like the Channel Islands and Poland.

Children's books about the Holocaust also have very few similar breakdowns. Most books are about the experiences of Jewish children or saving Jewish children. A first glance at the data presented two possible stories that were not about Jewish experiences: one is the story of a Polish girl's experiences. The second was a book with the stories of six children. The book never expressly stated that the two of those families were Jewish, but further research revealed that all six children in the book were Jewish.⁷⁷ Below is the total breakdown of kids' books sold divided by category:

Table 1. Amazon Top Holocaust Kids Books Breakdown.

Category of Book	Number of Books
Jewish Memoirs/Biographies	30
Resistance to Rescue Jews	17
Anne Frank	16
Biographies of Jewish groups	16
WW2 with Holocaust part of it	10
General Holocaust	9
Total	100

⁷⁷“BBC Staff, “Children of the Holocaust.” *BBC*. (London),.

Table 2. Barnes & Noble Top Holocaust Kids Books Breakdown.

Category of Book	Number of Books
Anne Frank	28
General Holocaust	12
Biographies of Groups of Jews	19
Individual Jewish Bios/Memoirs	31
Resistance to Rescue Jews	18
WW2 with Holocaust part of it	6
Polish Memoir	1
Total	118

As the numbers below show, the most popular genre of kids' books about the Holocaust are memoirs or biographies of individual Holocaust experiences. On Amazon, these memoirs and biographies are all about Jewish individuals. Moreover, approximately one-third of those books were about Anne Frank. The breakdown is similar for Barnes & Noble - except that they sold one memoir written by a woman persecuted by the Nazis because she was Polish. It is undeniable most of the books children consume about the Holocaust in and outside of classrooms are from the Jewish perspective. Because young people see an overwhelmingly Jewish perspective of the Holocaust, children may think that Jewish people were the only group persecuted in the Holocaust. Teachers cannot supplement these children's knowledge of the Holocaust due to time constraints in the classroom. These constraints make the conversation around Holocaust victims be that Nazis killed Jews and others in their quest to create the Aryan race.

In Popular Culture: Social Media

Many concentration camps that have turned into museums have social media pages, especially Twitter, to promote visiting their museums and post information about the Holocaust. These pages frequently post the profiles of victims who died in concentration camps. Auschwitz Memorial Museum (@AuschwitzMemorial) is the only former concentration camp turned museum to have an English language Twitter page. It is also the Holocaust-related profile with

the most followers at 1.3 million.⁷⁸ The popularity is likely because "Auschwitz is at the center of Holocaust memory."⁷⁹

The Auschwitz Memorial Museum posts five to twelve profiles of victims on their birthdays or, on rare occasions, the day of their death. They post the person's name, what year they were born, their nationality/why the Nazis sent them to the camp, their camp registration number (if applicable), and, if known, their fate. Auschwitz Memorial Museum publishes multiple posts times a day with a single tweet and threaded tweets to shed light on the lives of those the Nazis targeted and persecuted. Their Twitter account brings awareness to groups like the Sinti and Soviet Prisoners of war. However, an analysis of six months' worth of profiles reveals their account reinforces a Jewish dominant narrative because the highest percentage of people profiled (41%) are Jewish.

⁷⁸ Auschwitz Museum., Twitter Bio, April 2022, <https://twitter.com/AuschwitzMuseum>

⁷⁹ *Denial*, directed by Mick Jackson. (2016 Universal City, CA: Universal Pictures.)

Table 3. Six Months of Auschwitz Victim Profiles.

Reason in Camp	Number of Victims
Eastern European Jews*	690
Polish	668
Western European Jews **	421
Sinti	102
Soviet POW	97
Czech	65
Roma	47
German	17
Ukrainian	12
Religious Leadership/Affiliation***	12
French	11
Resistance/Political prisoner	17
Russian	7
Slovenian	6
Only Labeled As Jewish	6
Middle East or North African Jew	8
Homosexual	5
Asocial	5
Russian Jew	1
Total	2,197
Jewish Related	1,126
Non-Jewish Related	1,071

*Eastern European Jews are Czech, Hungarian, Polish, Belarus, Ukrainian, Greek, Serbia, Yugoslavian, Slovakia, Romania, Cypriot, Rhodes Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenian, Croatia

** Western European Jews Austrian, French, German, Dutch, Norway, Belgian, Italian

*** Religious Leadership/Affiliation are Polish Catholic priests & nuns and Jehovah's Witness

Additionally, while the author did not do an official tally, a pattern emerged during the data collection process that gave the Jewish profiles a privilege other victims did not. Many Jewish profiles had personal, family photos accompanying the profile. Polish victims had pictures from their camp registration. Sinti/Roma victims did not have any images accompanying the posts.

However, Auschwitz Memorial Museum acknowledges that its Twitter page profiles many Jewish people because most of those sent to Auschwitz were Jews. Every year, for the past couple of years, Auschwitz Memorial posts a tweet that reports the Nazis sent 1.3 million people to Auschwitz. About 1.1 million were Polish Jews, 75,000 were Poles, 21,000 were Roma,

14,000 were Soviet POWS, 12,000 Jews from other countries, and 77 were gay men.⁸⁰

Compiling every victim profile for a prolonged period reveals that the profiles posted roughly reflect those numbers' ratios. Overall, the Auschwitz Memorial Museum presents a Jewish dominant narrative because Jewish people were the predominant group in the camp. But their profiles also offer a more extensive history and increase the visibility of victim groups that do not receive much attention in popular culture.

The Twitter account for USHMM, @HolocaustMuseum, is a different story. It is the second-highest followed Holocaust-related page with 344.8k followers.⁸¹ Unlike the Auschwitz Memorial Museum, the USHMM does not regularly post victim profiles. Another difference is that Auschwitz's Twitter page lets the victims stand independently. Occasionally, the profiles lead to threads providing background information, whereas the USHMM frequently tied victim profiles to invitations to attend online events or calls to donate to the museum. Six months of gathering the victim profiles from the USHMM reveals a Jewish-centered narrative because almost 92% of the tweets centered around Jewish Holocaust experiences. Here is the full breakdown:

Table 4. Six Months of USHMM Victim Profiles.

Reason sent to camp	Number of Victims Profiled
Jews	115
Resistance Assisting Jews	10
Jews & Disabled/Gay/Resistance	7
Reason Not Mentioned	5
Disabled	4
US POW	1
Roma	1
Gay	1
Jehovah's Witness	1
Total People	144

⁸⁰ Auschwitz Memorial, Twitter Post, January 2021, 4: 21 a.m.
<https://twitter.com/AuschwitzMuseum/status/1486645425289535488>

⁸¹ Holocaust Museum, Twitter Bio, April 2022, <https://twitter.com/HolocaustMuseum>

Another significant difference between the Twitter pages of the two Holocaust museums is that the USHMM does a lot more #trends. For example, the four posts profiling disabled individuals were part of a #DisabilityAwarenessMonth social media campaign. That begs the question: would USHMM have profiled these people if it wasn't for that social media campaign? That certainly seems to be the case. The one gay person profiled on their Twitter feed from July to December was a post for the #Olympics about a gay man denied from competing in the Berlin Olympics because of Paragraph 175.

A deeper dive revealed four profiles of gay victims during June, and all of the posts had #Pride, #PrideMonth included. In other words, Auschwitz's Twitter organically generated more posts for recognizing gay victims than the USHMM did. USHMM wants to speak for victims of the Holocaust across Europe, whereas Auschwitz only highlights 1.3 million victims, of which they admit only had 77 gay victims. Yet Auschwitz Memorial victim profiles organically include more mentions of the LGBTQ+ than the USHMM museum did within six months. In essence, USHMM pays lip service to groups who are not Jews and spends most of their attention on social media on Jewish victims. At the end of the day, the two social media pages present a Jewish dominant narrative of the Holocaust.

In Popular Culture: Films

Most of the Holocaust films embedded into culture also focus on Jewish suffering or salvation. IMDB's list of Holocaust films recommended 15 movies. They all are about Jewish victims during and after the Holocaust or saving Jews from Nazis, the trials Nazi leadership, or camp guards.⁸² It is the same scenario with Screen Rant's "Top Ten Holocaust films."⁸³

⁸² Pennington, Susan., Beachum, Chris., and Holland, Misty. "15 Best Holocaust Movies Ranked," *IMDB*. (Seattle, WA), April 17, 2020.

⁸³ Bulten, Izak. "10 Best Movies about the Holocaust," *Screen Rant*, (Saint-Laurent, Q.C.), December 4, 2019.

Cinemaholic recommended and ranked 20 movies: 19 are about Jewish experiences – the odd one was about Soviet resistance.⁸⁴ Mojo's list provided 15 films, and three did not follow a Jewish narrative. One of them is a general Holocaust documentary, the second is about the collaboration between the Vichy government & Nazis, and the final film is about Soviet resistance.⁸⁵

Problematic Portrayals, Especially In Cinema

There is one glaring issue with these cinematic portrayals of the Holocaust. The films depict women poorly. Sara Horowitz noted that even though males in camps were every man for himself, women decided to fight for the group and that cinematic portrayals occurred through the male gaze and "stress the protective agency" of women.⁸⁶ Other scholars examined Holocaust films produced from the 1960s to the 1990s and observed that the movie "reify gender hierarchies and inequalities...and exploiting the female body."⁸⁷ Essentially, Holocaust films objectify women and keep women defined as conservative heterosexual, maternal feminine ideas.

Even the films about the Holocaust and Holocaust memory meant to be empowering fall flat on this goal. *Denial* is a film about the Irving vs. Penguin/Lipstadt trial. The filmmaker's goal was to subvert the narrative of women in dramas. The screenwriter for *Denial*, David Hare, admits that the typical woman's cinematic journey is to gain a voice and agency to complete the task they need to undertake—citing Erin Brockovich as the epitome of this scenario. But he

⁸⁴ Sundriyal, Diksha., & Bhattacharjee, Sunayan. "20 Best Holocaust films of All Time." *The Cinemaholic*, (Port Coquitlam, B.C.), August 7, 2019.

⁸⁵ WatchMojo.com. "Top 10 Holocaust Films. May 8, 2014," YouTube video, 14:31, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jobufl3C5aE>

⁸⁶ Horowitz, Sara. "Gender & Holocaust Representation," In *Teaching the Representation of the Holocaust.*, Edited by Marianne Hirsch and Irene Kacandes, (New York: Modern Language Association, 2004), 115.

⁸⁷ Banwell, Stacy., & Fiddler, Michael. "Gendered viewing strategies: a Critique of Holocaust related films that eroticize, monetize and fetishize the female body," 165-166.

declared, "what was unusual about Lipstadt's experience was that she was an already articulate and powerfully intelligent woman who was ordered by her defense team not to take the stand."⁸⁸

The film's plot centers around the fact that Dr. Lipstadt's lawyers, Antony Julius and Richard Rampton, decided all the attention had to be on Irving to win their case. This approach meant Lipstadt would not take the stand or speak to the press until the trial was over. None of the survivors who approached Lipstadt, many of whom were women, were allowed to take the stand either. The scriptwriters declared they wrote the film to empower by showing the power of trust and teamwork.⁸⁹ But the empowerment fails. Though the film, men treat women with skepticism instead of support. Men force women to be silent. No other woman has a significant storyline in the movie. Women are secretaries and law clerks who tell Lipstadt to trust the process because the men know what they are doing.

Additionally, the writers did not present Dr. Lipstadt as a complex person in a significant way either. All the audience learns about Dr. Lipstadt is that she is a Jewish professor who has a dog, likes to run, and wrote a book. That book led to a lawsuit, and she has many feelings about that lawsuit – which does little to dismantle the idea of the "emotional woman." Honestly, the film lacks a lot of biographical information for a biopic film. Viewers do not learn that young Dr. Lipstadt circumvented Arab rules to visit Jerusalem when Jews were not allowed into the city. You never discover that Dr. Lipstadt went to the USSR to help Soviet Jews flee persecution a few years later.⁹⁰

The film *Denial* is the story of a sexist, racist, anti-Semitic man getting his just deserts because an outspoken woman – which is rare to see a woman who knew the power of her voice

⁸⁸ Hare, David. "Foreword." In *Denial: Holocaust on Trial* by Deborah Lipstadt, (New York: Harper Collins, 2005), xiv.

⁸⁹ Hare, xv.

⁹⁰ Lipstadt, Deborah, *Denial: History on Trial*, (New York: Harper Collins, 2005), 6-15.

from the very beginning of the story represented in media – had to be silent to win the case. But what the film boils down to is a dramatization of a woman who had men tell her to sit down, shut up, and let men do all the talking to get the job done. Those who wrote *Denial* meant for the film to be empowering. The empowerment fails after one applies a feminist lens. In the end, it is just another film in a long line of Holocaust films that do not promote women having agency and being successful.

These Depictions Conform With Women's Depictions In Film.

However, cinema does not favorably depict women in general. Dr. Stacy Smith and Crystal Cook discovered that in the 101 highest-grossing G-rated movies from 1990 to 2005, "28% of speaking characters were females [portrayed as] 'hyper-attractive' or 'hypersexual' and/or passive."⁹¹ Jocelyn Murphy wrote that even though there are more films with women playing active roles in recent years, "women are overwhelmingly valued based on their identification as a mother, wife, or lover."⁹² The roles women play in Cinema, Holocaust-themed or not, promote conservative ideals of women and cishet ideals because the characters are in defined, domestic roles in heterosexual relations.

These depictions are intentional because, like Broadway, television, and film star Karen Olivo asserted that in the entertainment industry, "men write the scripts, decide what gets produced, and who gets hired."⁹³ Male-dominated decision rooms explain why Hollywood produced films about Oscar Schindler and Leopold Socha, not Irene Sendler or Frieda Belinfante. Irene Sendler rescued over two thousand children in the Warsaw ghetto. During the

⁹¹ Green, Sally., & Cook, Crystal Allen. *Gender stereotypes: An analysis of popular film and television*. (Los Angeles: Geena Davis Institute on Gender and Media, 2008).

⁹² Murphy, Nicole. "The Role of Women in Film Supporting the men --An analysis of how culture influences the changing discourse on gender representations in film," Honors thesis, (University of Arkansas, 2015).

⁹³ *Rita Moreno: Just a Girl Who Decided to Go for It*, directed by Mariem Pérez Riera. (2021. Washington D.C.: Corporation for Public Broadcasting).

war, Frieda Belinfante dressed as a man to help destroy records and falsify ID cards to aid those fleeing Nazis in Amsterdam.

Dystopic Narratives

According to Dr. Marla Morris, there is another problem in most depictions of the Holocaust across popular culture. These stories are mainly utopian. Her definition of a utopian story is that there is a happy or hopeful ending. For example, people are liberated in many stories and become productive citizens. Some even became well-known advocates like Elie Wiesel. Survivors received justice when Nazis faced punishment during the Nuremberg Trials. Even when the resolution is death, there is hope. For example, Anne Frank died weeks before the liberation, but her words survived – and the parting words of the diary are those of hope for better days to come.

But the reality of the Holocaust is what Morris deems dystopic: a story without a positive resolution. The truth of the Holocaust is that many did not get a happy or hopeful ending. Millions died in the ghettos, firing squads, trains, camps, and gas chambers.⁹⁴ Morris argues that too many Holocaust stories follow the utopian model and not the dystopic to reflect that fact. Ultimately Morris calls for curriculums to adopt dystopic approaches because "representations of the Holocaust should not be made comfortable."⁹⁵

The author certainly agrees with this sentiment – of the many Holocaust narratives consumed in creating this thesis, the Auschwitz Twitter account was one of the only platforms that regularly had a dystopic narrative. Many of the victim profiles recorded that person had died, many in the gas chamber. The page also underscored how bleak experiences were for those

⁹⁴ Morris, 142.

⁹⁵ Morris, 10.

sent to concentration camps. Many profiles listed how long they were in the concentration camp. Horrifically, people frequently died within weeks of their arrival.

Carving Out Spaces of Memory

Keep in mind these conversations using "and others" while these individuals were still alive. After hearing this rhetoric and experiencing those biases, groups decided to make their own memorials. While there are many memorials for Jewish victims of the Holocaust, there are only seven memorials for LGBTQ+ victims. Of those seven, three are memorials that use the pink triangle to symbolize the persecution of gay people during the Holocaust and after 1945.⁹⁶ Pink Triangle Park in San Francisco, California, is one of those seven memorials. The park's focal point is 15 pylons. Each pylon represents one thousand people to remember the LGBTQ+ victims of the Nazi regime. The park's center has a large pink triangle filled with pink stones people can take to remember their experience at the site.⁹⁷

The Eureka Valley Promotion Association (EVPA) advocated for building the park in the early 2000s. The EVPA commissioned the artists Robert Bruce and Susan Martin to create the design. San Francisco dedicated the park on Human Rights Day, December 10th, 2001 – though, at the time, it was little more than a flower garden.⁹⁸ Private donations and the city of San Francisco work together to fund the site since the site is now under the purview of the city's public works. One private funder is Project Juice. Profits from their Rainbow Parfait juice line go

⁹⁶ Gerdes., Stephanie. "7 places around the world remembering the Holocaust's LGBTI victims." *Gay Star News*, (London), January 27, 2017.

⁹⁷ Friends of the Pink Triangle Memorial, "About Pink Triangle Memorial." *Eureka Valley Foundation*. (San Francisco, CA), Updated 2022.

⁹⁸ "Pink triangle park and memorial." My Castro, Solar Flare Digital Technology, Access March 12, 2020, <http://mycastro.com/pink-triangle-park>.

towards Pink Triangle Park maintenance.⁹⁹ The EVPA did not have enough funds to complete and install all of the pylons in the park until 2013.

Safe Space Versus Silence

One consideration is a cost-benefit analysis of having a separate space for LGBTQ+ Holocaust memory. Pink Triangle Park is in the heart of the Castro district of San Francisco, America's most well-known gay village; some even say gay Mecca. Placing the memorial in Castro avoids rejection from people like those on the board of the USHMM. Placing the monument in the Castro avoids clashes with groups like the Westboro Baptist church. It is also where LGBTQ+ people can interact with LGBTQ+ history in an LGBTQ+ affirming space. And there are very few spaces where that can occur. Because it is such an affirming area, the park has only had one case of vandalism. In 2019 the plaque explaining the park pylons was defaced with white paint, but authorities did not believe the perpetrators did it as a hate crime.¹⁰⁰

Consequently, the conversation about gay victims happens in gay places. It is a memorial only seen by those coming through the Castro and those looking for it. The LGBTQ+ experiences of the Holocaust are not a part of mainstream public memory. Ergo, cis het people may never come across the memorial to know the Nazis targeted LGBTQ+ people and sent them to camps, and died in the camps beside Jews, Roma, political prisoners, Eastern Europeans, and dissenters. A memorial separated from the national museum and nestled across the country in San Francisco means that it is a perspective that is silent in mainstream memory.

⁹⁹ Friends of the Pink Triangle Memorial, "Project Juice First anniversary." *Eureka Valley Foundation*, (San Francisco, CA), Feb 1, 2018..

¹⁰⁰ Laird, Cynthia. "Plaque at Pink Triangle Park vandalized." *The Bay Area Reporter*, (San Francisco, CA), May 1, 2019.

Further Silencing

Though even with these pink triangle memorials, there is exclusion. In the Holocaust, the pink triangle was for Gay men. Lesbians wore a black triangle. The park website says it is a memorial to gay men.¹⁰¹ Yet the plaque at the park says, "Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender victims of the Nazi regime."¹⁰² The park also shows how the pink triangle is a symbol that has moved beyond gay men to symbolize the LGBTQ+ movement.¹⁰³ For example, a pink triangle is on the infamous silence = death posters that are so ubiquitous they appear in films like *Tick...Tick...Boom!* without the audience batting an eye.¹⁰⁴

However, this addresses the issue that LGBTQ+ memorials have a history of silencing victims. Memorials have purposefully excluded lesbians. The most jarring example is the Memorial to Homosexuals Persecuted Under Nazism. There is a viewing hole in this memorial to see a rotating loop of pictures of gays kissing – called the eternal kiss. In 2008, the plan for the eternal kiss loop would be images of men kissing men for two years; then the next two years would be women kissing women, then back to men for two years, etc. However, groups protested when the memorial moved to install the lesbian eternal loop in 2010 because "lesbians were not targeted for persecution in the Holocaust."¹⁰⁵ Sociologist and historian Alexander Zinn argued that having lesbians as the focus of the eternal kiss would distort history, and "Historical truth must remain the focus " of the memorial.¹⁰⁶ The loop did not incorporate lesbians until

¹⁰¹ Friends of the Pink Triangle Memorial, "About Pink Triangle Memorial."

¹⁰² Friends of the Pink Triangle Memorial, "Dedication 23 June 2003 Pink Triangle Park Opens." *The Eureka Valley Foundation* (San Francisco, CA). June 2003.

¹⁰³ Braidwood, Ella. "Holocaust Memorial Day: How the pink triangle became a symbol of gay rights."

¹⁰⁴ *Tick...Tick...Boom!* Directed by Lin-Manuel Miranda (2022. Los Gatos California: Netflix.)

¹⁰⁵ Advocate Editors. "Lesbian Kiss at Berlin Gay Holocaust Memorial draws protest." *The Advocate*, (Los Angeles, CA), March 25, 2010.

¹⁰⁶ Anonymous. "Lesbian Holocaust memorial upsets historians." *The Data Lounge*, (New York, NY), March 28, 2010.

2012. The video from 2012 -2014 was a loop of people reacting to gay and lesbian couples kissing.¹⁰⁷

Most Holocaust remembrances almost entirely leave out transgender voices. Among the LGBTQ+ memorials, only the plaque at Pink Triangle Park mentions transgender victims. The previously mentioned *Nazi Ideology* book created by the USHMM does not acknowledge transgender experiences. A search for “transgender” on the USHMM website does not yield any results. One has to use “transvestite” to yield four image results. The USHMM updated its language to include Roma and Sinti with anything tagged gypsy. Yet the USHMM has not updated its language for the LGBTQ+ people to find results using today’s terminology.

Collective Memory Counterargument

One counterargument is that the Jewish dominant narrative is not malicious like Holocaust denial but simply winning the numbers lottery. The status quo is a Jewish-centered narrative because Jewish people were the largest singular group targeted. The most who escaped, the most who survived to tell their stories to historians, donate their photos and artifacts to museums, and the most write and publish books about their experiences. Any historian knows they have to base their research on the sources that are available to them. Most of the materials available to those interested in studying the Holocaust were about the Jewish experiences.

This idea goes hand in hand with Maurice Halbwach's collective memory theory. He argues that collective memory is a social construction dependent on class, race, and family. Groups support collective memory, and that memory is delineated through space and time.¹⁰⁸ Survivors told their stories to their families, and these conversations were happening in Jewish

¹⁰⁷ Breitenbach, Dagmar. “New Film for Berlin’s memorial to Commemorate Persecuted Homosexuals.” *Deutsche Welle* . (Bonne, Germany), January 1, 2018.

¹⁰⁸ Halbachs, Maurice., *On Collective Memory*. ed. & trans. Lewis A Coser (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

families across the globe. Survivors also began to speak and record their stories in books, documentaries, or films, and communities consumed those stories. Then those stories became part of the fabric of society in schools and have stayed throughout time.

The Darker Side of Collective Memory

However, historians need to reconcile that perhaps there are so many Jewish Holocaust narratives in the public sphere because, after WWII, Jewish people could live openly in Europe and America without persecution for existing. Jewish Holocaust survivors were beginning to tell their tales in earnest in the 1970s and 1980s. At that time, many of the other groups were still facing persecution. Therefore, they were never allowed to process the trauma of concentration camps publicly.

Europeans never stopped persecuting Roma. In 2010 France used the police to force hundreds of Roma living in France to relocate to Romania.¹⁰⁹ Andrea Carlo reports that antiziganist [anti-Roma] sentiment has risen since then, especially in France, Italy, and Hungary: only attacking camps but calling for relocation and sterilization of Roma people. Carlo notes that those attacking Roma are "neo-fascist gangs and angered locals." The violence "often goes unchecked because there is a striking lack of opposition from many on the left."¹¹⁰ The COVID-19 Pandemic exacerbated the violence as many in Europe "blame the Roma for this pandemic," causing some countries to call for military intervention in Romani neighborhoods instead of sending aid to help Roma communities – as EU human rights treaties mandate.¹¹¹ The Roma could not focus their post-war energy on creating a community memory that could seep

¹⁰⁹ BBC News Staff. "France sends Roma Gypsies back to Romania." *BBC*. (London, UK), August 20, 2010.

¹¹⁰ Carlo, Andrea.. "We need to talk about the rising wave of anti-Roma attacks in Europe." *The Independent*. (London, UK) July 29, 2019.

¹¹¹ Matache, Margareta., & Bhabha, Jacqueline., "Anti-Roma Racism is Spiraling During COVID-19 Pandemic." *Health and Human Rights Journal*. (Cambridge, MA), April 7, 2020.

into national and international collective memory the same way the Jewish populations did. After all, if Roma students are not welcome in schools today, it is not likely they will let Roma Holocaust survivors give lectures like the ones Elie Wiesel and David Faber did for decades.¹¹²

It is the same scenario for the LGBTQ+ population. Throughout the postwar period, the LGBTQ+ population faced battles for recognition. The European LGBTQ+ community mobilized to receive reparations for being sent to concentration camps. The American community had to mobilize for aid from an apathetic government during HIV/AIDS epidemic. To this day, LGBTQ+ people must advocate and organize to allow governments to let people exist and have rights within their identity. LGBTQ+ Americans still have to advocate for work or housing protections in many states. Only 21 of the 27 EU member countries have marriage equality.

Another problem with LGBTQ+ collective memory is that scholars and greater society will never know the actual number of LGBTQ+ victims of the Holocaust because many could have been persecuted for a reason other than being gay. One example of this is the play *Bent* – which was adapted into a film. The play is based on the book *The Men with the Pink Triangle* by Heinz Herger. Herger wrote the book based on interviews with an unnamed gay Austrian man from 1971 to 1972. In *Bent*, Max, the main character, does not disclose being gay after the Nazis arrested him because he knew a pink triangle on his uniform would lead to a worse fate than a yellow triangle. Max kills himself in the play, but the man Herger interviewed survived and, like Pierre Seel, married a woman after liberation.

But these stories of gay men are few and far between, and lesbian Holocaust narratives are even harder to find. The Biases that prevent people from living openly as LGBTQ+ today

¹¹² Matache, Margareta., & Bhabha, Jacqueline, April 7, 2020.

existed in full force when historians began collecting Holocaust survivors' memories. Dr. Marla Morris proposes that "Perhaps it is the historians' homophobia that keeps these memories hidden" to explain why there are few known narratives about lesbians.¹¹³ Therefore these stories were left out of official narratives because of biases in society. Men like Pierre Seel eventually told their stories in a quest to seek reparations. But how many men and women were like Max and never bore the pink triangle? Or how many were like Pierre Seel and lived heterosexual lives after liberation but took their secret to the grave instead of speaking out?

Sometimes acknowledging the LGBTQ+ population has been one step forward, two steps back. This cycle of progress and regression is because of the long history of politicization of LGBTQ+ people, which is still playing out in today's political arena. While Florida's "Don't Say Gay" bill dominates national headlines, there are currently 251 pieces of Anti-LGBTQ+ legislation debated in 39 states during the 2022 legislative session.¹¹⁴ The politicization of LGBTQ+ identities reared during federal commemorations of Holocaust Remembrance Day. Under the Obama Administration, the list of victims included transgender identities in the list of Holocaust victims read out during the federal government's commemorations of Holocaust Remembrance Day, which occur in collaboration with the USHMM. While the 46th president was in the White House from 2017 to 2021, the commemorations dropped transgender victims from the list of victims read out on Holocaust Memorial Day – an action in line with his anti-LGBTQ+ activities throughout his administration.

In 2018, a lawyer and a historian approached the USHMM about the removal of transgender people from the list. A curatorial team member responded that the exclusion was

¹¹³ Morris, Marla. *Curriculum and the Holocaust: Competing Sites of Memory and Representation*. PhD diss, (Louisiana State University, 1999).

¹¹⁴ Freedom for All Americans Staff, "Legislative Tracker: All Anti-LGBTQ+ Bills," Freedom for All Americans, Accessed <https://freedomforallamericans.org/legislative-tracker/anti-lgbtq-bills/>

because transgender people did not exist in Nazi Germany because transgender was not a term used until the 1980s. The USMM employee also said that people who labeled themselves with the "proto-transgender identity" were also persecuted for homosexuality, so they were listed as part of homosexual victims.¹¹⁵

But individuals we would now call transgender did live in Nazi Germany outside of same-sex relationships and had lived in Germany before the Nazis rose to power. In fact, one of the first scientists to research LGBTQ+ and advocate for gender-affirming care was the German Manfred Hirschfeld. He advocated that humans had many different types of sexuality and gender. Hirschfeld convinced the Weimar Republic to create identity cards for people who did not fit the gender binary. In 1919, Hirschfeld founded the Institute for Sexual study. The Nazis exiled Hirschfeld and burned down the Institute in 1933.¹¹⁶

Conclusion

There has been slight progress since the conversation between the lawyer, historian, and the USHMM curator. The 2022 Holocaust Remembrance Day press release stated, "to remember the millions of Roma, Sinti, Slavs, disabled persons, LGBTQ+ individuals, and political dissidents who were killed."¹¹⁷ But the USHMM continues to silence trans identities since there is no entry for them in the Encyclopedia. The Jewish dominant narrative stands in memory, education, and popular culture as Holocaust forgetting and denial linger in the foreground.

People need to know about the death and suffering of Jewish people in the Holocaust and why the Nazis killed Jewish people. But it is also important to remember the rest of the groups

¹¹⁵ Marhoefer, Laurie. "Transgender Identities and the Police in Nazi Germany." YouTube Video. May 2, 2019. 3:55 – 7:55. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-NhJVtMGONk>.

¹¹⁶ Hieneman, Elizabeth. "The early 20th-century German trans-rights activist who was decades ahead of his time." *The Conversation*. (Melbourne, Australia), November 9, 2018.

¹¹⁷ Biden, Joseph. "Statement by President Biden on International Holocaust Remembrance Day."

who suffered under the Nazi regime. At present, the Auschwitz Twitter account is one of the only places that regularly educates beyond a Jewish narrative, even though most of the people in the camp were Jews. Yet the English language Auschwitz Twitter page has less than 1.5 million followers. In contrast, millions go through the American school system every year and consume the Jewish dominant narrative, leaving the Twitter account overwhelmed by the rest of Holocaust remembrance that is more active than reading Twitter posts.

As Elizabeth Alexander asserted, people should learn the truth about the past. And the truth is that the Holocaust is the story where millions suffered and died because they suffered due to prejudice and hate. But therein lies a problem with remembrance: telling the story of millions of people is exceedingly complex – especially when the groups involved have different agendas and have different levels of public acceptance. One way to recognize victims and fight denial and forgetting is to create inclusive narratives more accurately reflect the victims of the Holocaust as per the most recent definitions. Hopefully, an inclusive narrative can ensure that when it comes to the Holocaust, no one else has to learn in their 20s that the Nazis killed LGBTQ+ people and wonder why they had not learned that before.

CHAPTER TWO: THE CURRENT STATE OF HOLOCAUST DENIERS AND DENIAL

"Irving got what he wanted...He came for headlines; he's got them. 'No holes, no Holocaust.'

He wanted a catchphrase; he's got it. It's going to spread like a virus."

- *Denial* Film¹¹⁸

Defining Denial

This chapter will add to the scholarship of deniers by undertaking an in-depth analysis of the major players in the Holocaust denial movement and identifying the whole gambit of their hateful ideologues and the way their ideas and actions intersect with other harmful movements. First, it is necessary to define what Holocaust denial is because cultural institutions, the academic community, and national and international legal systems have slightly different definitions of denial.

The USHMM explains that there are two types of Holocaust denial, hardcore denial, and softcore denial. Softcore denier admits the Holocaust happened, but not in how history books say the Holocaust happened. Softcore deniers make statements like the Nazis killed less than six million Jews in camps, or concentration camps like Auschwitz were labor camps, not extermination camps. Hardcore deniers are the ones who outright say the Holocaust did not occur. They assert that the Holocaust did not happen by proclaiming that survivors made up the Holocaust because the Nazis had no central plan to kill the Jews and say that Anne Frank was not a truthful account of someone hiding from the Nazis.¹¹⁹ Some deniers straddle the line between

¹¹⁸ *Denial*. Directed by Mick Jackson. (2016. Universal City: Universal Studios).

¹¹⁹ Vidal – Naquet, 65 -75.

hardcore and softcore denial by proclaiming there were no gas chambers in concentration camps. They say that victims died of typhus from overcrowded barracks.¹²⁰

Is The Status Quo of Holocaust Memory Distortion/Softcore Denial?

The USHMM has a page dedicated to addressing Holocaust denial, declaring:

The Nazi persecution of the Jews began with hateful words, escalated to discrimination and dehumanization, and culminated in genocide. The consequences for Jews were horrific, but suffering and death was not limited to them. Millions of others were victimized, displaced, forced into slave labor, and murdered. The Holocaust shows that when one group is targeted, all people are vulnerable.

The denial or distortion of history is an assault on truth and understanding. Comprehension and memory of the past are crucial to how we understand ourselves, our society, and our goals for the future. Intentionally denying or distorting the historical record threatens communal understanding of how to safeguard democracy and individual rights.¹²¹

Yet as we have observed the narrative, the USHMM purposefully created a Jewish-centered dominant narrative. As Timothy Snyder says, “The Germans murdered about as many non-Jews as Jewish people during the war.”¹²² The USHMM themselves attest to this on their website that Jews were only roughly 45 % of those who died. The section “Documenting Numbers of Victims of the Holocaust and Nazi Persecution” explains how scholars, historians, and demographers calculated the number of victims and provided a graph.

¹²⁰ United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Staff. “Why it’s Important to Confront Holocaust Denial,” United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Access January 20, 2022, <https://www.ushmm.org/antisemitism/holocaust-denial-and-distortion/explaining-holocaust-denial>

¹²¹ United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Staff. “Why it’s Important to Confront Holocaust Denial.”

¹²² Snyder, x.

Table 5. Condensed "Number Of Deaths" Graph From USHMM.¹²³

Why Nazis Killed Them	Number of People
Jews (including Russian Jews)	6 million
Soviet Civilians	5.7 million
Soviet POWs	3 million
Polish Civilians	1.8 million
Other Eastern European Civilians, Disabled, Jehovah's Witness, Black Germans, Criminals/"Asocials" (Including LGBTQ+)	643, 900
Roma/Sinti	250,000 – 500,000
Total	16, 643, 900 – 16, 893,900

However, one advertisement by the USHMM did not even acknowledge any Holocaust victims besides Jewish victims. A Facebook ad from August 2020 had the banner heard, "55% of Americans don't know how many Jews were killed during the Holocaust." Is this advertisement an example of soft-core denial because it excluded the millions of non-Jewish Holocaust victims who died? Is the "six million" refrain distortion because about ten million non-Jewish people died too? The answer depends on what you define as the Holocaust. If the Holocaust follows the definition of six million Jews, then no, it is not. But if your definition of the Holocaust is the millions of Jews and non-Jews who died at the hands of the Nazis, then yes, this advertisement would be distortion. The answer is not so cut and dry, affirming that Holocaust narratives and remembrance are complex.

Holocaust Denial In Academia

Manfred Gerstenfeld & Deborah Lipstadt are the two academics who have published on the nature of Holocaust denial, defining denial beyond softcore and hardcore. But both scholars add the ideas of distortion, equivalence, and comparisons. Gerstenfeld writes that distortion is not portraying the Holocaust accurately, especially concerning Jewish suffering. One example is

¹²³ "Documenting the Number of Victims of the Holocaust and Nazi Persecution," United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Access January 21, 2022, <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/documenting-numbers-of-victims-of-the-holocaust-and-nazi-persecution>

the comments Congressional Representatives Marjorie Taylor Green and Thomas Massey made comparing masks to yellow stars and other Nazi iconography.¹²⁴

Gerstenfeld argues that representing LGBTQ, Roma, Sinti, Eastern European, disabled, and “asocial” victims of the Holocaust is a distortion called de-Judaization. He declares de-Judaization is problematic and harmful to Holocaust memory because it makes the Holocaust the “process of wartime brutalization instead of a premeditated plan to kill the Jews.”¹²⁵ Both equivalence and comparison use an analogy between the Holocaust and something else. Gerstenfeld & Lipstadt say this is denial because one can only “metaphorically compare phenomena.”¹²⁶ Therefore the act of a metaphor trivializes Jewish suffering and the scale of the Holocaust. That rationale is why Lipstadt does not like the term nuclear holocaust.¹²⁷

Scholar and the son of two Holocaust survivors, Norman Finkelstein, believes Gerstenfeld and Lipstadt's definition of denial is far too narrow and dramatic. He argues that Lipstadt's argument means that statements of fact such as citizens of Dresden suffered from the allied bombings or that Elie Wiesel made a career out of being a Holocaust survivor is Holocaust denial. Finkelstein considered Holocaust deniers to be individuals a court of law had convicted of denial.¹²⁸

Finkelstein has a point. Ironically, Gerstenfeld and Lipstadt would claim this thesis is an act of Holocaust denial. Their rationale is that an inclusive narrative falls under distortion because it de-Judaization of Holocaust memory. Yet, the primary purpose of this thesis is to find ways to combat Holocaust denial in memory and popular culture. As this quandary exemplifies,

¹²⁴ Mui, Christine. Kentucky GOP Lawmaker Deletes Tweet Comparing Vaccine Mandate to Holocaust.”

¹²⁵ Gerstenfeld, 79.

¹²⁶ Gerstenfeld, 116.

¹²⁷ Lipstadt, *The Holocaust: An American Understanding*, 57.

¹²⁸ Finkelstein, 60.

defining Holocaust denial and the motivation behind deniers is not always as clear-cut as one may presume, and their actions do not occur in isolation.

Holocaust Denial Across The World & Politics

The United Nations recently passed a resolution on Holocaust denial and distortion. The General Assembly's "Holocaust denial" states, "Holocaust denial refers to discourse and propaganda that deny the historical reality and the extent of the extermination of the Jews by the Nazis and their accomplices during the Second World War, known as the Holocaust or Shoah."¹²⁹ The UN declared denial includes excusing or absolving the Nazis, saying the Jewish people brought their own destruction, or putting the Holocaust in a positive light. However, the 2022 resolution focused on how to fight denial across online platforms.¹³⁰

Many western countries have made laws banning Holocaust denial. About twenty-five countries, most of them in Europe, have laws criminalizing denial. These definitions of denial are consistent with the UN's definition.¹³¹ As time passed, these laws criminalized denying not just the Holocaust but denying crimes against humanity, such as the Armenian genocide.¹³²

Is Denial Hate Speech? A Conspiracy Theory?

Another issue with the definition of Holocaust denial is deciding whether or not Holocaust denial is a conspiracy theory or hate speech. Kenneth Stern considers denial hate speech.¹³³ Gertsfield and Lipstadt concur. Others believe it lies in a liminal space between

¹²⁹ UN Resolution "Holocaust denial" document A/76/L.30 January 13, 2022, 1.

¹³⁰ UN Resolution "Holocaust denial" document A/76/L.30 January 13, 2022, 2-3.

¹³¹ International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Staff. "Holocaust denial Laws: Effective tool or Trojan Horse?" *International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance*. (Berlin, Germany), April 13, 2021.

¹³² Bąkowski, Piotr. "Holocaust denial in criminal law Legal frameworks in selected EU Member States," *European Parliamentary Research Service*, (Brussels, Belgium), January 2022.

¹³³ Stern, Kenneth. *Holocaust Denial*.

conspiracy theory and hate speech. Robert Eaglestone argues that according to postmodernist theory, denial is not history but a genre outside of historical scholarship.¹³⁴

Eaglestone's idea of genre is prescient in light of the anti-vaxxers and anti-maskers proliferating worldwide. There is an argument that Holocaust denial's place is within an anti-fact rhetorical genre. This genre consists of the expanding movement to not believe in facts. Not only are those who do not believe in public health, but climate change deniers still exist. In an anti-fact genre, Holocaust denial can exist simply as its barest definition: denying the facts of the Nazi's murder apparatus from 1933 to 1945.

Holocaust Denier's Motivations

There are many motivations behind Holocaust denial. The bulk of Dr. Lipstadt's work examines the professionalization and motivations of deniers. Lipstadt states deniers are "fascist, antisemites with a specific ideological and political agenda."¹³⁵ Kenneth Stern concludes that Holocaust deniers' belief systems are rooted in racist, anti-Jewish, and anti-Zionist sentiments, and they are Neo-Nazis.¹³⁶

Dr. Lipstadt also believes postmodernism plays a role in Holocaust denial on college campuses because a tenant of postmodernism is to question the truth about the past. Like Northwestern electrical engineering professor Arthur Butz, some scholars have taken that to mean to question the Holocaust itself.¹³⁷ Shermer and Grobman added that another motivation is that some white supremacists have for an enemy run so deep they will go so far as to deny the largest calculated mass casualty event in Europe to create an enemy.¹³⁸

¹³⁴ Eaglestone, Robert. *Postmodernism and Holocaust denial*.

¹³⁵ Lipstadt, Deborah. *Denying the Holocaust*, 4.

¹³⁶ Stern, Kenneth, *Holocaust Denial* (New York: The American Jewish Committee Institute of Human Relations, 1993).

¹³⁷ Lipstadt, Deborah. *Denying the Holocaust*, 123 -130.

¹³⁸ Sherman, Michael., & Grobman, Alex. *Denying History: Who Says the Holocaust Never Happened*. (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2009), 88 -93.

Geography also motivates Holocaust denial. Stephen Atkins argues that deniers spout their opinions or find support because they feel German citizens, especially in Dresden, were victims of the war. But because Germany lost, society did not acknowledge their suffering.¹³⁹ A philosophy professor at Yale University, Jason Stanley, argues that Eastern Europeans share the same sentiment. He states that "Eastern European anti-semitism functions by saying that Jews stole the Holocaust Narrative; that Eastern European Christians, those were the real victims of the Nazis."¹⁴⁰

In some parts of the world, Holocaust denial stems from their national trauma. Robert Wistrich also argues that some Eastern European countries commemorating the Holocaust teeter on Holocaust denial because nations like Poland and Romania want to blame the Holocaust squarely on Germany's shoulders — even though citizens were both perpetrators and victims of the Holocaust in those countries.¹⁴¹ He added that Japanese Holocaust denial aims to "sanitize Japan's own wartime past."¹⁴²

Both Wistrich and Atkins agree that Holocaust denial in the Middle East manifests out of anti-Jewish sentiment directly tied to anti-Zionism. Saudi Arabian Abdullah Mohammad Sindi is an international relations professor who worked at the University of California in Irvine and as a research fellow at the United Nations.¹⁴³ Sindi has stated on record that the "Holocaust is nothing but Jewish, Zionist propaganda."¹⁴⁴ Egypt and Iran also have deniers who parrot the same sentiment to delegitimize Israel's existence.

¹³⁹ Atkins, Stephen E. *Holocaust Denial as an International Movement*.

¹⁴⁰ Gladstone, Brooke, host. "Fog of War"

Gladstone, Brooke, host. "Fog of War" On the Media (podcast). March 4, 2022. 37:00 – 49:30, March 4, 2022. <https://www.npr.org/podcasts/452538775/on-the-media>

¹⁴¹ Wistrich, 72.

¹⁴² Wistrich, 194.

¹⁴³ "About the Author" Amazon Books, Amazon. Access March 29, 2022, <https://www.amazon.com/Arabs-West-Contributions-Inflictions/dp/0967431603>

¹⁴⁴ Atkins, 215.

Denier's Strategies

There are four strategies deniers use to spread their message to gain followers to achieve their aims. The first is a strategy centered around discrediting the widespread facts of the Holocaust. These deniers try to delegitimize Holocaust survivors' testimony and lectures. They challenge the number of Jews killed and reject that gas chambers existed. They have corollary arguments with these, such as the allied bombings in German cities were as serious a war crime as the Holocaust.¹⁴⁵

The second strategy is saying they are presenting their ideas through free speech to avoid accountability. Holocaust deniers say that their activities fall under free speech, which they do. But as we'll discover, free speech does not include facing criticism and consequence when what you are saying is wrong. Robert Faurisson is one of the most prominent voices for this strategy, using academic freedom and free speech to suggest that *The Diary of Anne Frank* was not authentic.¹⁴⁶ Even the famous scholar Noam Chomsky supported Faurisson's arguments about free speech in Holocaust denial.¹⁴⁷

The third is that they do not call themselves deniers. Many deniers, including the most famous denier David Irving, make these claims under the banner of historical revisionism. As Kate Taylor puts it, "The term 'revisionist' is a term of respect that lends itself to legitimacy as an opposing view to which is taken as fact."¹⁴⁸ Irving and his ilk do not think they are incorrectly interpreting the past. They believe they are correcting the historical record to reflect their "truth" – even if they face incarceration as most countries in Western Europe have criminalized

¹⁴⁵ Atkins, 80.

¹⁴⁶ Lipstadt, Deborah. *Denying the Holocaust...*, 160-196.

¹⁴⁷ Atkins, 90.

¹⁴⁸ Taylor, Kate, *The David Irving Trial & International Revisionism*, (London: Searchlight Education Trust, 2008), 8.

Holocaust denial – fines or expelled from countries and never allowed back.¹⁴⁹ These fines, prison time, and expulsion are not deterrents to some deniers because they see themselves as martyrs for free speech.¹⁵⁰

Finally, many Holocaust deniers present a veneer of professionalism through association with the Institute for Historical Review (IHR). They sound like any professional academic organization to anyone unfamiliar with historical organizations. Only until they see the content of the papers and conferences does one realize that their arguments exist within pseudo-science and harmful ideologies.

Willis Carto and David McCalden formed the IHR in 1978 for far-right "activists" to have a place for their "revisionist history." It gave a voice to people like Carlos Whitlock Porter, the man behind "The Chemistry of the Hoaxocost," and Mark Weber, the author of "The Holocaust: Let's Hear Both Sides." Weber gained a leadership position early on in the IHR's establishment.¹⁵¹ While infighting between Carto and Mark Weber, the IHR no longer hosts conferences or publications; it still has an online presence.¹⁵²

This veneer of professionalism makes fighting deniers all the more necessary. As Wistrich put it, "Beyond their antisemitic assault on Jewish memory, there is even more fundamental negation of the basic premises of enlightenment itself, an implicit leveling of all values, and the nihilistic destruction of historical reality." Those working with the IHR know how to present their nonsensical arguments in a palatable way that adds an aura of legitimacy. Unaware or unsuspecting people can be lured into the IHR's ideas by their seemingly

¹⁴⁹ Epperlein, Petra., & Michael Tucker. "We Caught 'Historian' David Irving Denying the Holocaust on a Hot Mic."

¹⁵⁰ David John Cadwell Irving vs. Penguin Books Limited & Deborah Lipstadt, 113 (The Royal Court of Justice), Day One.

¹⁵¹ Atkins, Stephen., 166 -178.

¹⁵² Southern Poverty Law Center. "Institute for Historical Review."

professional presentation. This perceived professionalism adds an additional onus to confront denialists' arguments. As this chapter will later examine, people who do not believe facets of the Holocaust start to disbelieve other facts.

The Public Dissemination of Denial

While academics have acknowledged it is a problem, no one has done an in-depth analysis of denial to form the complete picture of Holocaust deniers across the country. Additionally, scholars have done very little to challenge the denial. Dr. Lipstadt's approach to deniers is not to give them places to air their views. While this advice was sound when she voiced it in 2000, it is now warrantless because the internet allows people to express their opinions unchecked across various platforms and allows their message to spread. Atkins argues that "Holocaust deniers have had the freedom to operate because of the reluctance of academic specialists to challenge them because the arguments are so absurd."¹⁵³

Holocaust denial is seemingly innocuous because their statements are so ludicrous, but denial is more nefarious and prevalent than it seems at first glance. One of the biggest reasons to challenge denial is the slippery slope fact denial can bring. If some people working in the Capitol on January 6th and covered behind Capitol Police now say that it was "a day not much different than any other tour group" and "legitimate political discourse," what other wackadoo ideas will they have next?

Frankly, the fact that Holocaust denial exists all, nevertheless across the world should be frightening to historians. It should be taken as a serious threat against the profession – and the academy. The Holocaust is the .largest systemic mass casualty event on the European continent – it inspired the creation of the word genocide. It spurred the UN Convention on the Prevention

¹⁵³ Atkins, Stephen., pg 3.

and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. As human rights, Dr. Ewelina Ochab states, "Failing to challenge Holocaust denial risks the danger of repeating false claims and blurs the line between truth, opinions, and lies. We need to ensure that we and the generations to come are equipped to know the difference between them as we cannot allow the three to be conflated."¹⁵⁴

The Public Trial of David Irving

Holocaust denial's big moment in the media was the libel trial *Irving vs. Penguin/Lipstadt*. This trial centered on Dr. Lipstadt's book *Denying the Holocaust: Assault on Truth and Memory*, where she labeled several Holocaust deniers by name, including David Irving in her book. Irving took umbrage at being called a denier. He sued Dr. Lipstadt for libel, even though most of what she said about Irving was actually citing other people's declarations on Irving. Irving sued Dr. Lipstadt in British court because the onus would be on Lipstadt and her legal team to prove Lipstadt's statements about him were factual. Irving would have had the onus to present evidence in his own defense in an American court.

The trial took place in the London High Courts in 2000. Lipstadt's legal team ran an "atom bomb defense." This defense was to spend all their energy and focus on proving Irving was a lousy historian who distorted the truth of the Holocaust. Instead of putting Lipstadt and Holocaust survivors on the witness stand, they called upon historians and scientists to show the inaccuracies in Irving's books.¹⁵⁵ The atom bomb defense worked, and the judge ruled in Lipstadt's favor.

But twenty years later, the trial seems to have minimal cultural impact. As established in the introduction, David Irving has moved from writing books for traditional publishing houses to

¹⁵⁴Ochab, Ewelina, "Why Challenging Holocaust Denial & Distortion Matters," *Forbes* (Jersey: NJ), Jan 27, 2020.

¹⁵⁵ Lipstadt, *Denial: Holocaust on Trial*, 32.

giving public lectures and touring concentration camps.¹⁵⁶ The internet gave Irving the ability to create videos and books independently of any television station or publisher. Even though a critical component of Dr. Lipstadt's defense was establishing that there is a difference between free speech and speech that spread false or hateful messages, that lesson seems not to have been internalized. For example, when JK Rowling made her transphobic views known to the public on Twitter, fans started boycotting the franchise. The mainstream media latched onto the fact Rowling and 150 other people signed a letter decrying fans not spending money on Wizarding World products as "cancel culture." The press could have framed the boycott as JK Rowling facing financial consequences for her words because fans decided to give money to Rowling's projects no longer because she spread untrue and harmful information about a marginalized community on a public platform.¹⁵⁷

Who Are Holocaust Deniers?

While David Irving is one of the most well-known deniers, he is not the only person proliferating denialist work. The primary scholarship on Holocaust denial mentions 90 Holocaust deniers throughout the globe. Nearly every Holocaust denier mentioned in these works is a man. Only four deniers are women: Elisabeth Carto, Ingrid Rimland-Zündel, Michele Renouf, and Olga Scally. Carto and Rimland Zündel were also married to Holocaust deniers – Willis Carto and Ernst Zündel, respectively. Olga Scally was a Soviet refugee in Germany and felt obligated to defend the country which adopted her. Such a drastic ratio between the sexes is hard to ignore.

¹⁵⁶ Epperlein, Petra., & Michael Tucker. "We Caught 'Historian' David Irving Denying the Holocaust on a Hot Mic."

¹⁵⁷ Shead, Sam. "JK Rowling criticizes 'cancel culture' in open letter signed by 150 public figures," *CNBC*, (New York, NY), July 8, 2020.

Misogyny, Racism, And Anti-LGBTQ+ Beliefs Among Holocaust Deniers

The scholars Kirril Shields, Ted Nannicelli, and Henry Theriault unequivocally call Irving an Anti-Semite, racist, misogynist. Yet, it is rare that other scholars or the media grant other Holocaust deniers the same monikers.¹⁵⁸ However, it is clear that many of the individuals exhibit more than one type of antagonist beliefs and behaviors towards their fellow humans beyond anti-Jewish and racist ideologies, including misogyny, racism, and anti-LGBTQ+ ideologies. As a warning, some of the things these individuals say are awful and sometimes rather shocking that one cannot even believe people think this way.

Example One: Robert Faurisson

Robert Faurisson is one of the first people associated with Holocaust denial. Faurisson was a French Holocaust denier who did not believe that gas chambers were a part of the concentration camps and *The Diary of Anne Frank* was a forgery.¹⁵⁹ Faurisson had no apparent record of using sexist language or expressing misogynistic behaviors. But it is very telling that out of all the published first-person accounts of the Holocaust, Faurisson chose to attack the veracity of the one written by a young female. On top of that, Faurisson chose a female who died in a concentration camp and therefore could not defend herself.

Example Two: A Deep Dive into David Irving

The *Irving v. Lipstadt* trial is the only time scholars examined sexism and misogyny amongst deniers to any extent. In her memoir about the *Irving v. Lipstadt* trial, *Denial: Holocaust History on Trial*, Dr. Lipstadt theorizes Irving chose her and not those other authors because she was a woman. As *Denial*, the film adaption of the *Irving v. Lipstadt* trial, portrayed

¹⁵⁸ Shields, Nannicelli, & Theriault, Henry. "Denial: David Irving, and the Complexities of Representing a Holocaust Denier," *Genocide Studies and Prevention: An International Journal* 12, no. 3 (2018), 40.

¹⁵⁹ Vidal – Naquet, Pierre. *Assassins of Memory*...., 83.

it, "I'm a woman, and I'm a Jew: he gets more bang for his buck."¹⁶⁰ In essence, Irving wanted to take a Holocaust denier to court in hopes of destroying their reputation to regain his academic reputation, which had been slipping after he fell in with the denier crowd. Irving found a person he could take to court who was also Jewish and a female scholar, which made him even more determined to use the trial to impact her reputation.

The defense had plenty of arguments to prove Irving is a racist and misogynist man, but Day 14 unveiled a lot of it. On that day, Rampton showed a recording of what Irving called a "stock speech."¹⁶¹ Irving stated, "The BBC should have a dinner-jacketed man reading all the important news, followed by a lady reading all the less important news. Followed by Trevor McDonald giving all the latest news about muggings and drug busts."¹⁶² For context, Sir Trevor McDonald is a Black man, knighted for his services to journalism the year before the trial, and so this comment affirms Irving's misogyny and racism.¹⁶³

Then Rampton highlighted an entry in one of the many diaries Irving has kept throughout his life; he wrote a lyric he was teaching his daughter at nine months old. The words to the rhyme were: "I am a baby Aryan, not Jewish or Sectarian. I have no plans to marry an Ape or Rastafarian."¹⁶⁴ There are many things to unpack in that rhyme, notably because he was singing this to a child. The trial did not unpack Irving's ditty's sexist intent. He tried to impart to his daughter the idea that a woman needs to get married but that a woman needs to marry a man – and that man needed to fit within specific parameters.

¹⁶⁰ *Denial*. Directed by Mick Jackson. (Universal City: Universal Studio, 2016).

¹⁶¹ Lipstadt, Deborah. *Denial: History on Trial*, pg 177.

¹⁶² David John Cadwell Irving vs. Penguin Books Limited & Deborah Lipstadt, 113 (The Royal Court of Justice), Day Fourteen.

¹⁶³ BBC Staff, "BBC Icons, Sir Trevor McDonald." *BBC*, (London, UK), Access February 19, 2022.

¹⁶⁴ Guardian Staff, "Irving taught his nine-month-old..." *The Guardian*, (London, UK), February 2, 2000.

Day 14 continued to reveal Irving's determination that his daughter marries a man also comes from a racist and anti-LGBTQ+ standpoint. Irving admitted he thought HIV/AIDS was "God's Final Solution which may cruelly wipe out, not only the blacks and homosexuals but a large part of the drug addicts and sexually promiscuous and indiscriminate heterosexual population."¹⁶⁵ Years later, Irving gave a lecture in Manchester while Manchester Pride took place. He insinuated that the LGBTQ+ movement was fake and that gay people were responsible for spreading the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s.¹⁶⁶

But he also revealed his misogyny when he cross-examined the defense's witnesses when he defended himself. Irving asked Robert Van Pelt, an architectural historian who was testifying as an expert on the architecture of Auschwitz, about art created by the Auschwitz survivor David Olère. Instead of asking about attributes of the drawings, such as the buildings, Irving asked Van Pelt if Olère felt compelled to depict women as naked to sell these depictions and if Nazis could imprison only attractive-looking women.¹⁶⁷

Irving aligned deeper into the racist and misogynist camp as he spoke to the press after the court dismissed on day 14. Irving admitted to the press that he appreciated his maid's breasts, especially maids who were not born in Britain.¹⁶⁸ Overall, the trial reinforced Irving's Holocaust denial comes from an anti-Jewish place – but racism, misogyny, and anti-LGBTQ+ beliefs also influenced his actions. An alarming fact is that Irving is not alone in these beliefs.

¹⁶⁵ Epperlein, Petra., & Michael Tucker. "We Caught 'Historian' David Irving Denying the Holocaust on a Hot Mic."

¹⁶⁶ Mancunian Matters Staff. "Holocaust Denial David Irving Sick Jibe at LGBTQ Community for their Part in Aids Epidemic while Manchester Celebrated Pride." Mancunian Matters. (Manchester, UK), August 28, 2013.

¹⁶⁷ David John Cadwell Irving vs. Penguin Books Limited & Deborah Lipstadt, Day 10.

¹⁶⁸ Lipstadt, Deborah. *Denial: History on Trial*, 183.

Example Three: Ernst Zündel

Irving was friends with Canadian denier Ernst Zündel. Zündel was another early player in Holocaust denial, believing the Holocaust was a hoax, a conspiracy started by the Jewish freemasons.¹⁶⁹ Zündel also believed Hitler created bunkers on Antarctica that house lasers and missiles.¹⁷⁰ He also played a significant role in the IHR because Zündel spearheaded Samizdat Publishers in Toronto, where "staff worked every day beneath a portrait of the worst evildoer of all time, Adolph Hitler."¹⁷¹

The Canadian Court tried and sentenced Zündel for publishing and distributing false information, including the Leuchter Report. Fred Leuchter was a man who ran an execution equipment manufacturing business and was a Holocaust denier. Leuchter chipped away at some of the structures at Auschwitz, roughly forty years after the camp's liberation. He conducted a pseudo-scientific analysis of chemicals present in those fragments. Leuchter claimed his analysis revealed that "Zyklon B was not used to kill people, but rather, only sporadically, for disinfection."¹⁷²

Scholars on Holocaust denial have focused on Zündel's ideas about lasers and science. But his second wife supplied information to the FBI, and Canada's equivalent Security Services makes anyone and referred to him as "evil incarnate."¹⁷³ No one would give someone that label if they only had off-the-wall ideas about historical events. One would easily assume that based on that declaration Zündel denigrated more than just Jewish people based on that declaration. A

¹⁶⁹ Goldschlänger, Alain. "The Trials of Ernst Zundel," in Wistrich, Robert., *Holocaust Denial: The Politics of Perfidy*, (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2012), 117.

¹⁷⁰ Taylor, pg 7.

¹⁷¹ Auschwitz Memorial Museum Staff, "Ernst Zundel" Auschwitz Memorial Museum, Access March 27, 2022. <https://www.auschwitz.org/en/history/holocaust-denial/ernst-zundel/>

¹⁷² Auschwitz Memorial Museum Staff. "Leuchter Report." Auschwitz Memorial Museum, Access March 27, 2022. <http://www.auschwitz.org/en/history/holocaust-denial/leuchter-report/>

¹⁷³ Cheney, Peter., "The wives, The Marriages Of Chameleon Ernst Zundel," *The Globe and Mail*, (Toronto, ON), March 8, 2003.

man like Ernst Zündel begs for scholars to consider deniers holistically — not just how their anti-Jewish sentiment influences their actions in Holocaust deniers since more than anti-Jewish ideas fuel their identity.

Example Four: Darren Beattie

Zündel is dead, and Irving is old, but the younger generations have their own versions of these two. The 46th President of the United States appointed Darren Beattie to serve on the Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad. Serving on this commission includes attending Holocaust commemorations. But earlier in the Trump administration, the White House had fired Beattie as a speechwriter because he appeared on panels with his friends to support their claims about Holocaust denial.

Beattie also exudes sexist and anti-LGBTQ+ behavior. He has publicly supported and admired Jeffrey Epstein for refusing to admit guilt and used language that disrespected women to defend his admiration of Epstein.¹⁷⁴ Beattie mocked Lia Thomas and a post the US Air Force had made on celebrating the Air Force's highest-ranking trans member on #TransVisibilityDay.¹⁷⁵ Beattie is following the pattern emerging that deniers have nefarious ideologies beyond denying the Holocaust.

Example Five: Nick Fuentes

Nick Fuentes is no exception to this pattern. Not only has Fuentes compared Nazi gas chambers to baking cookies, but he is also the epitome of right-wing, white supremacist extremism. He started the "America First" podcast and the America First Political Action Conference (AFPAC). The Anti-Defamation League writes that "Fuentes views these societal

¹⁷⁴ Mathis – Lilly, Ben. "White Nationalist Appointed by Trump...." *Slate*, (Brooklyn, NY), November 20, 2020.

¹⁷⁵ Beattie, Darren. Twitter Post, March 2022, 12:23 p.m., <https://twitter.com/DarrenJBeattie/status/1509582098226716673?ctx=HHwWgoC9wfK6jvMpAAAA>

changes [feminism and LGBTQ+ rights] as the "bastardized Jewish subversion of the American creed." ¹⁷⁶ The suggestions he told his audience to use to keep a wife "in line" were all acts of domestic violence.¹⁷⁷ According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, Fuentes is only 23 and has fully harnessed the internet to spread the same ideologies as Irving and his ilk in ways the older deniers have not utilized technology.

Example Six: David Duke

Irving's friend and associate, David Duke, is also the epitome of a man proven to be prejudicial towards more than one group of people. The press freely labels David Duke a white supremacist and a racist because of his former roles in the KKK. After Duke started hanging out with Irving, he started spewing Holocaust denial. But according to Abraham Foxman, the former President of the Anti-Defamation League, David Duke wrote a memoir that reveals the man is a misogynist and racist. Foxman went on to say that Duke's memoir rang like a "minor league *Mein Kampf*."¹⁷⁸

Overall, these profiles reinforce two facts about Holocaust deniers. The first is that the majority of deniers are men. The second is that after analyzing the full spectrum of denier's belief systems, the fact that deniers are predominantly men is not a coincidence. Their ideology is twisted with malicious intent toward many marginalized groups, particularly towards women.

Why Do These Men's Actions Matter?

We need a fuller picture of deniers not just because they threaten Holocaust remembrance but because they are a threat to the world. Hardcore Holocaust deniers intersect with hardcore

¹⁷⁶ Anti-Defamation League Staff. *Anti-Defamation League* (blog). July 8, 2021. "Nicholas J Fuentes: Five Things You Need to Know." <https://www.adl.org/blog/nicholas-j-fuentes-five-things-to-know>

¹⁷⁷ Dreisbach, Tom, "How Extremists Weaponize Irony to Spread Hate," *NPR* (Washington D.C.), April 16, 2021.

¹⁷⁸ Foxman, Abraham. "David Duke's *My Awakening: A Minor League Mein Kampf*." *The Anti-Defamation League*, (Washington D.C.), January 1999.

hate mongers, and there are consequences for hating all groups for all groups involved. Men like Beattie and Fuentes are dangerous because once people no longer connect to reality about one subject, it is easy to be disconnected from other facts.

The first example is the white supremacists with minor roles in Holocaust denial who lead the way for anti-vaxxers and anti-maskers. David Duke is also a vaccine skeptic.¹⁷⁹ During the pandemic, Canadian Holocaust denier Marco Pietro added "anti-lockdown activist" to his lackluster resume.¹⁸⁰ These pose public health risks because their actions undermine efforts to stop the spread of a deadly virus.

These ideologies can lead to apathy from these people because they think people deserve to die or be injured. The white supremacist ideology escalated from public health crisis to domestic terrorism. On January 6th, insurrectionists bore white supremacist flags and signs and had apparel emblazoned with anti-Jewish and sexist slogans. The press was not shy to call the insurrection a super spreader event, especially when 38 Capitol Police officers, 150 National Guard troops, and 8 members of Congress tested positive in the days after the insurrection.¹⁸¹ It is clear from these examples that hate does not exist in singularity, and Holocaust deniers can possess an assortment of repulsive ideologies with harmful consequences.

But much to the detriment of society, these men have also gained political power. David Duke had a brief career as a politician in the Louisiana State House.¹⁸² In 2016, Robert Morrow became the head of the Republican party in Texas – even though his social media is filled with

¹⁷⁹ Graham, Ruth. "Vaccine Skeptics Are Excited About Donald Trump's Presidency." *Slate*, (Brooklyn, NY), November 30, 2016.

¹⁸⁰ Smith, Charlie. *The Georgia Straight*. December 5, 2020. "B.C. antilock down activist Marco Pietro denies Holocaust."

¹⁸¹ Williams, Elliot. "At Least 38 Capitol Police Officers Test Positive for COVID since January 6 Riots." *NPR*. (Washington D.C), January 25, 2020.

¹⁸² Southern Poverty Law Center Staff. "About David Duke" Southern Poverty Law Center, Access March 25, 2022. <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/individual/david-duke>

derogatory depictions of influential women, ogling scantily clad women and promoting his friend Victor Thorn's theories that are Holocaust denial.¹⁸³ A Holocaust denier even became the President of a country. Former Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad repeatedly stated that even to American broadcast companies like NPR, the Holocaust was a lie propagated to create Israel.¹⁸⁴ Ahmadinejad also had very patronizing views of women as well.¹⁸⁵

Acknowledging The Depths of Deniers In Academia And Mainstream Society

There are several impacts on scholarship and society by expanding and exploring the misogynist views of Holocaust deniers. The first is noting the presence and relationship of sexism, misogyny, and anti-LGBTQ+ attitudes among Holocaust deniers presents the total picture of what makes up a Holocaust denier. Since some of the biggest names in the Holocaust denial movement exhibit sexist and misogynist behaviors, it seems likely that the smaller-scale deniers are both deniers and sexist. Future scholars can further scrutinize the relationship between these nefarious ideologies and see how deep these ideas are entrenched in white supremacist movements. Focusing on their anti-Jewish ignores the complete depravity of their behavior and the ramifications of their actions.

Altogether, looking at all of the prejudices that make up a Holocaust denier will add a layer of understanding about what Holocaust deniers genuinely believe. It will also provide a complete picture of what deniers genuinely desire. It is bleak to consider Holocaust deniers do not want Black people or Jews to exist in a denier's ideal world. A vision of a perfect society that excludes the existence or subjugates other groups like women and LGBTQ+ is even more disturbing. The public deserves to know this mindset of those who propagate Holocaust denial.

¹⁸³ TOI Staff. "Texas's new vulgar, sexist GOP leader also an Israel-hater." *The Times of Israel*. (Jerusalem, Israel), March 6, 2016.

¹⁸⁴ Whitelaw, Kevin. "Ahmadinejad: Holocaust 'Opinion Of Just A Few'."

¹⁸⁵ Gerges, Fawaz. "Commentary: Ahmadinejad's Problem with Women. *CNN*. (New York), June 10, 2009.

Accountability

Expanding the discussions of deniers also brings the state of Holocaust denial back into the historical record. As stated earlier, the academy has generally ignored Holocaust denial because their statements are so absurd. Lipstadt only engaged with Irving in court because Irving set the suit. Dr. Lipstadt wrote in her memoir that she had not planned on making Holocaust denial a large part of her life's work. She was keen to move on to other projects and research ideas after completing *Denying the Holocaust* and had no plans to further engage with the subject until David Irving sued her.¹⁸⁶ Acknowledging denier's full scope of ideologies also forces the ivory tower to acknowledge their long existence and their deterrents to the public memory of the Holocaust.

Labeling deniers as crazy and moving on doesn't seem to work. Frankly, the crazy claims have simply gotten more insane in the twenty years since Irving's trial. We live in an age where the guy who said Ted Cruz's father was the zodiac killer became president. People believe in anti-fact movements in spades because there are people who thought consuming horse dewormer or drinking their own urine would cure COVID-19.

Scholars and greater society need to do more to hold deniers accountable and decimate the free speech argument. Irving's indictment shows there are consequences when lying when exercising free speech. As *Denial* dramatized from Dr. Lipstadt's press conference after the Judge's verdict, "Freedom of speech means you can say whatever you want. What you can't do is lie and expect not to be held accountable for it. Not all opinions are equal, and some things happened, just like we say they do. Slavery happened. The Black Death happened. The Earth is round, the ice caps are melting, and Elvis is not alive. The Holocaust happened."¹⁸⁷ Yet no one is

¹⁸⁶ Lipstadt, *Denial: History on Trial*, 183.

¹⁸⁷ *Denial*. Directed by Mick Jackson. (2016. Universal City: Universal Studios).

repeating this argument or pointing to the trial when individual face backlash or consequences for their untruthful or hateful comments.

Allowing For Redemption And Growth

Scholars who study Holocaust deniers have focused on the significant players, condemned them as bad apples, and told people not to listen to them because they are liars – which has proven ineffective because Irving is still propagating his beliefs. Fuentes still streams content on the internet, so they still have an audience. As Roxane Gay eloquently explains the status quo of today’s culture, “ the problem is that we haven’t figured out what consequences should be. So, it’s all or nothing. Either there are no consequences, or people lose their jobs, or other sort of sweeping grand gestures that don’t actually solve the problem at hand.”¹⁸⁸

Gay hit the crux of the problem: calling out these deniers in academic publications does little to solve the problem and does not engage with people who espouse or receive those messages. Gay’s statements have merit, especially when it comes to Holocaust deniers. Telling people not to listen to Duke, taking down many of Irving’s videos from YouTube, and kicking Fuentes off social media has not stopped their messages from reaching people. Additionally, the current solution does not allow for interpersonal or individual discussion to encourage them to challenge their beliefs and change their behavior. In short, the current model does not allow people to grow and move on from their denialist behavior.

There has to be a path to redemption to bring misinformed people back into the community, or as Ricoeur calls it, “a path for those who recognize their offenses.”¹⁸⁹ Or, as

¹⁸⁸ Schwartz. Molly., “Roxane Gay Says Cancel Culture Does Not Exist,” *Mother Jones*, (San Francisco, CA), March 5, 2021.

¹⁸⁹ Ricoeur, 601.

Roxane Gay put it in her 2018 *New York Times* op-ed, a chance for restorative justice – which helps both the victim and the perpetrator.

He should pay until he demonstrates some measure of understanding of what he has done wrong and the extent of the harm he has caused....He should publicly admit what he did and why it was wrong without excuses and legalese and deflection...We need to figure out what justice looks like in the court of public opinion, not for the sake of the offenders, but for the sake of victims.

While Gay discussed this in terms of men accused of sexual assault and harassment going back into the public eye, such as Louis C.K. and Matt Lauer, the idea can be applied to Holocaust deniers. For example, Nick Fuentes is in his early 20s and, from all accounts, seems to have grown up with white privilege and affluence in suburban Chicago and came of age at the start of the Trump presidency. He fell for Trump's extremism and, since then, has never left the right-wing echo chamber.¹⁹⁰ Perhaps as Fuentes gets older, he will find a way to escape the echo chamber and realize his ideas were terrible. While it may seem like a tall an order for Fuentes to change his tune, there are ways those help those who watch Fuentes's stream.

It seems an impossible task, but it can happen. Daryl Davis is a Black man who has convinced over 200 people to leave the KKK. Davis's approach is simple. He befriends Klansman, bonding over common appreciations, such as music. Many of the Klan members Davis meets realize their preconceived notions of Black people were wrong, and they give up their robes.¹⁹¹ If inclusive narratives can help people connect on a personal level, and these

¹⁹⁰ Kleiman, John., "Cancel proof? Activists are trying to get Nick Fuentes, a far-right video streamer from the western suburbs kicked off the internet. It might be Impossible." *The Chicago Tribune*, (Chicago, IL), March 21, 2021.

¹⁹¹ Brown, Dwane., "How One Man convinced 200 Ku Klux Klan Members to Give Up their Robes," *NPR: All Things Considered*, (Washington D.C.), August 20, 2017.

connections can help people see denier's words have harmful impacts, surely we owe it to ourselves and society to bring these narratives to light?

Conclusion

Deborah Frances – White asserts on her podcast *The Guilty Feminist* that "That history is told with a patriarchal voice and so we don't really see what happened."¹⁹² Perhaps scholars have only considered deniers' anti-Jewish and racist ideologies because most of those who study Holocaust deniers are Jewish men. But overlooking a pattern of sexism and anti-LGBTQ+ ideology is negligent behavior. Ignoring the ways these deniers antagonize women and the LGBTQ+ community seems to imply that sexism and misogyny are not dangerous as racism and anti-Jewish undermine the suffering and violence these groups go through.

Deniers exemplify the worst parts of the patriarchy. This chapter showed that not only do these deniers represent the worst of the patriarchy but the worst of humanity. Holocaust scholars must expand their research and publication to examine and disseminate all the biases and prejudices deniers present to the public to crusade against any of their perceived credibility and professionalism in the public eye. Doing so would show the full scope of the human capacity to hate now and back then and show that Hitler's same behaviors are still around. The Irving trial shows that denier's "research" does not present the truth, and a plethora of hateful ideologies funnel their ideas. Discrediting needs to happen with more voices participating and a path to redemption. These actions will cripple and cut off the white supremacy monster since these groups are all interconnected with that monster as the ultimate enemy: hate.

¹⁹² Frances – White, Deborah. "Hope with Hannah Gadsby," October 21, 2017, (podcast), 44:30, <https://shows.acast.com/guiltyfeminist/episodes/6130f7b41531680013afd096>.

CHAPTER THREE: CREATING INCLUSIVE NARRATIVES AND COMMEMORATION

"Memory is the antidote to death. Solidarity is the answer to silence. As activist Valerie Kaur once said, 'What if this is not the darkness of the tomb, but the darkness of the womb?'"

-#StopAsianHate Together Ad¹⁹³

The Fight Against Deniers Continues

Shortly after the *Irving vs. Lipstadt* trial, journalist Kate Taylor remarked, "We should not assume that the cult of denial will go sulking away."¹⁹⁴ Her assumption was prophetic. The trial did very little to deter Irving's actions. Nor did it seem to dissuade the general public from rejecting Irving's ideas or accepting the decision. Holocaust deniers amassed on the internet and matriculated into the White House throughout the Trump presidency. Holocaust denial has become part of the wicked hydra of an anti-fact movement monster.

This author proposes two methods to increase organizations' and individuals' engagement and participation in Holocaust education and memory: coalition building and creating inclusive narratives of the Holocaust to bring greater awareness to the non-Jewish voices. Public representation does not have to be a zero-sum game, nor should representation be treated that way – even though the first board of the USHMM made it seem like that is the case for Holocaust remembrance. Inclusion, if done well, does not erase any narratives but adds voices to the conversation. Coalitions creating inclusive narratives should generate more conversations about the Holocaust in more spaces, which means people receive information on the Holocaust and participate in Holocaust memory and memorialization.

¹⁹³ Nguyn, Bao, (dir)., "#StopAsianHate," YouTube video, 2:24 – 2:37 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Ps1D-hESes>

¹⁹⁴ Taylor, 8.

The Promise of Coalition Building

This inclusive narrative could help confront and destabilize the denial playing out in the world. As chapter two asserted, Eastern European victims feel the Jewish community has hijacked their experiences. But an inclusive narrative allows Eastern Europeans who feel jaded to join the conversations instead of being an outsider looking in. It is not likely an inclusive narrative would immediately solve their bitterness, but emotions from being silenced will not be tied to the intergenerational trauma of surviving the Holocaust. Inclusive narratives can also help emphasize that the Nazis invaded more than Austria, France, and Poland – but invaded swaths of Eastern Europe – lessons that need to be reinforced now that Russian aggression has destroyed Babyn Yar.¹⁹⁵

In other places, an inclusive Holocaust that spreads messages through coalition-building means more knowledge circulating that combats the tale the deniers are presenting. If students learn in school that Eastern Europeans, Afro-Germans, and LGBTQ+ people will know that Jewish people were not the only victims and will not see deniers as credible.

The effects of coalition-building in public memory are akin to market saturation: the more places an idea/product exists, the more people who will see it/imbibe it. While the Holocaust is a universal term, there is not much "knowledge saturation" beyond the most basic facts that individuals learn about in school. The most extensive collection of community Holocaust memory exists within Jewish populations -- who are very saturated with Holocaust remembrance because it is the lived experiences of their ancestors. In other words, at present, Holocaust awareness and remembrance are preaching to the choir. There needs to be more messaging outside the Jewish community to get more people to "buy into" remembrance and

¹⁹⁵ Wertheimer, Tiffany. "Babyn Yar: Anger as Kyiv's Holocaust memorial is damaged." *BBC News*. (London, UK), March 3, 2022.

confront denial. One way to do that is to connect to the victim groups and connect with those communities to "saturate" the market further.

Knowledge saturation is akin to consciousness-raising, making people aware of a problem or need.¹⁹⁶ For example, Betty Friedan's *Feminine Mystique* was consciousness-raising for a generation of women to realize that American society was pigeon-holing women into certain expectations and roles as housewives and mothers and telling them they should be happy in those roles.¹⁹⁷ But using, speaking in the language of corporations instead of grassroots organizers may help get places of Holocaust memory to embrace coalitions.

Coalitions aimed toward inclusive narratives and memorialization gives a voice to those previously silenced. Coalitions also create stronger ties of solidarity to increase knowledge saturation, fighting to forget. As established in the introduction, Americans' understanding of the Holocaust is minimal – millions cannot name a concentration camp or ghetto. If there is more Holocaust information spread across more platforms, people will have more opportunities to engage in education and remembrance – and gain knowledge saturation. If people knew more about the Holocaust, they would be less susceptible to Holocaust denier's rhetoric. People would then either cast deniers' diatribes aside and ignore them – or challenge deniers and seek to prevent their lies from spreading and hopefully permanently sever the head of the anti-truth monster and deter individuals from going down the slippery slope of anti-facts.

For an inclusive narrative to work, the presentation and explanation of the persecution of LGBTQ+ people have to utilize a different framework than a Jewish narrative. This is because gender identity and sexual orientation use a different framework than race or religion to inclusive

¹⁹⁶ Staggenborg, Suzanne. "Social Movement Communities and Cycles of Protest: The Emergence and Maintenance of a Local Women's Movement*." *Social Problems* 45, no. 2 (1998), 185.

¹⁹⁷ Coontz, Stephanie. *A Strange Stirring: The Feminine Mystique and American Women and the Dawn of the 1960s*. (New York: Basic Books, 2012).

narrative would require groups to put their expertise together to help audiences examine the Holocaust through different ways of thinking about the event.

Coalition Building Through Identification

The Jewish Holocaust experience has been the dominant narrative for almost 80 years. But the Jewish dominant narrative does not provide opportunities for empathy for many people in America. Historians, museum workers, and those that work in public memory of the Holocaust should consider the role identification plays in emotional engagement and coalition building toward Holocaust remembrance. Spreading Holocaust information across more groups is not just to disseminate knowledge for knowledge's sake – but to give more people more opportunities for identification. Identification is when "an audience member assumes, even for a moment, a character's identity and shares his or her perspective, motivations, and goals."¹⁹⁸ In essence, a person sees themselves in that character and connects to that person. The concept of identification is intrinsically tied to representation – because seeing a person who looks like them or shares significant identity with a character is the gateway to identifying with the character.

Identification is essential to get more people invested in Holocaust remembrance – because identification ties people alive today to those the Nazis persecuted and killed. Identification causes a person to move from sympathy to empathy and feel connected and invested in the subject. Colin Farrell stated succinctly, "When things become personalized, they go in deeper and open you up even wider."¹⁹⁹ Inclusive narratives can create that personal, emotional connection to the Holocaust in places without a direct connection to the Holocaust and where there is not a high Jewish population. Such places include the non-major metropolitan

¹⁹⁸ Nabi, Robert., & Oliver Mary Beth., *The SAGE Handbook of Media Processes and Effects*. (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 2009), 229.

¹⁹⁹ The Kelly Clarkson Show, "Colin Farrell and Kelly Clarkson can't Stop Talking About their Love of Musicals," YouTube video, March 3, 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BRODe7ujhZw>

areas of the American Midwest and West and people who may not be able to travel or prioritize visiting memorial museum concentration camps or the USHMM during vacations.

People in the aforementioned areas may not know many Jewish people. Still, they are likely to be or know individuals who fall into other victim profiles and could emotionally connect to the Holocaust through those victims. For example, the author is a non-Jewish person who grew up in an area with a small Jewish population. Growing up, the Holocaust was a tragic event but not something with any real emotional connection beyond the sadness so many people died. The author did not become highly engaged in Holocaust research until discovering that Nazis persecuted LGBTQ+ people at roughly the same time. The author also saw anti-fact movements seeping into public consciousness, including denying the Holocaust. In essence, this thesis came to be because the author did not want the suffering of long-gone LGBTQ+ elders further erased by letting Holocaust deniers gain more headway in the court of public opinion.

Identification is also one of the reasons why de-Judiaization may not be the nefarious scheme Ernst Gerstenfeld says it is and why it is not inherently an act of Holocaust denial. Imagine if more public discourse on the Holocaust moved from "Nazis killed millions of Jews and Others" to dialogues about the full scope of victims and allowed more people to identify with Holocaust victims and survivors. More people would likely go from casual readers of the occasional Holocaust-related book to someone invested in taking an active role in preserving Holocaust memory and refuting Holocaust denial. Significantly few people would likely go from being a casual reader to spending five years seeped in studying Holocaust memory and researching Holocaust denial to find ways to combat denial. Still, it would likely get more patrons and donors to places like the USHMM if they knew these institutions preserved stories of

people who lived like them 80 + years ago and would more likely fight against schools censoring and banning Holocaust texts and lessons.

The Process of Coalition Building

More emotional connections cannot happen without inclusive narratives, and coalition building can be the first step toward inclusive narratives. The first step to do that in American Holocaust remembrance may be to find a new way to remove some of the politicization surrounding appointments to the Memorial Council, the USHMM's equivalent of a board of trustees and includes the three members of the USHMM's Executive Board, 53 members of the public and 10 members of US Congress. Currently, the President of the United States appoints who serves on the Council. That has led to exemplary members like Deborah Lipstadt, but also individuals like Rudy Giuliani's son Andrew Giuliani, Marco Rubio, and Tim Scott.²⁰⁰

The process of appointing the council could change to remove politics from appointments. Since there are 53 members from the public, perhaps the Council could add three seats and have one representative from every state, territory, and DC to gain geographic diversity – as currently, the Council has very few members from the Midwest and West. The Council could have an application process instead of appointments with this state-by-state model. This would make it truly open to the public and increase the shared authority of the USHMM.

Commemorations are also a place for coalition building. The USHMM can form relationships with organizations to have more representatives at ceremonies, speak at these events, issue joint press releases, and run events during Holocaust commemorations. These groups can include the Voices of Roma, the European Roma Rights Centre, the National

²⁰⁰ United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Staff. "United States Holocaust Memorial Council (Board of Trustees)." United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Access March 19, 2022. <https://www.ushmm.org/information/about-the-museum/council>

Organization for Women (NOW), the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), organizers with BLM, the international disability organization TASH, the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD). These coalitions, especially joint press releases, allow everyone to have representation and spread the message to a broad audience without people needing to disclose invisible identities if they do not feel comfortable disclosing invisible identities or turning an individual into a spokesperson for a cause.

These coalitions can speak to the total human cost of the Nazi regime and reinforce the idea prejudices can coexist with fatal consequences. Having more groups issue statements provides more opportunities and platforms to spread the information to more audiences: the more people who see that message and the more people who take it in that message. The more people who take in that message, the less room Holocaust deniers have any perceived credibility by the public.

Coalitions can help decry deniers as well. Scholars are working to ensure people do not forget Holocaust victims' suffering and study those who deny the Holocaust to examine their motivations. However, as this paper discussed, these scholars have overlooked sexist and anti-LGBT+ behaviors that reveal a denier's entire personality. The David Irving trial briefly intersected denial and sexism. Yet, the trial's presentation through popular culture does little to challenge the same patriarchal ideas deniers hold in such high esteem. Publicly examining and airing all the prejudices of Holocaust deniers takes further steps to delegitimize and discredit deniers. Coalition building can cross-pollinate the messages that would discredit deniers across many groups. On Holocaust Remembrance Day, women's groups can issue statements that Holocaust deniers are also misogynists. Hence, people need to join together to fight against all

forms of bias, hate, and prejudice because white supremacists that brought about the Holocaust wish to harm more than just one group of people.

Coalitions can also work at the local level. For example, FPS could work with Fargo's rabbi, Eastern Europeans who have settled in the area, the North Dakota Disability Advocacy Consortium, and the Pride Collective and Community Center Fargo to come into schools on Holocaust Remembrance Day or during a Holocaust unit in one of the classes. In the same vein, feminist clubs and women's groups on high school and college campuses can host lectures to decry deniers and specifically call out denier's misogyny and sexism. These events would help reaffirm to the public that these Holocaust deniers are only interested in a world that caters to straight white men. Including other groups like women and LGBTQ+ organizations can serve as one of many possible avenues to spread messages about Holocaust remembrance and fight against Holocaust denial. These sorts of events also allow for the growth discussed in chapter two. These opportunities allow people to meet new people in a safe space and see diverse people, giving people a chance to challenge what they believe and unlearn toxic traits.

Coalitions Are Not A One-Way Relationship

Another point about these coalitions is that they would not be one-way streets. These coalitions work in solidarity to confront hate and bias. Antisemitism is profoundly rooted in discrimination, especially in Europe. Yet discrimination against disabled people, Roma, and LGBTQ+ people are still prevalent. Racism and misogyny continue to have fatal consequences today. These coalitions can coordinate messages for Holocaust Remembrance Day, lend their voices to each other's causes, and advocate for those suffering from hate crimes and discrimination.

The USHMM stated in their Press Release about the Capitol Insurrection that the museum is "A living memorial to the Holocaust, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum inspired people to confront hate, prevent genocide, and promote human dignity."²⁰¹ Yet throughout 2021, the USHMM's Twitter page posted for #FlagDay, #DanceDay, #InternationalJazzDay #WorldPoetryDay, but never to #StopAsianHate. The museum has been silent about discrimination against LGBTQ+ children in America, even though many in the Jewish community supported the Matthew Shepard hate crimes bill in the past.²⁰² A coalition can issue joint social media messages and issue joint press releases to show that these communities are working in solidarity to live in a world without the hate that impacts all these groups.

Successful Examples of Coalition Building

There have been successful examples of coalition building to create more inclusive memory. A prime example is creating the times Indigenous populations have worked with federal government institutions to create historical interpretations. The Smithsonian reached out to Indigenous communities during the creation of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial celebrations. Tim Grove was one of the Smithsonian staff members tribal elders were leery of working with because he worked for the Government actively working towards their annihilation a century before. Yet he and elders worked together to create The National Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Exhibition and related educational programming for 4th – 12th graders.²⁰³

²⁰¹ United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. "United States Holocaust Memorial Statement on Attack on US Capitol." Press Release, Jan 8, 2021, <https://www.ushmm.org/information/press/press-releases/museum-statement-on-us-capitol-attack>.

²⁰² Levin, Brian., & McDevitt, Jack. "Commentary: Why hate crimes are different," *CNN*, (New York, NY), June 29, 2009.

²⁰³ Grove, Tim. *A Grizzly Bear in the Mail and other Adventures in American History*, (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2014), 117 – 141.

The National Park Service (NPS) worked with Cheyenne and Arapaho to create the Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site. That experience was fraught with distrust and miscommunication. The Park Service representatives did not understand Cheyenne and Arapaho's concept of time. Cheyenne and Arapaho did not like that the white park representatives never seemed to believe their oral histories. They felt slighted many times when the Government worked to verify the location of the massacre, and the Government contracted archaeologists did not treat the excavation with the solemnity a place of a massacre deserved. But the groups were able to work through their issues and opened the site in 2007.²⁰⁴

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Colonial Williamsburg worked with Black history scholars to add interpretations, interpreters, and tours to tell the stories about the enslaved people forced to live and work in Williamsburg. Granted, many of the interpretations in the houses reinforced the "benevolent master" narrative – but the "Other Half" tour.²⁰⁵ At about the same time Colonial Williamsburg was changing its interpretation, Women's history scholars worked with The Department of the Interior to add sites important to women to the National Historic Register and National Historic Places. Many Women's history scholars also worked to reinterpret NPS sites already in place to tell more stories about the women involved in those sites.²⁰⁶

Obstacles To Coalition Building

One obstacle the USHMM would face when coalition building is that many groups that would be a part of a coalition have inbuilt distrust towards the USHMM based on the museum's

²⁰⁴ Kelman, Ari. *A Misplaced Massacre: Struggling over the Memory of Sand Creek*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013).

²⁰⁵ Handler, Richard., & Gable, Eric. *The New History in an Old Museum: Creating the Past at Colonial Williamsburg*. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997).

²⁰⁶ Putman, *Reclaiming America's Past*. (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1992).

previous actions. The comments made during the planning stages that "Jews were the only people to die in the Holocaust for who they were" certainly burned some bridges and created some animosity between the USHMM and non-Jewish groups with a vested interest in Holocaust memory. The recent unwillingness to have a conversation about the transgender identities of those living in the Nazi occupation does not help their cause. But that does not mean that coalition forming is not an impossible task, as other groups have been able to overcome distrust to create a memorial.

If any coalition were to succeed with the USHMM, the current board would need to acknowledge that previous board members and staff members continuously excluded these groups from exhibits and commemorations. The artist who created the *Scaffold* installation that was meant to be part of the Walker Art Center, Sam Duran, learned that the hard way. He created an art installation to be a critique of capital punishment, and it recreated the scaffold used to hang the Dakota 38. However, Duran, nor the Walker, connected with Indigenous Minnesotans during any part in the creation or installation process. After an outcry from Indigenous populations, the artist and the Walker worked with tribes to deconstruct and destroy the installation. The Walker's director stepped down over the incident, and the Walker increased programming and gallery space for Indigenous artists.²⁰⁷

Inclusive Holocaust Memorialization, Education, And Popular Culture

James Young argues that Holocaust memory "changes generationally."²⁰⁸ Perhaps the change for the millennial/generation z era is to have inclusive narratives. Nevertheless, the purpose of Holocaust memory needs to change to be more inclusive. The term "never forget" became the rallying cry for Holocaust remembrance, to educate the world about the immense

²⁰⁷ Fricker, Lis "Scaffold: A Crisis Communication Case Study," May 2018.

²⁰⁸ Young, James, 186 -208.

scale of human suffering at the hands of the Nazis to ensure it never happens again. But if "never forget" is to be more than a hollow cry, Holocaust memory needs to acknowledge and commemorate all of those who died at the hands of the Nazis so that we can see the total cost of Nazi atrocities. These can occur in all spheres of education, memorialization, and remembrance.

Memorialization

The USHMM could renovate its museum to have inclusive narratives. After all, a permanent exhibit does not have to be permanent. Perhaps there should not be permanence in historical interpretation in the first place. As Eric Foner wrote, "the study of the past is a constantly evolving, never-ending journey of discovery."²⁰⁹ The USHMM could change exhibits and interpretations to reflect the modern approaches and ideas – including a larger inclusive narrative. There was a short-term exhibit at the USHMM in 2021 about the Pink Triangle Victims. The USHMM could renovate its permanent exhibit space to include those narratives on a larger scale.

A less costly measure could be memorialization in the virtual world. The Holocaust Wing of the Jewish Virtual Library is exemplary for the breadth of resources available and the amount of information it portrays. Yet as the name implies, it focuses on Jewish experiences. While it addresses some of the not Jewish victims, the conversations are overwhelmingly Jewish. The Holocaust Museums and Memorials list is incomplete and lacks any LGBTQ+ memorials.²¹⁰ Having a digital space dedicated to an inclusive memory allows groups to have representation that is easy to showcase – and easy to access. It can also be a collaboration so people can contribute to the site to include the perspectives viewers feel are left out of it. Also, a virtual

²⁰⁹ Foner, Eric. *Who Owns History*, (New York: Hill & Wang, 2003), xix.

²¹⁰ Jewish Virtual Library, "Holocaust Museums & Memorials: US Holocaust Museums and Memorial."

space would provide an area for a resources page for places for teachers to go for suggestions about how to have inclusive curriculums.

Education

There are ways to make more inclusive discussions about the Holocaust in middle and high schools without completely redoing curriculums. One way to do that is to provide a handout with information outlining all the groups the Nazis killed, such as the one in Appendix A. However, there are ways that Holocaust classes in higher education can be more inclusive. Gideon Shimoni collected syllabi for Holocaust classes from many different disciplines in *The Holocaust in University Teaching*. The classes focused on Jewish suffering. The books selected in this example syllabus encapsulate a wide range of Holocaust experiences, especially the books selected for firsthand accounts. Additionally, this offering aims to work towards the dystopian curriculum Dr. Marla Morris suggests. An example of such a syllabus is in Appendix B.

Additionally, an inclusive narrative presents the opportunity to show how to use different frameworks and academic lenses on the same idea or event. For example, in the Holocaust class, students would study Nazi persecution through the frameworks of race, religion, and sexual orientation. Interacting with a historical event using different frameworks allows the students to become stronger scholars.

Popular Culture

Nobel Laurette Imre Kertész "If the memory of the Holocaust remains, then it will remain through culture."²¹¹ Popular culture helps ensure the onus of inclusive narratives does not rest solely on historical, cultural, activist organizations; authors and educators can create inclusive books and curricula to educate people on the full scope of Nazi atrocities.

²¹¹ Kertész, Imre. trans. Thomas Cooper., *Holocaust as Culture*, (Salt Lake City, UT: Seagull Books, 2012), 42.

A powerful way to preserve Holocaust memories is through children's books. This thesis provides the text for potential kids' books with inclusive Holocaust narratives. The first reason to choose children's books is that those books heavily depict Jewish people and Jewish experiences, as we discovered in chapter one. Additionally, kids' books are beginning to embrace diverse themes. The *Who Was?* Series, published by Penguin Random House, has books about Stonewall and Harvey Milk.²¹² *And Tango Makes Three* is a picture book about gay penguins starting a family. A practical reason to discuss kids' books is that a YA/adult inclusive Holocaust book would be a thesis itself.

Additionally, books like this prove that there are ways to explain complex issues like the Holocaust to young children in a way they can understand. Part of the debate about presenting sensitive issues in schools is that some people feel children are too young to learn about atrocities. The *Who Was?* Series has a book about the Holocaust which included the statement, "One thing you won't learn is why it happened. That's because there really is no way to explain something that is so purely evil."²¹³

However, children these ages experience racism and other forms of bias and prejudice. The Nazis sent children to ghettos and gas chambers. Thus, children should learn about them to understand them. The author contends that if they can observe a parent finding a way to explain the Holocaust to their four or five-year-old child when they visit the Anne Frank house, writers and educators can create resources and tools for parents to help explain these events.

One caveat to mention is despite the amount of editing this tome undertakes, these kids' books would likely not be the story verbatim at the time of publication. An editor and publishing

²¹² "Who Was? Series" Penguin Random House, Access March 22, 2022.
<https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/series/DWY/who-was/?page=3>

²¹³ Herman, Gail. *What was the Holocaust?* (New York: Penguin Workshop, 2018).

house would be involved in fine-tuning the stories and making them the best they can be. The main point of these books in this thesis is to provide examples of inclusive narratives of the Holocaust which do not currently exist in children's media from the perspective person who has been stewing with these ideas for five and a half years.

The first example of a children's book, found in Appendix C, is *Why did the Holocaust happen? And other questions for kids about the Holocaust*. It is an inclusive narrative in the vein of *What was the Holocaust* by Gail Herman and *Tell Them We Remember* by Susan Bachrach. The book offers an inclusive alternative to books such as *Prelude to the Holocaust* by Jane Shuter and all the biographies and memoirs of Jewish experiences.

This book also is an example of how to have a more dystopic narrative Dr. Marla Morris proposes needs to happen with the Holocaust curriculum. Dr. Morris would likely say that these books are not purely dystopic. The books balance light and dark themes. However, the current trend in children's books is that the plot revolves around solving a problem and there is a satisfactory resolution.²¹⁴ Additionally, it seems like the best way to end a children's book about the Holocaust is a call to action to encourage children to be good people.

The second example of a kids' book in Appendix D directly responds to the Southlake school district's move to mandate teaching "opposing views" of the Holocaust. The crux of the matter is the "opposing view" to the Holocaust is lies. Here is a book that underscored that fact, but it would fit their parameters since it is about the opposing side. Additionally, this book is an example of how to have a Holocaust-related narrative that empowers women. This book is *Dr. Lipstadt's Day in Court*, an interpretation of the *Irving vs. Lipstadt* trial. A libel suit may not seem like a banger of a plot for a kid's book, but elements of the trial lend themselves well to the

²¹⁴ Kelley, Suzanne. "Children's Books" (Class Lecture, North Dakota State University, Fargo, ND, Fall 2020)

Little Golden Books, She Persisted, or Little People, Big Dreams series. These books spotlight individuals who did something noteworthy that teaches life lessons. For the book in Appendix D, the lessons include speaking up against liars and bullies, standing up for what's right, and the power of teamwork: three traits that would undoubtedly prove indeed *Everything I Need To Know I Learned From A Little Golden Book*.

This specific book, like the film, would show that atypical women's empowerment stories to young audiences alongside those lessons. However, *Dr. Lipstadt's Day in Court* serves as a counter-narrative to the film because it aims to give Lipstadt more of her voice and agency. This story reframes some of Dr. Lipstadt's actions as having agency and empowerment – because they were acts of agency, even if she did not view them that way.

Conclusion

The author would be remiss not to end on the final reason for creating a more inclusive education and memorialization: shared authority. Shared authority is the idea that an individual or institution is not the sole expert on a concept or experience. There should not be a strict hierarchy for information sending and receiving between an institution and the audience.²¹⁵ As Eric Foner presents, "Who owns history? It is everyone and no one."²¹⁶ Shared authority is a cornerstone of public history and museum work, and in Holocaust remembrances, that shared authority comes from survivors' memoirs and testimonies.

Everyone impacted by the Holocaust needs space in its education and memorialization, or no one understands the full consequences of the Nazi's Final Solution. Inclusive narratives allow that level of understanding to happen. Coalition building to create inclusive commemorations

²¹⁵ Firsch, Michael., *A Shared Authority: Essays on the Craft and Meaning of Oral and Public History* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1990).

²¹⁶ Foner, xix.

and narratives also increases the shared authority within Holocaust remembrance because more groups of people contribute to the conversations and lend their expertise.

CONCLUSION

"And when you're gone, who remembers your name? Who keeps your flame?"

Who lives, who dies, who tells your story?"

-Hamilton! Ensemble²¹⁷

Thus far, Holocaust remembrance has primarily focused on Jewish victims. In the next 80 years, we should work to tell more inclusive stories of the countless numbers the Nazis killed from their hateful and limited ideas of humanity. This goal is not to dismiss the dominant Jewish narrative but to propose that one way to combat Holocaust denial is to supplement that narrative with those of other victimized groups. A multitude of voices presenting Holocaust experiences means more people will identify with the plight of Holocaust victims. Historian Saul Friedländer proposed, "There may be different ideas about what should be remembered or forgotten."²¹⁸ An inclusive narrative is one of those different ideas that can work to fight denial and forgetting.

To stay relevant, those who work within Holocaust memory will have to move towards inclusive narratives because incorporating diverse voices is the modus operandi in the present and future of popular culture, public history, and memory work. Publishers, movies, and film producers strive to include diverse voices across all entertainment genres, from the film *Hidden Figures* to *And Tango Makes Three*. The National Parks Service is starting to reinterpret historical sites to reflect that the US military shed the blood of innocent indigenous populations. Famous historic sites like Monticello work to include enslaved people's narratives and the perspectives and experiences of women. Even places like the James J Hill House in St. Paul are working to have the life stories of the nannies and cooks, not just James J Hill and his immediate

²¹⁷ Miranda, Lin-Manuel., & McCarter Jeremy, *Hamilton the Revolution*, (New York City: Grand Central Publishing, 2016), 280.

²¹⁸ Friedlander, Saul. *Memory, History and the Extermination of the Jews of Europe*, (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), 2.

family. These narratives do not challenge the dominant narrative but rather enhance the story and engage audiences in ways that connect to more people.

Steps Towards An Inclusive Holocaust Memory

Several things need to happen before acts of solidarity can flourish within Holocaust memory. The first is to have a consensus on the definitions for the Holocaust. As the first two chapters of this thesis attest, academics, sites of memory, and popular culture use different definitions for the Holocaust. Coalitions will only be equitable if everyone involved in creating the narrative uses the same definition of the Holocaust. Different definitions bring different expectations. Suppose the USHMM asked the HRC to post something on their social media on Holocaust Remembrance Day because LGBTQ+ victims were among those the Nazis targeted. In that case, it is an act of allyship since the definition the USHMM utilized is that the Holocaust was six million Jews and other people suffered under Nazi aggression. Then suppose the federal government wanted and asked the USHMM to work with BLM HRC, TASH, AADP, NOW, and Voices of the Roma to create a special Holocaust Remembrance Day commemoration committee for the 100th Anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz because the Holocaust was defined as all victims of the Nazi regime. That is an act of coalition-building with more expectations to be involved in the decision-making for all aspects of the commemoration.

An inclusive definition may mean a shift in the meaning of “Holocaust.” Perhaps the word Holocaust needs to slowly disappear in favor of terms such as Nazi aggression and atrocities to encompass the whole spectrum of Nazi actions. Rudolph J Rummel coined the term “democide” for his work quantifying the total number of people the Nazis killed. It comes from the Greek “demos” for the populace and the Latin “cis, cid, cide,” to cut or kill.²¹⁹ That could go

²¹⁹ Rummel, Rudolph. *Democide* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1992).

into broader circulation in conversations about the Holocaust. Or perhaps it means the Holocaust and Shoah refer to the annihilation of Jews, and there is a whole new term to describe the non-Jewish victims of the Nazi regime. Although this option could continue the mentality that the Holocaust was “Jews and others,” which inadvertently perpetuates the “who they were versus what they did” fallacy. Norman Finkelstein addresses this by using the Nazi holocaust as a historical event and the Holocaust as an ideology.

These actions would follow trauma scholar Kali Tal's suggestion for the future of Holocaust study is to remove it from its sacred pedestal. In the book *World of Hurt*, Tal states, "We must demystify the Holocaust, reducing it, once again, to a series of historical and cultural events on par with other cultural and historical events and therefore undeserving of a capital 'H'" except as a sort of casual shorthand, as we speak of the Enlightenment, or the Renaissance."²²⁰ A new definition for the victims of Hitler's regime may recenter their experiences towards an inclusive concept that places the Holocaust back into the context of the 20th century.

The second action toward an inclusive Holocaust memory is for scholars and memorial makers to cease accepting the idea that a Jewish memory supersedes other identities in Holocaust memory. America's priorities of Holocaust remembrance should change because Americans have accepted Israel as a nation that is not going anywhere. As the examples in Appendix B show, de-Judaization need not be Holocaust distortion. Inclusive narratives do not distort the facts of the Holocaust or negatively affect Jewish representation; they acknowledge the breadth of atrocities because more voices join the conversation and provide more significant contexts for all the suffering in Germany from 1933 to 1945.

²²⁰ Tal, Kali. *Worlds of Hurt*, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 7.

Addressing Silenced Voices

The final and most important action to create an inclusive memory is to continue highlighting the plights of silenced voices of the Holocaust. The creations of LGBTQ+ memorials demonstrate that progress has been made, but there is still more to be done. There is no entry in the US Holocaust Memorial Museum Encyclopedia for transgender victims the Nazis arrested or sent to concentration camps. Sinti and Afro-Germans are not a regular part of the Holocaust vernacular. Additionally, there is not a lot of attention given to victims who died outside the camps, whether that be because they died in the transport trains, in mobile gas units, or shot in places such as Babyn-Yar.

Mainstream memorialization silenced Hitler's earliest victims as well. Hitler used disabled people as beta testers for gas chambers through Aktion T-4 and Operation Barbosa. But these actions are recorded in history books or online resources where a researcher has to know where to search. These stories are not in movies, monuments, or places easily accessible to the public. These stories need to be told to wider audiences, so people understand the totality of hate. Today, many people are skeptical that Holocaust denial can exist in the face of all the movies and books dedicated to the Holocaust. But we live in an age where a student goes on a study abroad trip and hears another student ask their friend what Auschwitz was – and their friend cannot give a solid answer. We live in an age where a judge declared that a man used faulty research methods to promulgate lies about the Holocaust and had Hollywood make a movie about that trial. However, that man can still have a thriving career as a Holocaust denier.

Some of the silenced voices reinforce that the Holocaust and WWII are complex stories. Where do men like Ernst Röhm and Edmund Heines fit in the Holocaust narrative? They were prominent Nazi leaders who were murdered for being homosexuals. But as Martin Karaffa states,

“they played a key role in creating that very state, and their hands were dirty with horrendous murder and corruption, regardless of their sexuality. But their own murders show how easily the hatred they unleashed could turn against them.”²²¹

In the same vein, where do German women fit in the Holocaust narrative? Some women bought into the white supremacy aspect of Nazi ideologies, such as the “Witch of Buchenwald” Ilse Koch. She killed Buchenwald prisoners with tattoos to turn their skin into decorations.²²² Yet Nazi ideology also oppressed women in Germany. The Nazis limited their career opportunities for women because they valued women's ability to bear children over any other skills. The regime encouraged women to stay at home to be homemakers and mothers.²²³ The Nazis used their propaganda machine to have girls' education emphasize motherhood and wifely obedience.²²⁴

A girl in Germany who started school in 1933 at five or six years old was almost an adult when the Nazis were removed from power. Her formative years were spent living under Nazi indoctrination. Where do young girls who were fed propaganda from a young age belong in the Holocaust narrative? Or boys from the same age who had grown up indoctrinated in Hitler youth? These stories have been overlooked in the past because their German identity superseded being a woman. These stories are also overlooked because they also did not die from Nazi policy but still faced oppression under the Nazi regime, and that should not be ignored.

²²¹ Karaffa, Martin., “Was Ernst Röhm’s Homosexuality a Scandal, or a Secret?” *Medium*, (San Francisco, CA), April 18, 2020. <https://martinkaraffa.medium.com/was-ernst-r%C3%B6hm-homosexuality-a-scandal-or-a-secret-ffb332da8d36>

²²² History.com Editors. “The “Witch of Buchenwald” is sentenced to prison,” *A & E Television Entertainment* (New York, NY), January 13, 2020, <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/the-witch-of-buchenwald-is-sentenced-to-prison>

²²³ Mosse, George. trans. Salvador Attanasio. *Nazi Culture: Intellectual, Cultural, and Social Life in the Third Reich*, pg 45 -52.

²²⁴ United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Staff., “Women in the Third Reich, ” United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Access April 14, 2022, <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/women-in-the-third-reich>

However, one of the most pressing silences is the silence surrounding the origins of Adolf Hitler's plans and ideas. The enormity of the Nazi's pure evil did not come out of thin air. The hateful sentiment was brewing in specific populations before Hitler rose to power. The roots of discrimination were there, and much like those who stormed the Capitol, the Nazis did not have singular hate; only mainstream thought focused on anti-Jewish ideologies. Hitler found America's genocide of the Native Americans inspiring. The Nazis sent a delegation to the south to study segregation after they became the leading party of Germany.²²⁵ To Hitler and the Nazis, these were an inspiration because these things were happening, and there was not an international tribunal investigating the United States government's discrimination.

The lack of outcry emboldened Hitler, especially in light of what had happened during WWI. The Turkish government killed at least a million Armenians from 1914 to 1916. The Turkish government faced few diplomatic repercussions afterward. Hitler noticed this. When the German army invaded Poland and sent Polish people to concentration camps, Hitler told Herman Goering, "Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?"²²⁶ Yet mainstream historical thought largely ignored the origins of Nazi atrocities. No matter how uncomfortable these narratives make viewers, these need to be given more weight in Holocaust history to understand the full scope of Nazi ideology.

Uncomfortable conversations and revelations about the Holocaust lead to one final thought on inclusive narratives: possible backlash. Some of the suggestions in this thesis would be met by the public with the same energy as the original plans for the 1995 Enola Gay exhibit at

²²⁵ Katznelson, Ira., "What America Taught the Nazis," *The Atlantic*, (Washington D.C.), November 2017, <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/11/what-america-taught-the-nazis/540630/>.

²²⁶ Genocide Education Staff. "Hitler and the Armenian Genocide," *The Genocide Education Project*. (San Francisco, CA), Access March 20, 2022. <https://genocideeducation.org/background/hitler-and-the-armenian-genocide/>

the Air and Space Museum, if not worse. After all, some Holocaust scholars think an inclusive narrative is Holocaust distortion because it decenters Jewish narratives. That is why some of the solutions, such as a virtual exhibit and children's books, are given more consideration in this work: these are ways to interact with the content that a person can choose to opt in or opt out of participating but still provide ways to get the information to the public.

However, any backlash that could happen may provide opportunities for discussions and education. For example, every public history or public memory-related class the author took as an undergraduate and graduate has discussed the Enola Gay controversy from over 25 years ago. If that controversy had not occurred, the author likely would not know as much about the events surrounding the Enola Gay's involvement in WWII, the impact of dropping the atomic bombs on Japan, or the struggles of interpreting those events.

Inclusive narratives about the Holocaust and discussing the full spectrum of Holocaust denier's hate may not be the golden goose solution to combatting Holocaust denial. There probably is no golden goose to combat denial and forgetting. But something in the status quo about historical and scientific truth needs to change to dismantle anti-fact movements. We live in an age where people who ascribe to these ideas latch onto movements that deny science and urge people not to obtain life-saving vaccines or use personal protective equipment. Something needs to be done to combat these anti-fact and hate movements that do not exist in a vacuum but have lethal consequences. Despite any possible backlash, creating inclusive narratives through coalitions working in solidarity to spread the facts of the Holocaust and confront and deescalate denier's lies and hate while also providing a path to redemption is one path we as a society can take.

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APPENDIX A: HIGH SCHOOL HANDOUT

This handout would accompany this note to teachers to supplement the handout:

The Numbers in this handout may differ from those you learn in school. When the committee to plan and build the USHMM was formed under the Carter administration, the definition of Holocaust victims were Jews who died in concentration camps. Almost 30 years later, public understanding of the Holocaust has changed. The general public accepts stigmatized identities, such as LGBTQ+ and Roma, so now, in many spaces, Holocaust victims are seen as anyone the Nazis killed as part of their Final Solution plan when they ran Germany from 1933 - 1945.

The Holocaust By The Numbers

7.8 million	Jews (including Russian & Polish Jews)
5.7 million	Soviet Civilians
3 million	Soviet POWs
2,443, 900	Eastern Europeans, mentally or physically disabled, Jehovah's Witness, Freemasons, Afro-Germans, Roma/Sinti, Criminals, and "Asocials." Asocials were those who protested against the Nazis, Nazi resisters, academics, priests, artists, and LGBTQ+ individuals.
17, 143, 900	Total People

From:<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/documenting-numbers-of-victims-of-the-holocaust-and-nazi-persecution>

It is important to note that no one knows the actual number of people the Nazis killed. These numbers are estimates because the Nazis did not keep complete lists of their victims. These numbers are based on the camp records that survived and census and demographic records created after the war compared to those before the war began.

Want to Learn More About These Groups? Check Out These Books

Nazi Ideology and the Holocaust By US Holocaust Memorial Museum

Light of Days: The Untold Story of Women Resistance Fighters in Hitler's Ghetto by Judy Batalion

Lily Renée Escape Artist: From Holocaust Survivor to Comic Book Pioneer by Trina Robbins, Anne Timmons, and Mo Oh

Branded by the Pink Triangle by Ken Setterington

A Roma in Auschwitz: The Inspirational True Story of a Young Boy Surviving the Terror of the Holocaust by Otto Rosenberg

Was God on Vacation? By Jack van der Geest

Surviving the Angel of Death: The True Story of A Mengele Twin by Eva Moses Kor & Lisa Rojny Buccieri

MAUS by Art Spiegelman

APPENDIX B: UNIVERSITY SYLLABUS

University Class Called The Holocaust: A Full History

HIST 4XX/6XX

BULLETIN DESCRIPTION

This class will address the Holocaust in great depth using multiple academic frameworks. In this class, students will use primary and secondary sources to examine the full extent of Nazi atrocities in Europe to learn about the sheer number of victims and hateful beliefs that lead to the deaths of millions across Europe.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Identify the many nefarious ideologies of the Nazi party under Hitler's Leadership
- Identify the many victim groups of the Third Reich
- Understand the aftermath and legacy of the Holocaust on those groups
- Create scholarly works analyzing an aspect of the Holocaust
- Examine a historical period through different academic frameworks to understand the intricacies of historical scholarship

At course completion, students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of:

- Historical events in Europe from 1933 – 1945
- Analyzing Primary Sources
- Evaluating historical texts and scholarship

REQUIRED STUDENT RESOURCES

1. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. *Nazi Ideology and the Holocaust*. 2007/2017. ISBN: 97808696047129 089604712.

2. Batalion, Judy. *Light of Days: The Untold Story of Women Resistance Fighters in Hitler's Ghetto*. New York: William Morrow, 2021. ISBN: 9780062874214.
3. Teege, Jennifer., & Sellmair, Nikola. *My Grandfather Would Have Shot Me*. New York: The Experiment, 2016. ISBN: 9781615193080
4. Snyder, Timothy. *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*. Basic Books, New York. 2010. ISBN: 9780465002399.
5. Lipstadt, Deborah. *Holocaust History on Trial*. New York: Ecco, 2006. ISBN: 9780060593773.
6. Choose one from the list:
 - a. Seel, Pierre. *I, Pierre Seel, Deported Homosexual*. New York: Basic Books, 1995. ISBN: 9780465045006.
 - b. *The Pianist: The Extraordinary Story of One Man's Survival in Warsaw, 1939–45* by Władysław Szpilman, translated by Anthea Bell. London: Picador Paper, 2000. ISBN: 9780312263768
 - c. Stenoski Winter, Walter. *Winter Time: Memoirs of a German Sinto who survived Auschwitz*. Hertfordshire, UK: University Of Hertfordshire Press, 2004. ISBN: 9781902806389
 - d. Van der Geest, Jack, & Ordemann, Carol. *Was God on Vacation?.* Highlands Ranch, CO: van der Geest Publishing and Distribution CO, 1999.
 - e. Nyiszli, Miklos. *Auschwitz: A Doctor's Eyewitness Account*. New York: Arcade. ISBN: 9781611450118
 - f. Ebert, Lily. *Lily's Promise*. New York: Macmillan, 2021. ISBN: 978-1529073409

- g. Lengyel, Olga. *Five Chimneys of Auschwitz*. Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2005. ISBN: 9780897333764.
- h. Hahn Beer, Edith., & Dworkin, Susan. *The Nazi Officer's Wife: How One Jewish Woman Survived the Holocaust*. New York: Harper Collins, 2015. ISBN: 9780062378088.
- i. Moses Kor, Eva. & Rojany Buccieri, Lisa *Surviving the Angel of Death: The True Story of A Mengele Twin*. Indianapolis, IN: Tanglewood, 2020. ISBN: 9781939100450
- j. Tuvel Bernstein, Sara. *The Seamstress*. New York: Penguin, 1999. ISBN: 9780425166307

ASSIGNMENTS, EVALUATION PROCEDURES, AND GRADING CRITERIA

Class Participation: 10 points a week, 150 total

Students are expected to attend class having read the assigned text, come with completed assignments, contribute to discussions, and show proper decorum to earn all participation points.

Alternate Class Participation: If you cannot make it to class, reach out to me to access the class PowerPoint/listen to the class recording and write a paragraph synopsis of the class.

Think of the paragraph as what you would tell someone if they asked, "what did you learn in class today?"

Weekly reflections: 10 points for each week, 150 points total

Submit at least a paragraph to process the week's lecture and readings. These can be facts that stood out or how those facts made you feel.

Book Reflection Paper: 30 points for each paper, 6 papers, 180 total

Complete a four to five-page paper based on a question/prompt for each book.

Book Discussion Leader: 10 Points total

Every Book Discussion (except for the firsthand accounts) will have students lead the class discussion on that day's book. Two days before the class, the group will submit questions and discussion points to the instructor to clear.

Firsthand Account Reflection: 10 points total

Provide a brief synopsis of the books you did not read and any impressions you may have of the book based on what was discussed.

Independent Project: 200 points total

Complete a 15 - 18 page research paper on an aspect of the Holocaust or a Holocaust memorialization based on your research interests and professional goals.

Paper Proposal: 15 points total

The paper you would like to write is a one-page proposal, the reason to write this paper, and two to three potential sources you plan to use.

Outline & Working Bibliography: 30 points total

A basic outline of the paper includes a thesis statement and topic areas and a bibliography of at least seven sources that you plan to use in your paper.

Rough Draft: 15 points total

Have at least 8 pages of the paper completed to bring to peer review editing day.

Final Product 140 points**Graduate Students**

Graduate Students will have alternate assignments to the undergraduates. Instead of attending the undergraduate book discussions, students will find an alternate time to meet with the instructor to discuss the readings and the books from their individualized list.

Participation Points: 10 points per discussion, 60 points total

These points will be during the book discussion meetings and will be based on coming prepared and contributing to the discussion.

Book Reviews: 20 points per review, 12 reviews, 240 points total.

Each review will include a brief summary of each chapter, evaluate strengths and weaknesses, and contributions to the field.

Research Paper: 300 points total

Create a research paper suitable for publication on the topic of your choice related to the Holocaust. Students will meet with me during the first two weeks of class to discuss the topic of their research paper and curate a booklist for six other books to read based on that topic.

Paper Proposal: 20 points

The paper you would like to write is a one-page proposal, the reasoning for choosing that topic, and four to five potential sources you plan to use.

Outline & Working bibliography: 40 points

A basic outline of the paper includes a thesis statement and topic areas and a bibliography of at least ten sources that you plan to use in your paper.

Rough Draft: 20 points

At least ten pages of the final paper are completed for peer review editing day.

Final Product: 200 points

Potential Additional Texts for Graduate Students

General Holocaust History: *The Holocaust: A New History* by Laurence Rees, and *Black*

Earth: The Holocaust as History and Warning by Timothy Snyder.

Women's Experiences: *Women in the Holocaust* by Zoe Waxman, *Noah's Ark* by Marie-Madeleine Fourcade, *999: The Extraordinary Young Women of the First Official Jewish Transport to Auschwitz* by Heather Dune Macadam, and *Irena's Children: A True Story of Courage* by Tilar J. Mazzeo.

LGBTQ+ Experiences: *Aimée & Jaguar: A Love Story of Berlin 1943* by Erica Fischer, *The Pink Triangle* by Richard Plant, *An Underground Life: Memoirs of a Gay Jew in Nazi Berlin* by Gad Beck, *Hidden Holocaust?: Gay and Lesbian Persecution in Germany, 1933-45* by Günter Grau and Claudia Schoppmann, and *The Men with the Pink Triangle* by Heinz Herger.

Firsthand Accounts/Intergenerational Trauma: *Man's Search for Meaning* by Viktor Frankl, *After Such Knowledge* by Eva Hoffman, *The Happiest Man on Earth* by Eddie Jaku, *How to be a Refugee* by Simon May, *Remembering: Voices of the Holocaust* by Lyn Smith, and *The Complete Maus* by Art Spiegelman.

Roma Experiences: *Johann Trollmann and Romani Resistance to the Nazis* by Jud Nirenberg, *The Nazi Genocide of the Roma: Reassessment and Commemoration* by Anton Weiss-Wendt, *Pharrajimos: The Fate of the Roma During the Holocaust* by Janos Barsony, *Bury Me Standing: The Gypsies and Their Journey* by Isabel Fonseca, and *Gypsies under the Swastika (1995)* by Donald Kenrick and Grattan Puxon

Holocaust Memory & Denial: *The Holocaust Industry* Norman Finkelstein, *The Use and Abuse of Holocaust* by Ernst Gerstenfeld, *Preserving History* by Edward Linenthal, *Denying the Holocaust* by Deborah Lipstadt, and *The Holocaust in American Life* by Novick.

Calendar

Week One: Introductions

Lesson 1: Syllabus and introductions

Lesson 2: Defining the Holocaust

Week Two: Lead Up to the Holocaust

Lesson 1: State of Weimar Germany

Lesson 2: Adolf Hitler & his cronies

Assignment: Turn in Book Reflection Paper Week 3, Lesson 1

Prompt for *Nazi Ideology and the Holocaust*: Identify each group the Nazis targeted specified in the book and explain why the Nazis persecuted that group.

Week Three: Rise of the Third Reich

Lesson 1: *Nazi Ideology* Book Discussion

Lesson 2: Origins of Nazi Atrocities: the Nazis didn't invent their actions

Week Four: Life in Europe 1933- 1945

Lesson 1: Anschluss to Aktion T-4

Lesson 2: Ghettos to Concentration Camps

Assignment: Turn in Book Reflection Paper Week Five, Lesson One

Prompt for Firsthand Account: Does this account follow what you knew about the Holocaust before this class? In what ways is it the same/different?

Week Five: Firsthand accounts of the Holocaust

Lesson One: *ALL BOOK REPORTS TURNED IN AT THE START OF CLASS*

Discuss: *Winter Time & Lily's Promise*

Lesson 2: Discuss: *Auschwitz: A Doctor's Eyewitness Account & Five Chimneys & Surviving the Angel of Death: The True Story of A Mengele Twin*

Week Six: Firsthand Accounts Week 2

Lesson One: Discuss: *I, Pierre Seel, Deported Homosexual. & The Nazi Officer's Wife*

Lesson Two: *The Seamstress & Was God on Vacation? & The Pianist*

Week Seven: Resistance Movements

Lesson 1: All the underground/ resistance movements in France, Germany, Holland

Assignment: Book Reflection Paper Due, Week Seven, Lesson 2.

Prompt for *Light of Days*: Were these women able to use their sex in ways men in the resistance could not use theirs? In other words, how were female resisters able to use their position as a female to their advantage in a regime that regulated women's actions?

Lesson 2: *Light of Days* Book Discussion

Week Eight: Liberation & Aftermath

Lesson 1: Liberation & the world discovers the truth

Lesson 2: Survivors after Liberation

Week Nine: Nuremberg & Trauma

Lesson 1: Nuremberg Trials & the role of Survivor's Testimony

Assignment: Book Reflection Due Week Nine, Lesson 2.

Prompt for *My Grandfather*: This book is in both the first and third person. How does that strengthen its historical argument? Consider the role emotionally connecting to content has to play in historical scholarship.

Lesson 2: *My Grandfather would have Shot Me* Book Discussion

Week Ten: Never Forget week 1

Lesson 1: UN Council on Genocide/UN Declaration of Human Rights

Lesson 2: Addressing Israel

Week Eleven: Never Forget Week 2

Lesson 1: The Plight of Roma & Sinti

Lesson 2: Political Prisoners and LGBTQ+ Victims

Due Book Reflection: Week Twelve, Lesson One. *ONE REFLECTION PAPER, TWO DISCUSSION LEADER OPPORTUNITIES*

Prompt for *Bloodlands*: Snyder points out that many historians have considered WWII the climax of Enlightened, Modern thinking when the war should be seen through an imperialist lens. What arguments does Snyder provide to support that claim? Do you agree based on the evidence Snyder presents?

Week Twelve: Interpretations of the Holocaust

Lesson One: *Bloodlands* Chapters 1 – 6 Book Discussion

Lesson Two: *Bloodlands* Chapters 7 – 11 Book Discussion

Week Thirteen: Interpretations of the Holocaust continued

Lesson One: Memorialization

Lesson Two: Women & LGBTQ+

Week Fourteen: Holocaust Denial

Lesson 1: Denial from Faurisson to Ahmadinejad

Assignment: Turn in Book Reflection Paper Week Fourteen, Lesson 2

Prompt for *History on Trial*: Examine how Irving interpreted historical sources compared to Lipstadt's legal team and the role distortion of facts played in the trial and public opinion on Irving and the Holocaust.

Lesson 2: *History on Trial* Book Discussion

Week Fifteen: Independent Project Workshop

Lesson One: Work Day – class attendance optional

Lesson 2: Peer Review Session

Finals Week: Turn in Independent Projects

APPENDIX C: INCLUSIVE HOLOCAUST CHILDREN'S BOOK 1

Why Did The Holocaust Happen? And Other Questions For Kids About The Holocaust

What Was The Holocaust?

The Holocaust was an event where one hateful group tried to eliminate people who did not think, behave, or look like them. In 1933, a man named Adolf Hitler became Chancellor of Germany as the leader of the Nazi party. Under Hitler's leadership, the Nazis killed millions of people because the Nazis did not like their religion, skin color, who they loved, or people who disagreed with their ideas. People call these murders the Holocaust. The Nazis succeeded because they used propaganda and political advertising to convince many people on the European continent to join them and help them hurt millions of people.

No one knows precisely how many people the Nazis killed because the Nazis did not keep complete records of those they arrested and killed. A few Nazis destroyed some of those records to try and prevent people from finding out what they did. However, historians and people who study populations could use the records that survived and the censuses to determine that the Nazis killed over 17 million people from 1933 – to 1945. The people who calculated the death toll estimate that 6 -7 million Jews died, and about 7 million others died. This "others" description is because there were many reasons the Nazis killed these people and because sometimes people do not fit into nice descriptions, and those who write definitions can't figure out a good way to deal with that fact.

Who Were The Nazis?

The Nazis were a political party in Germany. One of their goals was for Germany to become an empire for a so-called "Aryan Race." What is this Aryan Race? In the late 1800s, scholars came up with the term "Aryan" to describe the people who settled across what we now

call Europe, Iran, and Asia. Some of those scholars argued that these Aryan people were their race which was better than other races. But Germany and the countries surrounding it never had this Aryan race. Europe has had all kinds of people with different beliefs and cultures for thousands of years.

The Nazis did not like that so many people who were not "Aryans" lived in and around Germany. Hitler and the rest of the Nazi leadership created a plan to get the people they thought did not look and act like Aryans out of Germany. The Nazis called this plan the Final Solution, and the Holocaust was a big way the Nazis carried out the Final Solution.

Who Were The Victims Of The Holocaust?

The biggest group of people the Nazis killed were Jewish people. The Nazis thought that Jewish people were not the same race of humans as Germans because Jewish people originated from people who lived by the Red Sea, not Europe, and practiced Judaism as their religion instead of Christianity. Millions of Jews died in the Holocaust. Over a million Jewish people died in Auschwitz, many of them children. Max Leopold Hahn was one of those children. He died in the Auschwitz gas chamber when he was six years old simply for being born into a Jewish family. The Nazis also used Jewish people as a scapegoat for Germany's problems.

The Nazis also targeted Eastern Europeans, which were people who lived in what is now Russia, Poland, Ukrainians, Latvia, Lithuania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Serbia, Hungary, Greece, and Cyprus. Hitler thought Eastern Europeans were less human than German people just because they were not German. In 1930, Józefa Głazowska was born in Sitaniec, Poland. When the Nazis took over Poland, they sent Józefa to Auschwitz. Her parents died in the camp. Doctors conducted medical experiments on Józefa. During the last

days of the war, the Nazis who ran Auschwitz sent Józefa with a group of children to another concentration camp in Poland, where Allied forces rescued her.

The Nazis killed the Roma and Sinti because they originated from Asia, which the Nazis took to mean Roma and Sinti were "mixed blood." Nazis also did not like Roma and Sinti because they did not live "normal" lives. Many Roma and Sinti did not settle down in a house. They were semi-nomadic. The Nazis sent many Roma and Sinti to the Zigeunerlager camp in Auschwitz II-Birkenau. The Nazis built that camp specifically for Roma and Sinti. Conditions there were very rough in Zigeunerlager because the camp had many people living in a small area and very little food. A disease called typhus ran through the camp, and many died. Roma *Anna Beneš* died in Zigeunerlager when she was eight. The Nazis sent Sinti boy Manfred Buriansky to Auschwitz, where he died at only two and a half years old.

The Nazis arrested and killed those who were Jehovah's Witnesses because their religious beliefs would not accept Hitler and the Nazi party as the ultimate authority. Jehovah's Witnesses also do not believe in wars, so they would not join the German military, and the Nazis did not like that either. Luta Wagemann was arrested for being Jehovah's Witness. After being released from prison, she fled to be with family who lived outside of Germany.

Nazis killed people with mental or physical disabilities in their quest for an Aryan Empire. They did not like disabled people because they saw them as a drain on Germany's financial and medical resources. Hitler came up with a plan known as Aktion (Action) T-4 to kill disabled people. Luta Wagemann's son Robert had a physical disability and could not walk easily. When Robert was five years old, Luta heard doctors discussing killing Robert as part of Aktion T-4. She took Robert and went into hiding with his Grandfather during the war. But many disabled people, especially children, were not able to escape. The Nazis sent over 70,000

disabled people to facilities with gas chambers that were the prototypes for those in concentration camps.

Afro-Germans were those born to one German parent and one parent from Africa. The Nazis did not like Black people and did not see them as the same race as the Aryans they wanted in their Germany. The Nuremberg laws that banned Jews from certain places and professions also applied to Afro-Germans. The Gestapo rounded up many Afro-Germans and performed medical procedures that prevented them from having babies. Hilarius Gigles was an Afro-German dancer before the war and became an anti-Nazi activist. The Nazis killed him in 1933 for his political protests and because he was Black.

The Nazis also arrested and killed a broad group of people termed "Asocials." These were people who protested against the Nazis. Members of the Nazi resistance movement and the Nazis arrested them and executed them after a trial or sent them to a concentration camp. But the Nazis did not kill all those who resisted them. Kazimierz Smoleń was a Polish resister who the Nazis arrested and sent to Auschwitz. He survived and would co-found the Auschwitz Museum.

The Nazis also arrested academics, priests, artists, and Freemasons. They either had spoken against the Nazis or served as a problem to the Nazi regime because they were leaders and authorities the community respected and served as a threat to the Nazi's rule. Father Maksymilian Maria Kolbe and Sister Teresa Benedicta of the Cross became saints in the Catholic Church for their actions leading to their arrests and suffering in Auschwitz.

The Nazis also considered LGBTQ+ people asocial because couples that would not naturally have babies together did not help the population. Arrested them, sent them to prison, forced them into medical experimentation, and sent them to the camps. Josef Kohout was 22 years old when the Nazis arrested him because they had found a picture of Josef and his

boyfriend, Fred. The Nazis sent Josef, and many other gay men, to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. It is tough to know how many LGBTQ+ people were killed because people may have gone to the camps for other parts of their identity, like Jewish or Eastern European, rather than who they loved.

What Happened During The Holocaust?

The Nazis did not begin killing people immediately after rising to power. It happened gradually. At first, Jewish people could not own businesses or work as teachers, lawyers, or the German Government. In 1935, The Nuremberg Race Laws banned Jews and non-Jews from interacting with each other, and Jewish people had to have a special symbol on their identity papers. Nazis banned Jewish athletes from representing Germany in the 1936 Berlin Olympics. Eventually, all Jews in Germany had to wear a yellow star on their clothes to identify who they were.

The Nazis were very particular about who they considered Jewish. Not only was anyone who worshipped at a Jewish synagogue or followed Jewish culture deemed Jewish, but so was anyone with three or four Jewish grandparents. Even if a person did not practice the Jewish faith, but their grandparents had, the Nazis considered them Jewish.

The Nazis started sending Jewish families into ghettos. Ghettos were walled parts of a city, separating Jewish and not Jewish populations. Jewish people needed passes to leave the ghetto to go to the city to work or shop. But eventually, the Nazis stopped allowing Jewish people to have permits and forced Jewish families to stay in ghettos.

The Nazis sent people from those groups to labor and concentration camps, where millions died. Conditions in these camps were horrible – there was overcrowding and starvation. Concentration camps also took prisoners and forced them to undertake medical experiments.

Some of these camps had gas chambers which allowed the Nazis to kill hundreds of people at a time, thousands of people a day.

How Did People Get Away From The Nazis?

Many people tried to leave Germany and Europe after the Nazis rose to power. Some were more successful than others. Some Austrian, German, and Polish children could leave on The Kindertransport – a train that carried children to Great Britain to foster them during the war. It was much like the children from Chronicles of Narnia – parents sent their children away to be safe. Lily Renée boarded a Kindertransport when she was 14 traveling from Austria to Leeds, England. Lily's foster mother was abusive, and she eventually ran away from that home. The British authorities thought she might be a spy simply because she was born in Austria. Eventually, Lily's family was able to escape and brought her to America to be with them. Lily eventually got a job at a comic book publisher and illustrated the character Señorita Rio – a spy who defeated Nazis.

Some families stayed in Europe and went into hiding. While Anne Frank and her family are the most famous story, she was not the only child to find places to hide from the Nazis. Suzanne Ripton was born into a Jewish family in Paris. After the Nazis invaded France, Suzanne's neighbor rescued her and sent her to a farm in France, far away from anyone else and did not have electricity. It was so remote no one at the farm knew the war was over until a Red Cross worker stumbled across the farm in 1947. The Red Cross reunited Suzanne with her grandmother in England.

A very small number of people escaped from the concentration camps. The Nazis caught and executed many who tried to escape from the camps. The Nazis sent Stanisław Furdyna to Auschwitz for his role in the resistance. He escaped and was one of the few to do so successfully.

He helped others escape until the SS killed him. Jack van der Geest escaped Buchenwald and helped the US military until the end of the war.

However, many died because they could not escape. Many could not leave Europe because they could not afford to leave, they were not healthy enough to travel, or the Government did not give them the paperwork which allowed them to emigrate. Even if an individual or family had the proper paperwork, the Government might not allow people into a new country. The USS St. Louis ship came to America with Jewish refugees who had the correct paperwork to come into the country. But the American Government did not want more Jewish people in the country and forced the boat and its passengers to go back to Europe.

Did People Fight Back Against The Nazis?

There was a mistaken belief in many writing about the Holocaust that people just accepted Nazi rule. However, many people resisted the Nazis. They were so worried about people resisting the Nazis that they created a special division of the SS to find and arrest those who were a part of resistance groups. College students in Germany formed a resistance organization called the White Rose. Sophie Scholl and her brother Hans helped lead the group. They passed out papers outlining why the Nazis were terrible. The Nazis arrested and executed Sophie in 1943.

A young Frieda Belinfante lived in Amsterdam during the war, where she dressed as a man to help destroy records, falsify ID cards, and aided those fleeing Nazis. She avoided arrest and would later help found the Orange County Philharmonic in California. Chug Chaluzi, translated to Circle of Pioneers, was a resistance group in Austria made up of young people helping Jews go into hiding and stay hidden from the Nazis.

Sometimes the rebellion was a small act of resistance. The prisoners forced to help with medical experiments would fake administering shots. That prevented many people from getting sick and dying. Prisoners working in the kitchen would sneak food from the kitchens to bring back to their friends and family in the barracks.

Why Did The Holocaust Happen?

Germans did not elect Nazis who then decided to start killing people. The Nazi's political platform – what they stood for as a political party – was embedded in hateful ideas. The Nazis were a group that formed because they came together based on emotions and ideas that were a part of conversations around the world. Hitler and the Nazi party thought they could get away with carrying out the Final Solution because similar things had happened in other parts of the world and had not faced international outcry. Hitler and the Nazis were not the first to come up with ways to cause human suffering. Hateful thoughts and actions have been hurting people for a long time.

Before World War II, many people did not like Jewish people because many had become financially successful, not just in Europe but across the globe. Their wealth became a scapegoat, a group wrongfully blamed for a problem when others were struggling. The Russian Government forced Jews into the Pale of Settlement – a place where there were very few resources and little access to food and water, so many died from starvation.

Racism was rampant across the world. After the Nazis took charge of Germany, Hitler sent representatives to the United States of America to study the segregation of the South and the policies about sterilizing Black, Hispanic, Latina, and Indigenous women to prevent those populations from growing. Hitler was also inspired by the reservations system the United States government created, which forced Indigenous populations into small amounts of land to allow

for European settlement and forced the children to abandon their ancestor's culture, language, and religion and learn English and Christianity.

Shortly before the start of the 20th century, the British had forced Boers in Africa onto camps similar to reservations. Millions of people during the first two decades of the 1900s died in Armenia and the Boxer Rebellion in China because one group of people did not like the other and killed them.

There were also a lot of people who did not like LGBTQ+ populations. Even before the Nazis came to power, the German legislature added Paragraphs 175 and Paragraph 183 to their Penal Code, the laws that governed Germany. These paragraphs banned LGBTQ+ people from living their authentic lives. In the 1920s and early 1930s, the German police barely enforced these paragraphs, especially in the city of Berlin. During that time, Berlin had a thriving LGBTQ+ scene that brought Europeans, and even Americans came to Berlin to be able to live openly. When the Nazis rose to power, they began to enforce these paragraphs in the Penal code, and LGBTQ+ people worldwide lost one of the few safe havens to live their authentic lives.

What Happened To Concentration Camp Survivors After The Holocaust?

Some prisoners died shortly after liberation from the camps because their bodies could not handle having proper food in their system. Others died because their immune systems were so poor that they got sick and died. Many Jewish people immigrated to Israel or America and went on to find jobs, marry, and have children. Some LGBTQ+ people were rearrested after the war because Paragraphs 175 & 183 were still in the law after the Nazis were no longer in power. The Nazis arrested Karl Gorath for being gay. The Government after the war. The judge was the same at both trials. It took until 1994 to remove paragraph 175 from the Penal Code and until 2001 for the German Government to acknowledge the Nazis persecuted LGBTQ+ people.

All the survivors carried their experiences for the rest of their lives. Many survivors made it their mission to ensure people would never forget the death and suffering and make sure an event like the Holocaust never happens again. Elie Wiesel, Primo Levi, Pierre Seel, and Marianne Blumenthal Lazan are among many Holocaust survivors who wrote books about their stories and started telling their stories to whoever would listen. Survivors have worked to create memorials and museums worldwide dedicated to all victims of the Nazi's actions.

What Can We Learn About The Holocaust?

This story is a tale where some people survived, and some did not. That is the grim reality of the Holocaust: many people suffered, and many people died because the Nazis did not like people who did not align with their ideas. Many of these people and their stories were probably names you had never heard of before. Sometimes, the names and stories are all but forgotten because all that is left for that person to remember them by is a name on a concentration camp record. Sometimes it is because people want to ignore stories because mean people still do not like these groups today.

Sometimes names have been left out of stories simply because there are so many names. The Nazis killed millions of people, and now and then, it is easier to say "others" than to provide a list. But it is important to remember that no one is an "other." We are all humans. While the Nazis may have thought Max, Anna, Manfred, Robert, Józefa, Hilarius, Josef, and Lily were different from them, they were not. Humans are humans, and all humans deserve love and respect.

Eventually, Allied Forces removed Hitler and the Nazis from power. The American and Russian armies freed people young and old from the concentration camps across Europe. But hate did not go away with the fall of the Nazi regime. The Roma and Sinti face persecution to

this day. Black and LGBTQ + people still suffer and die worldwide for who they love and how they express themselves. But you can do something about it. Learn more about the Holocaust, learn more about the people that died, so the history of the Holocaust is no longer a word and a number but the story of people who died because bad ideas made people want to do bad things. Learn about the people who resisted because they knew what was right: all the differences that the Nazis saw as a reason to kill people were superficial –there is no such thing as different races of humans. There is just one human race.

Bibliography/Places To Learn More

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APPENDIX D: INCLUSIVE HOLOCAUST CHILDREN'S BOOK 2

Dr. Lipstadt's Day in Court

Page One: Two years after World War II, Deborah Lipstadt was born to a Jewish family in Queens, New York. As Deborah grew up, she didn't like anyone telling her what to do. As a teenager, she protested the cost of colleges in New York City so more people could go to college. During college, Deborah found a way to enter a part of Jerusalem Jews were not able to visit during that time. She eventually got a Ph.D. and got the title Doctor. She began teaching about history and religion to college students.

Page Two: One of the things she taught was the Holocaust. The Holocaust was when the Nazis, a group of people who ran Germany from 1933 to 1945, killed millions of people because they were mean and they did not like some people because of their religion, skin color, who they loved or stood up to them. Many Holocaust survivors have told their stories to friends and families and writing books, so the world knows what happened to them, their friends, and their families.

Page Three: Some mean people, called Holocaust deniers, have written their books about what happened to those who died and those who survived. Like Mr. Liar, Liar, and Mr. Pants on Fire, these deniers say untrue things about the Holocaust. They lie and say the Holocaust did not happen and that the Nazis did not kill people. Dr. Lipstadt wrote a book that explained some of the mean and untrue things Mr. Liar, Liar, and Mr. Pants on Fire said and pointed out why they were wrong.

Page Four: Mr. Pants on Fire found out about Dr. Lipstadt's book. He got angry that a Jewish woman called him a liar. He sued Dr. Lipstadt and the company that sold the book. He said Dr. Lipstadt lied about him in the book, and because of that, companies did not want to

publish his book. Mr. Pants on Fire sued Dr. Lipstadt because he did not like what she said about him.

Page Five: Dr. Lipstadt faced a choice: settle the case and give Mr. Pants on Fire money or take the case to a trial. She refused to settle. She knew Mr. Liar, Liar, and Mr. Pants on Fire would brag about winning the case if she settled and would continue to lie to people. Dr. Lipstadt did not want to send that message. She wanted a trial for a judge would say in writing that Mr. Pants on Fire was a liar.

Page Six: Dr. Lipstadt hired some of the best lawyers in Britain. Those lawyers hired a lot of legal aides and historians to read all the things Mr. Pants on Fire had said and written. They wanted to find all the wrong things he said about the Holocaust and all the mean things he said about those people he did not like. The legal team also hired history experts to speak about those wrong and mean things at the trial.

Page Seven: The lawyers also decided that Dr. Lipstadt and Holocaust survivors would not take the stand and not talk to the press. The legal team decided prove Mr. Pants on Fire was a liar beyond any doubt by just using his words. Dr. Lipstadt did not like that these lawyers told her what to do, mainly because they told her not to speak her mind. She had never liked men telling her what to do. She had always spoken her mind.

Page Nine: But Dr. Lipstadt knew these lawyers were the best in Britain. These people knew the law inside and out. She realized any hope of winning this case relied on her to trust these people in a way she had never had to trust anyone before. Dr. Lipstadt knew she had to win this case because people could think liars were telling the truth if they didn't. Dr. Lipstadt decided to trust these people, and if the lawyers thought the best way to win was for her to stay quiet, she would do so.

Page Ten: Even though she could not speak out during the trial, she still found a way to use her voice to help the case. It was expensive to hire all the people the lawyers needed to help with the research for the case. Dr. Lipstadt asked a lot of people to donate money. Like the famous movie director Stephen Spielberg, some people were happy to give her money. She raised over one million dollars. Dr. Lipstadt, the lawyers, and the researchers worked together to find all the proof showing that Mr. Pants on Fire was lying and mean. It was time for the trial.

Page Eleven: Dr. Lipstadt did not say a word in court or to the press during the 33 days the trial took. All Mr. Pants on Fire did was talk because he served as his own lawyer. He was on the witness stand himself. Mr. Pants on Fire talked to any press person who would give him a microphone. Dr. Lipstadt worried that the press would believe Mr. Pants on Fire was telling the truth because he was talking to them, and she was not.

Page Twelve: But she persisted. She stayed silent to the press until the judge made his decision. And her silence paid off. The judge said that Mr. Pants on Fire lied to people and lied in his books. Dr. Lipstadt and her legal team won! A judge put in writing that Dr. Lipstadt was right. Mr. Pants on Fire was a lying, mean man.

Page Thirteen: Dr. Lipstadt was able to use her voice after the trial to talk about her experiences. She talked to the world about what she went through during the trial. She used to trust and teamwork to stand up for what was right.

Page Fourteen: And you can too! Ask a person you trust to help you make sure what you see on the internet is genuine facts. You can tell people what you've learned from this book. Or, if you see someone being a bully, tell a trusted adult to help you stop the bully. Use your voice to help people and trust in the power of teamwork to fight mean people, just like Dr. Lipstadt did.

Page Fifteen: Mr. Liar, Liar, and Mr. Pants on Fire are not the real names of Holocaust deniers. But if we used their real names, they might get mad and try to take us to court for calling them what they are: mean, liars. If your grown-up wants to learn their names and more about the trial, the information for this book came from *Denial: History on Trial* by Deborah Lipstadt.