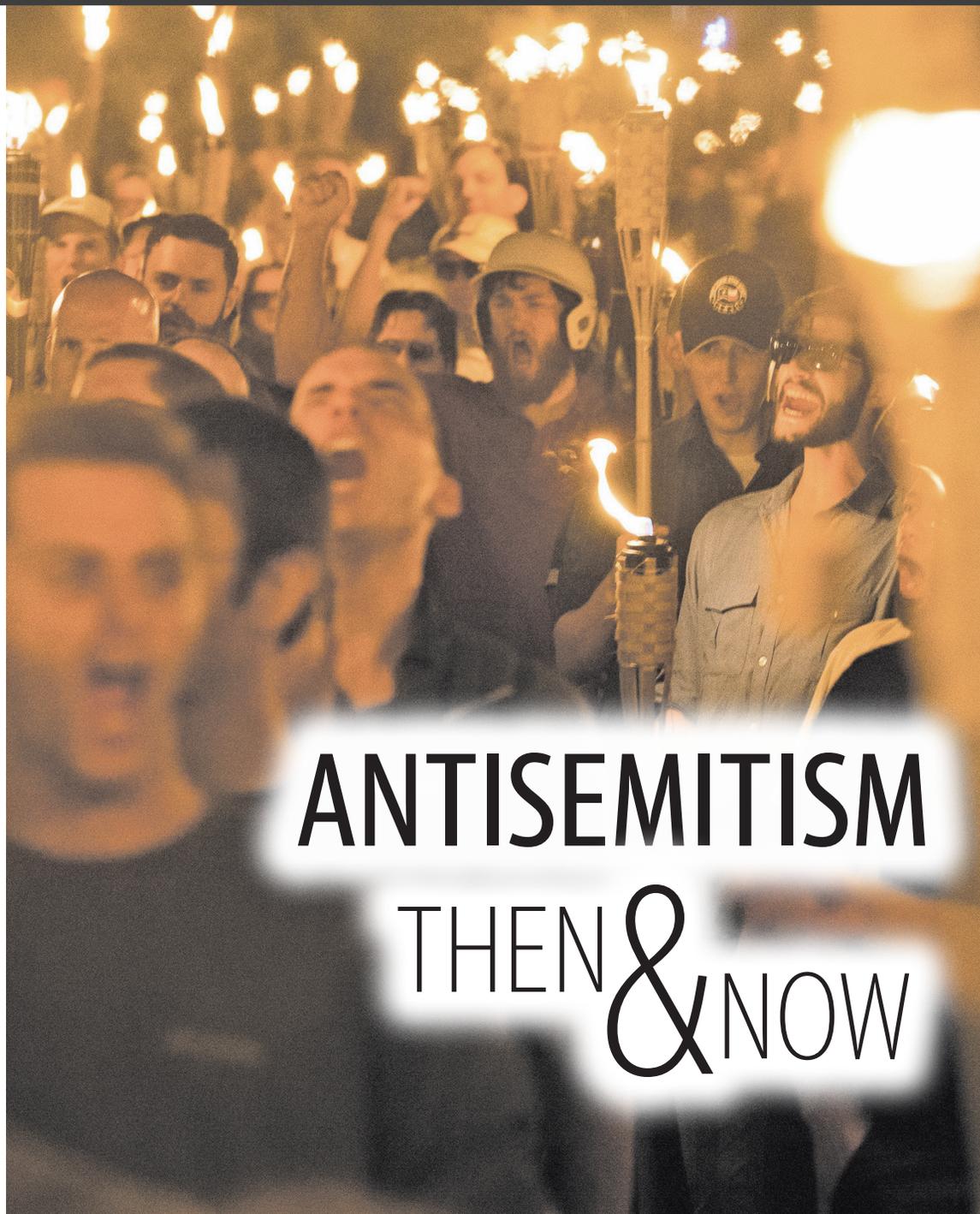


# Holocaust Remembered



**BERLIN, 1938**



**ANTISEMITISM**  
THEN & NOW

**CHARLOTTESVILLE, 2017**

# Antisemitism Surges

## Sincere thanks and gratitude

**Donors:** Thank you to all the previous donors, as well as to the **Columbia Jewish Federation**, the **Columbia Holocaust Education Commission**, the **S.C. Council on the Holocaust**, and the **Anita and Jerry Zucker Family Foundation**. Sincere appreciation goes to our anonymous corporate sponsor for making this edition possible.

**Contributing authors:** A special thank you to all the contributors who spent hours researching and writing this historical narrative.

## Survivors, liberators, eyewitnesses:

Thank you for telling us your stories. We have the deepest respect and gratitude to all of you who trusted us with your story and allowed us to tell the world. Only by hearing your testimonies and narratives can we continue to tell the truth about the Holocaust. And to the families of the survivors, liberators and eyewitnesses, you have honored your loved ones by keeping their memories alive.

**Find us online:** All previous Holocaust Remembered supplements can be viewed online at [thestate.com/holocaust](http://thestate.com/holocaust).

**The opinions** expressed in this supplement are solely those of the Columbia Holocaust Education Commission.

**Send us your story:** We invite those with experiences from the Holocaust to send their stories (600 words or fewer), along with three to four original photographs, to Barry Abels, [barrya@jewishcolumbia.org](mailto:barrya@jewishcolumbia.org).

## Columbia Holocaust Education Commission

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This is the fifth edition of Holocaust Remembered, a publication distributed by the McClatchy papers in South Carolina but compiled and edited by the Columbia Holocaust Education Commission. After reviewing the topics of the past four years, I felt it important to tackle the



LILLY FILLER, M.D.

*Co-chair, Columbia Holocaust Education Commission*

*Chair, S.C. Council on the Holocaust  
Retired physician*

root of all of the supplements: antisemitism. This was a tough decision, since it is not easy to hear about antisemitism or talk about it. When Dr. Deborah Lipstadt of Emory University (and the protagonist in the movie "Denial") spoke at USC on Jan. 28, 2018, she spoke of "hard-core" and "soft-core" antisemitism, and I realized that she has adeptly identified the key concepts of the terms and their implications.

Hard-core antisemitism is apparent to anyone who hears or sees it. Hard-core anti-Semitism is what Adolf Hitler incited and acted upon during the Holocaust: denouncing Jews and their right to exist, refusing services to Jews only, closing Jewish businesses, herding Jews out of their homes and into ghettos, and forcing Jews into crematoriums to exterminate them. It is what Iran, Syria and other Middle Eastern countries are saying when they threaten to drive Israel into the sea, to terminate the state of Israel and annihilate the Jewish people. It is Holocaust denial. It is the neo-Nazis and right-wing extremists and the white supremacists.

Soft-core antisemitism is less apparent – but once understood,



ARTIFACT PHOTOGRAPHED BY MAX REID - U.S. HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM



Above, an antisemitic poster depicts a stereotypical caricature of a Jew peering through British, American and Soviet flags with the words, "Behind the enemy powers: the Jew." It was published in Germany between 1933 and 1939. At left, a swastika was spray-painted on a Lexington, S.C., road sign in December.

THE STATE FILE PHOTO

it is also easy to identify. Dr Lipstadt says, "It is soft-core denial that is thriving right now, especially on social media. It is phrases like, 'Gaza is genocide,' or that the Hamas tunnels are like the ones of the Warsaw ghetto. It is not a denial of what happened but a re-writing of history." It is Holocaust distortion. It is when someone

dresses as Hitler and enjoys the reaction; it is when one generalizes that all Jews are smart; Jews are money-savvy; and Jews have dark hair and large noses. It is the omission of the Holocaust when discussing World War II. It is writing swastikas in yearbooks, painting one on a public sign, or drawing

disparaging pictures of Jews.

The contributors of this edition – from academia, the clergy, survivors of the Holocaust – were asked to discuss antisemitism as it related to their topics and experiences. The articles are an open view of each of the contributors. They are powerful. We know that there are references in the New Testament that do not paint Jews in a good light, and I thank the authors for recognizing this at the outset and explaining how this has contributed to the preservation of antisemitism today. This is not an exercise in blame, but an attempt to get to the root of the problem and try to understand where we go from here. Honest discussions with clergy and their parishioners and historical understanding of how certain events were perceived can help us move forward to eliminate the hatred of Jews.

The term "antisemitism" was coined in 1879 to replace "Judenhass" – Jew hatred. A working definition of antisemitism was adopted on May 26, 2016, by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance as "a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or (non-Jewish individuals) and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities."

The Columbia Holocaust Education Commission is a committee of Jews and non-Jews interested in educating and discussing the lessons of the Holocaust. We want to stem the tide of rising intolerance, bigotry, racism and hatred by showing where this could lead (another Holocaust) and how to stop it before it reaches that crescendo. As George Santayana, a 20th-century Spanish-American philosopher, stated, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."



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## ON THE COVER

**LEFT:** Firefighters walk past the Fasanenstrasse synagogue, Berlin's biggest house of Jewish worship, after Nazis set fire to it on Nov. 9, 1938, "Kristallnacht."

1938 AP FILE PHOTO

**RIGHT:** White supremacists and members of the alt-right movement march Aug. 11, 2017, through the University of Virginia campus in Charlottesville. One of the slogans they chanted was, "Jews will not replace us."

PHOTO BY ZACH D. ROBERTS, TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

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## Great Is Peace

What is antisemitism? Is it the same as any prejudice or bigotry? Is there anything that differentiates it from other forms of hatred? Why has it persisted throughout the ages? Was it inevitable that it would lead to the Holocaust? What follows is an attempt at answering these questions.



**RABBI  
JONATHAN CASE**

Rabbi at Beth Shalom  
Conservative  
Synagogue  
Columbia, S.C.

**Item:** Fewer than one out of every 500 people in the world is Jewish. That is 0.02 percent of the world's population.

This means that chance meeting with a Jew is slim. Further, since the vast majority of Jews are not immediately identifiable as Jews, the chances of consciously meeting a Jew are even slimmer. How can such a minute, often unidentifiable, portion of the world attract such vitriol?

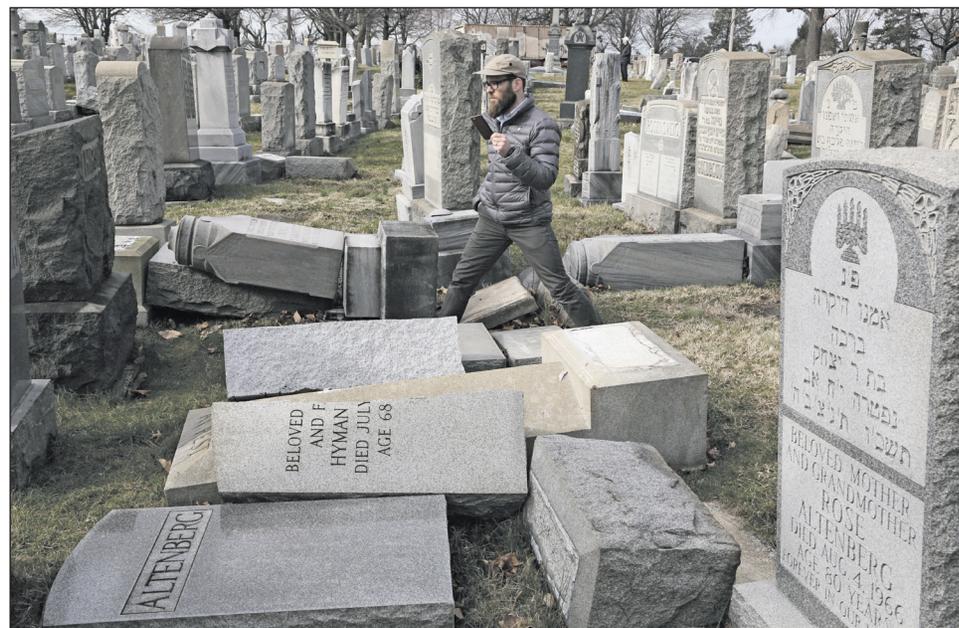
**Item:** For roughly 400 years, no Jews living are known to have lived in England. In 1290, King Edward I expelled all Jews. Until 1656, Jews were not allowed to return. During all those centuries, significant anti-Semitic literature has been documented in sermons and writings all during this period when there were no Jews! The most famous example of this is the Bard. Shakespeare fashioned Shylock, a vile character in the "Merchant of Venice" as defining what his contemporaries thought of the ruthless Jew. And yet, Shakespeare never met a Jew!

It takes no great leap of imagination to think that even if there were no Jews there would still be antisemitism.

Maybe if there were no Jews they would have to be invented.

Can you imagine this with any other group? Would white supremacists step down their rhetoric on African-Americans if there were none? Would the Catholic and Protestants of Northern Ireland fought with the other during their decades of warring if one of them had not been present? Could hatred exist between one group and another that was not present? It seems absurd. Of course not.

We have been accused of being communists while charging that we are avowed capitalists. Some have said we have a plan to



2017 AP FILE PHOTO

**Rabbi Joshua Bolton of the University of Pennsylvania's Hillel Center surveys damaged headstones at Mount Carmel Cemetery in Philadelphia. More than 100 headstones were vandalized at the Jewish cemetery less than a week after similar vandalism in Missouri, authorities said.**

control the world while others have called us rootless wanderers. Some say God has damned us and some say that we are the chosen elect. Jews who live in a Jewish state are told they are racist. Jews who live in diaspora are indicted for having dual loyalty. Jews have been accused of Deicide, killing God, and need to be eradicated. Others have viewed us as the key to ultimate redemption.

Some accuse us for being too wealthy and controlling. Others accuse us of being filthy leeches; taking away valuable resources or bringing dreaded diseases. We are at once inherently inferior and superior being too conspicuous in the echelons of learning.

Throughout the long ages and including present day the Jewish people have been the object of derision, expulsion and ultimately death citing all these reasons.

Two questions emerge. First, how can such vastly different and contradictory stereotypes exist? Don't the anti-Semites realize that accusing Jews of being Communists and capitalists is non-sensible? Second, why this obsession with the Jews?

There is no definitive answer but there are some responses. Some have suggested that

we are moral messengers to the world. And no one wants to have it pointed out to them that they are wrong.

Or. Perhaps it is part of human nature to abhor what is different and succeeds despite (because of?) those differences. After all, the Jewish people are still here while the nations that coexisted with us throughout the millennia have been swept away.

Scholars have documented many instances where the dicta of Judaism have demanded different attitudes and observances from the rest of the world. Such observances as Sabbath, adherence to laws of what can be eaten, and devotion to learning have been the source of enmity. By being faithful to God we are meting out our destiny and covenant while becoming the object of hatred for being different.

I suggest that when antisemitism is no more the final redemption will be at hand. It is the plague that has dogged humanity through more than three thousand years. When the nations of the world no longer find reason to vilify and destroy the Jewish people they will have learned to live peaceably.



# Antisemitism: Paving the Path to Genocide

Last year, 2017, delivered a hard blow to American Jews' sense of security and belonging. The year opened with a massacre plot against congregants of Temple Emanu-El in Myrtle Beach by a white supremacist, and it climaxed in August with the infamous neo-Nazi march through Charlottesville, Virginia, where the



**F.K. CLEMENTI**

Director, Jewish Studies program, University of South Carolina

Associate professor of English and Jewish studies, USC

Author, "Holocaust Mothers and Daughters: Family, History, and Trauma"

Columbia, S.C.

whole country and the world heard American far-right extremists loudly chant "Jews will not replace us!"

The Anti-Defamation League estimates that anti-Semitic incidents increased 67 percent last year. World War II and the Holocaust are long over, but events such as those in Charlottesville remind us that antisemitism, which already paved the way once to a Jewish genocide, is not.

## Time-Tested Propaganda

In artfully constructing a scary image of the Jew as an ugly, revolting creature, a parasite, an infectious



1941 AP FILE PHOTOS

**Jews in Yugoslavia were required to display a yellow cloth badge with the star of David on their chest and back at all times.**



1941 AP FILE PHOTOS

**Jews line up to draw water at a well in the ghetto in Lublin, Poland.**

illness to be eradicated by any and all means, the Nazi party had tapped into a time-tested propaganda.

In the fourth century, John Chrysostom, father of the Church, had already thundered in his homilies against the Jews of Antioch, calling them dogs and the "common disgrace and infection of the whole world," instigating physical hostility against them in the Christian masses. Before him, the biblical writer John had associated the Jews with the devil.

Martin Luther, in 1543, bellowed against the "damned" Jewish race, advising his followers to burn their synagogues, destroy their homes, confiscate their prayer books, deny them traveling permits and restrict their every movement. Jews – a parasitic people, according to the reformer – had to be forced to work and earn their food "by the sweat of their noses" (Luther's words).

We are all familiar with the yellow star worn by Jews in Nazi-occupied territories during the war: this way



UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM, COURTESY OF LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

**An antisemitic cartoon by Seppla (Josef Plank) shows an octopus with a Star of David over its head and its tentacles encompassing the globe.**

of distinguishing the Jews, in order to humiliate and better harass them, was not invented in 1941.

In 1215, Pope Innocent III had decreed that the Jews wear distinctive badges (often yellow) to be told apart from the Christian population, a measure long in use in France and the Muslim world.

While the best-known riot against the Jews is probably Kristallnacht, "The night of broken glass" – when, in 1938, hundreds of Jewish synagogues and shops were shattered

into smithereens and burnt to the ground all over Germany and Austria – pogroms had plagued the history of the Jews in Europe since the Middle Ages, occasioning thousands of dead.

When the great German Jewish poet Heinrich Heine wrote in 1823 that where books are burnt sooner or later people will be burnt too, he was only in part prophetic. Perhaps, more than guessing the future, Heine was drawing upon what the past had already amply demon-



1938 AP FILE PHOTO

**A young man with a broom clears broken glass from shop windows on the morning of Nov. 10, 1938. The night before, the Nazis had demolished thousands of Jewish facilities in what came to be known as Kristallnacht.**

strated. If it is true that a century later, in 1933, the Nazis would burn books by Jewish authors on the public squares of Berlin, it is also to be remembered that the Inquisition had sequestered, censured and burned Jewish books on the public squares of France (1242 and 1244) and Italy (1553) many times before: The Inquisitors had then proceeded to burning the Jews themselves, together with “witches” and heretics.

And lastly, the technique of cramming Jews into restricted areas, where they could be more easily controlled, was also not a Nazi invention and neither was the name

by which they were designated: ghetto. In 1516, the Jews of Venice had been the first to be forced to live in an enclosed quarter (with guarded gates) labeled “ghetto.” The old ghettos were not the antechamber to extermination, to be sure. Nonetheless, the idea, and even the name, was already in place for the Nazis to recycle.

### No Reason to Object

While it is true that Jew-hatred morphed to fit morphing eras, and it is a complex, shifting phenomenon, it was also undeniably a co-factor of the Holocaust. The anti-Jewish measures of the past



1945 AP FILE PHOTO

**As Gen. Alexander Patch’s 12th Armored Division forged its way through Germany toward the Austrian border, it uncovered a Nazi camp at Schwabmunchen, southwest of Munich. Soldiers found the bodies of prisoners burned alive by guards, who set fire to their crude huts while they slept, shooting any who tried to escape.**

millennia were not a prelude nor an exemplification of the Holocaust but they were, philosophically speaking, its necessary and sufficient condition. The long history of hatred did not turn every European into a genocidal murderer, but it accounted for the indifference that some were able to adopt in regards to the disappearance of the Jews.

Centuries of antisemitism had normalized hatred against the Jews to the point that laws restricting all their liberties (passed as early as 1935) seemed acceptable to millions of people. As restrictions turned into massacres, most Christians could find no compelling reason to object.

Hate toward a group must become, through time and relentless propaganda, second nature to the thinking of the majority for a genocide to happen. However, from hating to actively implementing the annihilation of an entire pop-

ulation there stands a not-too-narrow gap which only the convergence of the ripe political circumstances can bridge.

One question I always ask students at the start of my Holocaust seminars is: What makes a genocide possible? Hatred, intolerance, lack of empathy for the fellow human being combined with a ripe historical, social and political alignment certainly constitute the ideal condition for genocide.

But ultimately, the disarmingly simple answer as to how genocides happen is that they are allowed. The Holocaust was allowed. Myanmar today is allowed. Rwanda was allowed. Massacring the Bosnians, systematically raping women and killing their babies, torturing innocent men in Guatemala, Cambodia or Auschwitz were first and foremost allowed. The perpetrators knew that there would be no consequences for their acts because

the political apparatus gave them the green light and, as in the case of Nazi Germany, the government provided the technical resources to carry them out.

From which it follows that it is just as important to pay attention to autonomous acts of hate-motivated violence committed by one person or an organized group, as it is to be watchful of the ideological undertones of the political discourses surrounding us – especially when they are clearly hateful and incite bullying and intolerance. Under the rule of law, the former are criminal and hence punishable acts. But the latter hold a far more devastating power: it is ruling parties, governments or leaders who can potentially normalize the exceptional and turn illegality into legitimacy thus, through governmentally or nationally sanctioned violence that relies on well-established patterns of hate, trail new bloody paths to genocide.



## What Is the Holocaust?

As defined in 1979 by the President's Commission on the Holocaust:

"The Holocaust was the systematic bureaucratic annihilation of 6 million Jews by the Nazis and their collaborators as a central act of state during the Second World War. It was a crime unique in the annals of human history, different not only in the quantity of violence – the sheer numbers killed – but in its manner and purpose as a mass criminal enterprise organized by the state against defenseless civilian populations. The decision to kill every Jew everywhere in Europe: the definition of Jew as target for death transcended all boundaries ...

"The concept of annihilation of an entire people, as distinguished from their subjugation, was unprecedented; never before in human history had genocide been an all-pervasive government policy unaffected by territorial or economic advantage and unchecked by moral or religious constraints ...

"The Holocaust was not simply a throwback to medieval torture or archaic barbarism, but a thoroughly modern expression of bureaucratic organization, industrial management, scientific achievement, and technological sophistication. The entire apparatus of the German bureaucracy was marshalled in the service of the extermination process ...

"The Holocaust stands as a tragedy for Europe, for Western Civilization, and for all the world. We must remember the facts of the Holocaust, and work to understand these facts."

**W**hen I arrived in Columbia in 1987, I had no idea what to expect. Having grown up in New York, in predominantly Jewish neighborhoods, I would now be a minority in the Bible belt, the home of Leo Frank, Jim Crow and the KKK. Everyone up north told me to be careful.



**RABBI HESH EPSTEIN**

*Director, Chabad of South Carolina  
Rabbi, Chabad Aleph House  
Columbia, S.C.*

One incident early on made it clear to me how antisemitism would affect my Jewish life in Columbia. In December 1987, I was planning a public Hanukkah menorah lighting at Columbia Mall. Very excitedly, I shared my plans with community leaders, hoping to engage their interest and support.

The response was unenthusiastic. Fear was the issue: "Oy, that could be dangerous." "We could make ourselves into a target." "What will Santa think?"

But then, I met with S.C. Sen. Isadore Lourie. He told me something I have never forgotten: "Rabbi, I am a proud Jew and a proud American, and I let everyone I meet know it. Non-Jews will respect Jews who respect themselves. They will not respect Jews who do not respect themselves. Let's light that menorah."

Now please don't misunderstand. I am not saying that antisemitism does not exist in the U.S. That would be ridiculous.

We saw the white supremacists in Charlottesville, the anti-Semitic rhetoric spewed on campuses, the bomb threats against Jew-

# A Light for the Nations



THE STATE FILE PHOTOS

**Above, the late S.C. Sen. Isadore Lourie. At left, Rabbi Hesh Epstein speaks at the menorah lighting at the S.C. Statehouse in December 2005.**

adopt a survival mentality that argues, "Being Jewish is about being a victim, so we do the best we can to be as least overtly Jewish as we can and hope for the best."

Or we can adopt Sen. Lourie's approach that the world will respect us most when we are who G-d directed us to be: a light to the nations, a blessing to all humanity and the messengers of G-d's word to the world.

Chapter 13 of the book of Numbers describes the spies sent by Moses to reconnoiter Canaan prior to the Israelites' advance.

They returned from the mission with good news and bad news. The good news was that the land was "flowing with milk and honey." The bad news was, "We are unable to defeat the people, for they are stronger than us... We appeared like grasshoppers in our eyes, and that's how we were in their eyes."

Do you see the point the Bible is making? The spies' own low self-esteem led the Canaanites to have equally poor estimation of the Jews' ability.

Our job is to do the right thing, irrespective of anyone else.

We're on a mission from G-d and can't afford the time or trouble to even worry what the spectators will do or say.

ish community centers, and the Anti-Defamation League's 2017 audit of anti-Semitic incidents in the U.S.

For many members of our community, growing up in Columbia meant experiencing constant reminders of the ugliness of antisemitism. Name-calling, thrown pennies, limits on where you could live and play.

But the question is not "Is there antisemitism in the U.S.?" but rather, "How does it affect Jewish life?"

A rabbi once asked his students, "Where is G-d?" They said, "Easy, G-d is everywhere." He said, no.

They said G-d is in the synagogue; he said no. In the school, no. So where is G-d? they asked.

G-d, he said, is where you let Him in.

Anti-Semites are among us. They are in the colleges, the media, and the workplace. The question is, how do they affect our lives? And for me, the answer is, wherever we let them in.

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, the former chief Rabbi of the United Kingdom, once asked, when did we go from defining ourselves as the Nation that G-d loved, to the people that the Gentiles hate?

We have a choice – we can

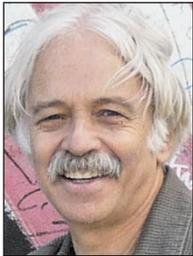


# Blood Laws: Nuremberg and Jim Crow

The American ambassador to Nazi Germany, William C. Dodd, sent copies of the Nuremberg Laws of 1935, to Secretary of State Cordell Hull, with the message not to worry, “The anti-Jewish legislation should be sufficiently severe to please Party extremists for some time.”

Little did he know.

The Nuremberg laws consisted of two anti-Jewish measures and an addendum defining who is a Jew and who is not. The Reich Citizenship Law restricted political rights – voting, office-holding, even showing the German colors – to members of the German Volk. One could no longer be Jewish and German.



**THEODORE ROSENGARTEN**

Zucker/Goldberg Chair of Holocaust Studies, College of Charleston  
Associate professor of Jewish studies, College of Charleston  
Charleston, S.C.

The nefarious “blood law” – “Law on the Preservation of German Blood and German Honor” – barred marriages as well as sexual intercourse outside of marriage between Jews and Germans.

The student of history flinches from recognizing how similar the German laws are to the citizenship statutes and legislation forbidding marriage between people of different races

in America, particularly, but not only, in the South. Could the American model have influenced the Nazis? In fact, Thomas Q. Whitman reports in his persuasive new book of uncomfortable truths, “Hitler’s American Model: The United States and the Making of Nazi Race Law,” that Nazi lawyers “regarded America as the innovative world leader in the creation of racist law.” They studied American immigration and citizenship laws, not only as they affected “Negroes,” but also Asians, American Indians, and other people of color. It was well known that Hitler admired the decimation of the indigenous tribes and the placement of their remnants on remote reservations.

To compare, however, is not to equate. Jim Crow, the system of enforcing white supremacy and keeping African-Americans in “their



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THEODORE ROSENGARTEN

A woman, left, holds a sign that translates to, “I’m the biggest pig in the area, and I only get involved with Jews.” The man’s sign translates, “As a Jew boy, I only take German girls to the bedroom.”



place,” was not the same as the lead up to the Holocaust. “It isn’t about finding equivalencies in terms of sameness,” instructs historian Jeffrey Benvenuto. “Rather the goal is to analogize, or to draw parallels.”

For a window onto the thinking that evolved into Nuremberg, look no further than the Prussian Memorandum of 1933, a guide to turning the criminal legal system into Nazi law. The trained eye and ear are drawn to American precedents. When, for example, the authors of the Nazi document ridicule “the fundamental principle of the egoistic past that everyone who bears a human countenance is equal,” we hear echoes of the Cornerstone Speech delivered in Savannah, Georgia, on the eve of the Civil War by Confederate Vice President Alexander Stephens. The ideas of the Constitutional founders “were fundamentally wrong,”

declared the insurgent leader, because “they rested upon the assumption of the equality of races. This was an error.” The Confederacy was the first country in the world, he boasted, founded on the principle of racial supremacy.

His German heirs were listening. “It is well-known,” they wrote, “that the southern states of North America maintain the most stringent separation between the white population and colored in both personal and public interactions.” They commended the Americans’ resolve while pointing to the mistake of counting Jews with the white population. To the Nazis, criminalizing race mixing was “a burning necessity.”

Virginia’s Racial Integrity Act of 1924 must have warmed the hearts of Nazi lawmakers who dreamed of establishing hereditary courts to confirm the whiteness and “racial value” of every individual seeking to marry. Mississippi showed the way to quash dissent by threatening to fine and imprison anyone who prints, publishes, or circulates “written matter urging or presenting for public acceptance or general information, arguments or suggestions in favor of social equality or of intermarriage between whites and negroes.”

Leaving no social crevice to chance, Oklahoma forbade whites and blacks to fish from the same boat or to use the same telephone booths; Louisiana warehoused blind people by race in separate group homes and legislated separate ticket lines and entrances to circuses; North Carolina forbade white and black workers from looking out of the same windows in the textile mills, prohibited schools for whites and schools for blacks from exchanging books, and made it a crime for the so-called races to use the same hearses.

Race consciousness reared its head in Nebraska in 1943, when lawmakers outlawed marriage between “persons of the Caucasian race” and anyone with “one-eighth or more Negro, Japanese, or Chinese blood,” utilizing, says Benvenuto, “a similar sort of racial arithmetic” and fixation on the “blood quantum” that obsessed the framers of the Nuremberg Laws.

Someone had to think up these laws, write them down, and bring them up for debate in state legislatures and city councils. Analogously, local Nazi officials were ordered to separate and isolate Jews from the rest of the population and to examine how the Americans did the same to blacks. They responded eagerly by enacting laws expelling Jews from all social, professional, and sports clubs; forbidding them to run retail shops or work as independent craftsmen; taking the keys to their cars and cutting off their telephones; excluding them from movie theaters and concert halls. They barred them from public beaches – just as black people were barred from the beaches at Sullivan’s Island, Isle of Palms, and Folly Beach; excluded them as witnesses in court cases against Germans; banned them from public libraries. (I recall visiting a library in rural Alabama 50 years ago where the chairs had been removed to block whites and blacks from sitting at the same tables.)

Nazi lawyers studied American immigration and citizenship laws, regarding “America as the innovative world leader in the creation of racist law.”

The more degrading the rule, the better. “That too,” remarked the late Israeli novelist Aharon Appelfeld, “was part of the wickedness” of the oppressor.



# Theological Arrogance

**T**he most obvious examples of intolerance in contemporary America are the obnoxious bigotry of the Westboro Baptist Church (of “God Hates Jews and Fags” fame) and the hate-filled prejudice of other white nationalist and neo-Nazi groups. Fear, paranoia, and clannishness are the usual culprits, resulting in a worldview of Us versus Them.

Such hostility has been largely outside my ecclesiastical sphere,



**REV. DR. MARION ALDRIDGE**

*Retired coordinator,  
Cooperative  
Baptist Fellowship  
of South Carolina  
Columbia, S.C.*

except when I see it on television. Though I've been to thousands of Christian meetings over my 70 years, I'm grateful I have no memory of hearing overt anti-Jewish political propaganda at any of them. I read about o b s e s s e d

fanatics and the events in which they're involved only when they emerge from the dark corners of humanity, committing some newsworthy atrocity against their neighbors.

Anxious, angry individuals, not part of any organized movement, also qualify as xenophobic and anti-Semitic. Hidden from public view, these shriveled spirits go unnoticed until they write anonymous letters to say something like, “Your type doesn't belong in our club.”

## Casual Contempt

Unfortunately, however, there is a subtler path that results in antisemitism, one not based on fear or paranoia, but on theological arrogance. It is created from the cavalier assumption that all Jews (as well as all Buddhists, Hindus,



1945 AP FILE PHOTO

**Townpeople of Nuremberg, Germany, were ordered to attend services and provide pallbearers for the 161 Polish Jews killed by SS troops. The burial took place in a Catholic cemetery on May 11, 1945.**

and Muslims) who have not converted to Christianity are going to spend an eternity tortured by their Creator in a horrifying hell.

This is fundamental to the theology of many evangelical Christians. They thoughtlessly accept this belief as temporarily harmless dogma concerning a far away future. This doctrine, however, is a social malignancy, a casual contempt for our neighbors who do not share our faith. It is not a benign belief when a segment of the population contends that God condemns all Jews or Muslims, casting them into eternal torment because they are not “saved.”

Many of those same individuals will read Anne Frank's “Diary of a Young Girl” or Elie Wiesel's “Night” and be appalled that such events actually happened. They may visit the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C., and genuinely be moved by the displays there, finding it beyond comprehension that 6 million Jews were slaughtered during the reign of Nazi Germany.

Then they return, time and time again, to a hostile, hellish, and humanity-diminishing theology.

A survivor from a Nazi death camp may have visited their classroom when they were studying



1943 AP FILE PHOTO

**A 1943 file photo shows the rubble after German forces razed the ghetto in Warsaw, Poland.**

World War II. They were sickened by what they heard. Maybe they listened to the horror stories and saw the videos from the liberators of the concentration camps. They would quickly disavow any relationship of their Christian faith to such cruelties.

Yet they slip back into the habit of accepting, never challenging, the cruel, deadly doctrines concerning the perpetual punishment of Jews they were taught as children.

Some well-traveled Christians have visited the sites where the terrible events of the Holocaust occurred – Buchenwald, Auschwitz, or Dachau. There are no words to describe what they saw there. They returned home and mentioned the experience to their friends when they attended church the next Sunday. They might have even felt uneasy when the preacher insisted that everyone who is not a born-again Christian is going to hell.

But their brutal theology never wavered. They had been taught, and so they believed, that Jews were not destined for heaven.

## ‘Walk Humbly With Your God’

They may remember that over half their scripture consists of the Hebrew Bible – from Genesis through Malachi. They may feel

slightly uncomfortable when they realize there would be no Christianity unless there had first been Judaism. It might dawn on them that not only are Abraham, Sarah, Moses, and Miriam Hebrews, but so also are Mary, Paul, and Jesus.

Nevertheless, they compartmentalize their lives – Jews (Them) over there and Christians (Us) over here.

Some Christians build sophisticated theological arguments around acknowledging Jews were God's first “chosen” people. But, according to their worldview, Christians are now God's favorites. The bottom line is that those who are not selected for inclusion as full partners into God's Kingdom are secondary, not valued, worth less.

That sounds like the dictionary definition of antisemitism.

Making decisions about the eternal destiny of other people is above my pay grade.

What can I do?

“(God) has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.” (Micah 6: 8, New Revised Standard Version.)



# Why the Holocaust Story Matters Today

Some years ago, I helped to lead a Christian-Jewish conversation in Charleston. The conversation centered around the book, "The Cup of Wrath: A Novel Based on Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Resistance to Hitler," featuring the life and work of the German Lutheran pastor and theologian Bonhoeffer.

I will never forget the question I was asked by a Jewish man: "Yes, Bonhoeffer and others did some heroic things, but are you aware as a Lutheran pastor of the hate-filled writings of Martin Luther, which were used by the Nazis to help fan the flames of antisemitism?"

Immediately, I answered, "Yes, I am aware of these writings and am deeply sorry for their tragic impact upon the Jewish people both then and now. I also want you to know that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has publicly apologized for these writings to the Jewish community in a resolution adopted in 1994.

"In the spirit of that truth-telling, we who bear his name and heritage must with pain acknowledge also Luther's anti-Judaic diatribes and the violent recommendations of his later writings against the Jews. ... In concert with the Lutheran World Federation, we par-



**REV. DR. HERMAN YOOS**

*Bishop, South Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
Columbia, S.C.*

ticularly deplore the appropriation of Luther's words by modern anti-Semites for the teaching of hatred toward Judaism or toward the Jewish people in our day."

So why is it so important to me as a Lutheran bishop today to remember the Holocaust and the more than 6 million people killed in Nazi concentration camps? The simple answer is this. I am compelled to add my voice to the voices of countless religious leaders who stand against the growing number of hate groups and crimes that are happening in our communities today.

In the July 10 edition of USA Today was an article titled, "The State of Hate in America Today." The Southern Poverty Law Center and Anti-Defamation League documented an increase in the incidences of hate and bias over the past two years.



AP PHOTO ARCHIVE

**The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in 1994 publicly apologized for the antisemitic writings of its founder, Martin Luther.**

"In its most recent hate crimes report, the FBI tracked a total of 5,818 hate crimes in 2015, a rise of about 6.5 percent from the previ-

ous year, and showed that attacks against Muslims surged. The SPLC documented an uptick of hate and bias incidents after the pres-

idential election, tracking 1,094 in the first month alone. The organization also says the number of hate groups in the U.S. increased for a second year in a row in 2016. In April, the ADL reported anti-Semitic incidents in the U.S. rose 86 percent in the first quarter of 2017."

Why remember the Holocaust? Because whenever a majority of people are willing to look the other way when a group different from themselves are under attack, the whole of society suffers and becomes more susceptible to increasing acts of hostility and aggression. Hate is a virus that is contagious and feeds on the fear of those who seem different and counts on the indifference of others. Yet at the same time, love is a powerful antibiotic that helps communities develop healthy patterns of living. Love also deepens respect for one's neighbor and those who are the most vulnerable. Love is not passive and does not give up.

At the heart of the Jewish, Christian and Muslim faiths are the commandments to love God and to love your neighbor. May we all learn, with humility, how to practice what we preach.

Amen.

## South Carolina Council on the Holocaust

[www.scholocaustcouncil.org](http://www.scholocaustcouncil.org)

Dr. Lilly Filler, CHAIR  
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FOR HOLOCAUST EDUCATION  
Dr. Christine Beresniova  
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Barbara Parker  
RETIRED ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

## Eastern European Travel/ Study Tour of the Holocaust

The S.C. Council on the Holocaust will sponsor a trip to Eastern Europe from June 16-26, 2019. The first 10 South Carolina-certified teachers to register will receive a \$1,000 subsidy. Three graduate credit hours from Columbia College will be awarded upon successful completion of the course. The tour is open to the public, but South Carolina teachers have first priority. For information, contact Leah F. Chase of Chase Inc., [leahlf@gmail.com](mailto:leahlf@gmail.com), (843) 556-0525.

## Holocaust Education Institute for Teachers

An intensive summer study, "Civic Awareness and Choosing to Participate: Lessons from the Holocaust," taught by Facing History and Ourselves instructor Dr. Mary Johnson, includes four weeks of online study and two and a half days at Columbia College in Columbia. Three graduate credit hours are awarded upon successful completion of the course, July 16-18, 2018. Registration fee is \$125. Room, board and study credits are underwritten by the S.C. Council on the Holocaust. Apply online at [www.scholocaustcouncil.org](http://www.scholocaustcouncil.org). For further information, contact Dr. Christine Beresniova, [cberesniova@scholocaustcouncil.org](mailto:cberesniova@scholocaustcouncil.org).



# He Defeated Hitler by Surviving

## FELIX GOLDBERG STORY

**M**y dad, Felix Goldberg was great with us kids as far as telling us most of his Holocaust stories and answering questions. I know that it was difficult – I heard his nightmares – but he was better than most in sharing his memories. I know, however, that there were some that he carried to his grave in November 2000.

Dad was a Polish Jew born in 1917. Most of you are familiar with the brutal treatment of the Jewish people by the Nazis in World War II. Most are familiar with the horrific beatings, torture, starvation, medical experiments and complete and unspeakable crimes against humanity.



**HENRY GOLDBERG**

*Son of Holocaust survivors*

*Business owner  
Columbia, S.C.*

I prefer to give a glimpse of a man who was wily, courageous, intelligent, mentally

strong and God-fearing in that he kept Hitler from defeating him, thereby avoiding the fate of 6 million other innocent men, women and children. Even though Dad possessed these qualities, he still could not have made it without many small miracles, which in total constituted a major miracle, as was true with most survivors.

Dad was drafted into the Polish army in 1938. The Germans overran Poland in three weeks' time in September 1939. During one air raid, a bomb burst near Dad, burying him up to his neck. In the midst of the confusion and battle, one fellow soldier saw what happened and dug him out. After the Nazis' military victory, the captured Polish soldiers, Dad included, were taken to a prisoner of war camp. Here, Jews were treated like the rest of the prisoners and according to Geneva Convention. Only later were the Jews separated out for the nightmare to begin.

Dad was put on a train to the Warsaw ghetto, but he jumped out. He was caught and severely beaten by the SS, then put on another train to Warsaw. He jumped out again and



PHOTOS COURTESY OF HENRY GOLDBERG

was able to make it home. Some of his family remained in the house, including his brother-in-law Avram and his brother Bernard.

As it was the largest house available, the Nazis took the front half over as the police station, and the family lived in the back. Avram asked Bernard to help him sneak into the attic right in front of the SS to retrieve some leather hidden there. Leather was worth its weight in gold. Bernard refused saying, "No way." Avram then asked Felix, who, of course, said, "Let's go." They went into the attic three times and successfully brought out the leather wrapped in old shirts, right under the Nazis' noses.

After several work camps, Dad ended up in Auschwitz. He was tattooed and went through the infamous Dr. Josef Mengele line three times. Mengele pointing left meant to the gas chamber and right meant live another day. Luckily, he was able to secure a job in Birkenau, a part of Auschwitz, where he ran the elevator bringing up bodies and coal cars.

He survived an air raid where every other train car was bombed and half of the inmates were killed. After having been in Auschwitz for a while, the Russians were closing in from the east. Dad was part of the death march toward Berlin. Most inmates literally walked



Clockwise from left, Henry Goldberg as a baby with his parents, Felix and Bluma Goldberg; from left, Bernard, Leon and Felix Goldberg; Felix and Bluma Goldberg with Bluma's sister, Cella, and her husband, David Miller, on the day of their double wedding.

barefoot in the snow. Giving in to frostbite and falling would get you shot.

Dad locked arms with his future brother-in-law, David Miller, to stay up. He procured some rags (schmattes) prior to the march and tied these around his waist. He used them as socks as one pair dried each day.

They passed by a potato farm, and the farmer took pity on them and cooked some potatoes. The Nazis said each person could have one potato. Anyone going through the line more than once would be shot. Dad said to himself, "I'm going to die anyway, so I might as well die on a full stomach." He went through the line six times.

They got to Buchenwald. They heard fire in the woods. Dad hid under the barracks for three days. He wasn't caught, and later, was

given a candy bar by a liberating American soldier. Many Jews died after liberation from eating too much. Felix avoided the temptation.

He met and married his beautiful wife Bluma in Landsberg, an American displaced persons camp. I was born there in 1948. We came to the states in late 1949. Dad went from being a janitor to building a large, successful company.

Fast forward 40 years. I visited Dad at his home one night. I complained that my business was bad, someone had beaten me out of money, etc., etc. Dad looked at me and said, "What is the matter with you? Don't you have a nice house? Don't you have a good car? Your kids go to camp. No one is shooting at you because you are Jewish. You live in a free country. What's the matter?"

I said, "Gosh, Dad, you're right."



# Deadly Procession, or the Last Way

## MOISEY ARONOVICH GERCHKOVICH STORY

**O**ur father, Moisey Aronovich Gerchkovich, was from Yanov, a very ancient town in the Kalininskiy District of the Vinnitsa region in central Ukraine. The town had a very rich and interesting history, until the German occupation. By July 16, 1941, all of central Ukraine was occupied by Germans and Romanians. The occupation was brutal to the town and the surroundings.

The day May 30, 1942, has a special significance to us. That day, the Jews of Yanov, Kalininskiy District of Vinnitsa, were murdered. On the previous day, the Jewish population was moved into an area designated as a "ghetto."

The SS carried out a house-to-house search to be sure all the Jews were sequestered. After a few hours, additional troops arrived, and all the ghetto inhabitants were placed in locked stables. Under the safety of darkness, our grandfather, Aron Josifovich Gershkovich threw himself out of the stable window to try to escape. He crossed the Bug River but was shot by the enemy.

As more and more people were crowded into the stable, the level of anxiety grew. The room was very crowded.

On Saturday, May 30, everyone in the stable were herded into the street and placed in columns. Neighbors and friends from the area came to see what was happening and seemed to know that this was a "goodbye" to them all.

The death procession began toward a Polish cemetery, where a large ditch had been dug. The marchers' heads were bowed as if they were ashamed and knew their destiny. There was obvious hatred toward the enemy.

The order was given that everyone undress, but initially, no one obeyed. SS officers repeated the order, threatening people that their eyes would be poked out. Reluctantly, everyone began to undress, and the bloody massacre began.

Onlookers watched in horror as the marchers were shot and fell into the pit. Blood covered the streets and the ditch. The sun did not absorb so much blood quickly, and the earth and sun became an eternal witness of the mass killings of innocent people.

For two days, wounded people tried to



**LARISA AGINSKAYA AND RAISA RABINOVICH**

*Daughters of Holocaust survivor Moisey Gerchkovich  
Columbia, S.C.*



**The authors' father,  
Moisey Gerchkovich**      **The authors' aunt,  
Anna Gerchkovich**

leave the pit and seek help, but the SS shot anyone who tried to escape. Nearly 1,200 innocent people were slaughtered on May 30, 1942, in Yanov, Kalininskiy District of the Vinnitsa region of Ukraine.

On that day, 25 members of our family were killed.

Our father escaped this fate since he was already in the Russian army, and our aunt Anna Aronovna Gerchkovich had previously evacuated to central Russia.

In Yanov today stands a monument celebrating the life of the 1,200 people murdered on May 30, 1942. Our parents and a few scattered relatives visit this monument every year to remember the good and innocent people of the town and our precious relatives.

On June 16, 1942, the Romanian occupiers shot another 15,000 residents. Ultimately, almost half of the original population of 93,000 inhabitants were murdered during the occupation, and thousands of others were forced to work in Germany. The town was decimated!



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE GERCHKOVICH FAMILY



**Above, an undated photo of Moisey Aronovich Gerchkovich's family. At left, a group at the Yanov monument in 1987.**

As sisters, we often heard this story from our father. This terrible event happened several years before our births, but we were very familiar with the story. After the war, we returned with our parents to Kharkov, Ukraine. After their deaths, Raisa came to the U.S. on June 7, 1994, and Larissa came on Feb. 4, 1997.

B.C. Blekherman, a Jewish man who lived in the town before the war, returned after-

ward and heard of the vicious way his family died. He wrote a book, "Deadly Procession, or the Last Way."

We read the story to our children and will keep the memory of our family and others alive. And our children and grandchildren will read that sad story and will remember that people were killed because they were Jewish! No more Holocaust!



# Holocaust Heroine a

## RESCUING CHILDREN FROM GURS CAMP

**F**rom the Gurs internment camp in the French Pyrenees mountains, Alice Resch Synnestvedt rescued 48 Jewish children from Hitler's evil reign of terror and systematic genocide of the Jewish people during the Holocaust.

She took them to safety, the orphanage Maison des Pupilles near Toulouse and taught them French so they could go to school. Courageous, dedicated, creative and open to adventure, Alice was able to talk her way through and around Nazi regulations.



**ARIELLE A. AARON**

*Project and campaign director, Permanent Butterfly Memorial Monument, a Holocaust memorial Author, "In the Presence of Butterflies" and "I Remember Singing: A Boy Survives the Holocaust" Myrtle Beach, S.C.*

She also rescued more than 200 Jewish artists, musicians, and members of the Resistance, helping them escape over the mountains into Spain and Switzerland.

Born Dec. 14, 1908, in the United States to Knut and Frida Resch of Norway, Alice lived for 99 years. She died in Denmark on June 1, 2007.

Alice spent her childhood in Norway, where her father, an engineer, was manager of a power station in Tyssedal in the Hardangerfjord region. There, atop her mountains, Alice dreamed of experiencing everything.

After high school, she traveled to Germany, then to Paris, where she trained as a nurse at the America School. She loved France and spent 30 years of her life there. Later, she became a physiotherapist in Norway, worked in Vienna, then returned to Paris. Because she had studied in German and French universities, she spoke five languages fluently.

In 1939, she joined the Quakers for six years, helping feed and care for French children. When Paris became occupied, making her return to Norway impossible, she assisted refugees who had come to the free zone in Southern France and helped doctors in camp clinics.

In Toulouse, she and Helga Holbaek, a Danish woman, worked with the American Quak-

ers relief agency to rescue children from the Holocaust, feed them and teach them French. Though the oppression was evil, Alice, even in the darkest challenges, saved lives.

Alice married her French husband, Magnus, in November 1943. Magnus was deeply involved in the Résistance. Magnus died in 1950 after only six years of marriage.

Though she had no children of her own, Alice is survived by many of her "children," including Hugo Schiller of Myrtle Beach, whom she rescued from Gurs. With his parents' permission, so that he might receive food, medical care and education, she escorted him and 47 other children to live in Maison des Pupilles orphanage in Aspet, France.

After the war and her husband's death, Alice left Toulouse. She managed an orphanage run by the Swedish Red Cross for Jewish children outside Paris. Later, she worked for the American Hospital in Paris.

Alice spent the last 40 years of her life in Copenhagen, Denmark, where she and Holbaek organized the Voluntary Visitor's Service, now run by the Red Cross.

In 1983, the Israeli ambassador in Denmark presented Alice and Helga with medals of honor from the state of Israel.

In 1984, a tree was planted for both Alice and Helga beside the Avenue for the Righteous Gentiles in Yad Vashem Memorial Park in Jerusalem.

In Denmark, Alice met Aase Ingerslev; they collaborated on the writing and publication of "Over the Highest Mountains," a memoir about Alice's life.

In 1998, some of Alice's rescued children brought her to the United States to celebrate her 90th birthday. Ingerslev accompanied her to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., where Alice saw her photo on the Memorial Wall. Thanks to her "children," Alice received rewards from The Jewish Foundation for the Righteous in New York.

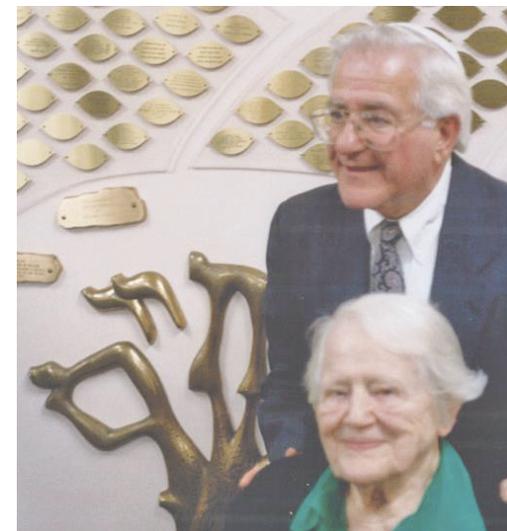
As a child atop mountains in Norway, Alice Resch Synnestvedt daydreamed about her future. Because of her loving care and heroic courage, many of her "Jewish children" still get to dream their own dreams – in peace and safety – and enjoy beautiful families of their own.



**ABOVE:** Hugo Schiller, right, meets Alice Resch Synnestvedt at the Myrtle Beach airport on Dec. 1, 1998. Schiller helped save 48 children, including Schiller, from the Nazis during World War II. **BELOW LEFT:** Synnestvedt and Schiller on a 1998 trip to Myrtle Beach. **BELOW RIGHT:** Synnestvedt and Schiller speak at a Myrtle Beach City Council meeting.



1998 SUN NEWS (MYRTLE BEACH) FILE PHOTO



# and a Boy She Saved

‘HE WOULD HAVE A BETTER CHANCE’



UN NEWS (MYRTLE BEACH) FILE PHOTO

Dec. 10, 1998. Synnestvedt  
: Synnestvedt during her  
ouncil meeting.



COURTESY OF THE SCHILLER FAMILY

**G**runsfeld was a beautiful town of 2,000 people in the hills of southern Germany. Hugo Schiller was born on Aug. 18, 1931, to Selma and Oskar Schiller; he was their only living child.

Selma's family had lived in Grunsfeld since the 1540s and owned a dry goods store. Oskar was the mayor of Grunsfeld, and the family enjoyed an idyllic home life until all Jews were banned from retail ownership and their store was "sold" to Gentile owners.



**HUGO SCHILLER**  
AS RELAYED  
TO LILLY FILLER

*Child Holocaust survivor  
Retired industrial  
engineer  
Myrtle Beach, S.C.*

On Nov. 9, 1938, Kristallnacht, Jewish shop windows were smashed, the synagogue was destroyed, and Jews were indiscriminately beaten. Despite the fact that Oskar Schiller had received the Iron Cross for bravery in World War I, he was arrested and taken away, but returned in six weeks.

Soon after his return, Oskar felt it best to entrust the family jewelry, including a ring given to Oskar from Selma's father, to a local jeweler.

Life was changing for the family. Many of Hugo's friends were no longer allowed to play with him, and he was barred from attending school. On Sept. 1, 1939, the war officially started.

Since 7-year-old Hugo could no longer attend school, he went to live with relatives in Offenbach, Germany. On a return visit home during a school break in October 1940, the Nazis banged on the door at 5 a.m. The Schiller family was given one



1942 AP FILE PHOTO

**The neutral Portuguese steamer Nyassa arrives in Baltimore on July 30, 1942. Among the passengers was Hugo Schiller, who now lives in Myrtle Beach.**

hour to pack a few things and were then trucked to Wiesbaden, where they were forced to march toward the train. It was an overcast day as the Schiller family was placed on a train for the Gurs internment camp in the Pyrenees mountains.

The family traveled with others for two days, unsure of where they were to be taken. On arrival, the family was separated, with 9-year-old Hugo living with his mother. Once monthly, he could visit with his father. Hugo recalls the cold and the persistent hunger that consumed him. Straw mattresses were on the floor, and people around Hugo were dying.

During this time, the camp allowed letters and packages, and Quakers could enter the camp to help feed the children. While there, they would speak to parents about signing the children over to them to be moved to a children's home in Aspet,

France. One of the Quakers, Alice Resch, was assigned to Hugo's group. Alice discussed transporting Hugo to a school in the south.

"He would have a better chance there," she told Hugo's parents.

They agreed that this might be the best hope for Hugo and his survival. In February 1941, he became one of 48 children removed from camp and transported by truck to Aspet, France.

At La Maison des Pupilles in Aspet, the children had a feeling of safety. There was a "normal" schedule with school, playtime, and activities, but Hugo yearned for his parents.

Many smaller children would cry for their mothers, and Hugo would sing lullabies to them. Letters between Hugo and his parents were sent. An excerpt from one letter reveals the quiet concern that his parents had for Hugo and his future. They asked that he commit to mem-

ory the address of an uncle in America (538 W. 158th St., New York City).

After several letters, his parents told Hugo that he would be leaving the school and traveling to visit his family in America. Alice and the Quaker agency arranged for Hugo to travel to Marseilles, France, then to Casablanca, Morocco, then to America. Additionally, Alice arranged that Hugo's parents be able to visit him in Marseilles prior to his trip. That visit was wonderful for Hugo, but it was the last time he saw his parents.

Within weeks of this visit, his parents were placed on transport train No. 17, bound for Auschwitz, and in 1945, Hugo learned of their murder.

On July 10, 1942, 10-year-old Hugo traveled with more than 800 European immigrants on the steamship Nyassa from Casablanca to Baltimore. Hugo traveled by bus to New York, where he was met by a cousin at 62nd Street.

Hugo lived with his relatives, attended and graduated high school in 1949 and was drafted in the Army. After basic training, he was sent to Iceland and joined the boxing team. He attended the Fashion Institute of Technology on a scholarship, earning a degree in industrial engineering.

In Baltimore, he met and married Eleanor Cohan. They had two children and three grandchildren, and they have lived in Myrtle Beach for more than 50 years.

In 1972, a beautiful surprise awaited Hugo. A cousin returned the ring that Oskar had entrusted to the jeweler in Grunsfeld, Germany. Selma's brother Max had retrieved the ring and had held it for many years. Upon Max's death, his daughter Hella came upon the ring while organizing his personal effects and remembered it as belonging to her Uncle Oskar.

She brought the ring to the U.S. and returned it to Hugo at his Myrtle Beach home.



# Butterfly Project to Butterfly Monument

It was the first day in January 1998, the day before school was to begin for the spring semester, when our upper school faculty gathered along with other teachers from private and public schools in our area.

The purpose of the meeting was to teach these educators how to teach the Holocaust. Our state, as well as a number of publishers, has prepared materials of this same subject but geared toward high school students. We were teaching this in language arts to the fifth-graders.



**ELLIE SCHILLER**

*Retired teacher  
Wife of Holocaust  
survivor Hugo Schiller  
Myrtle Beach, S.C.*

As the participants were arriving, each person got a manila folder decorated with a colorful butterfly sticker. Using a variety of materials including a pamphlet put out by the Council on Social Studies Teaching, I began to introduce various aspects of the Holocaust.

About halfway through my materials, the subject turned to the numbers that were murdered and otherwise lost. They spoke of the 1.3 million children killed in the Holocaust. The question then became, "How do we show what that number means?"

Since I was an "A-V" teacher, I said, "Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could gather 1.3 million something and display them?"

At that point, I saw the butterfly stickers on the folders – and so the project began to form. Our paper butterflies fluttered, in my mind's eye, on the empty lot next to the school, and the idea took hold. The attendees all seemed positive with this idea.

The next day, the display idea got more positive backing from my students. By this time, it was determined that the butterflies were to be paper. Paper was chosen since it was inexpensive and easy to find.

The class was enthusiastic but soon realized our small school could not color and cut out such a large number of butterflies. We needed help!

With a notice in our local Myrtle Beach Sun News and the help of the paper's religion reporter, Johanna Wilson, we let the town know about the display. Ms. Wilson was with us every step of the way, and more communities and more newspaper notices followed.

"Time for Kids," a classroom newspaper, gave the butterfly project a boost with pictures as well as including a page with two butterfly patterns that could be reproduced.

The word of our plan went from teacher to teacher, newspaper to radio talk shows, to any place where people could gather to make butterflies. And so the news rolled across America.

The special bits of paper came back to our school, a few at first, then the flood. We had a deadline for them to arrive at the beginning of April to give us time to mount the butterflies for the display and time to count them as they came in.

Even the U.S. Postal Service came to our aid as the number of envelopes, bags and boxes, stuffed with paper butterflies increased. Our postman delivered the school's regular



2016 SUN NEWS (MYRTLE BEACH) FILE PHOTO

**Hugo and Ellie Schiller attend the Permanent Butterfly Memorial Monument dedication ceremony on May 1, 2016.**

mail and then a second truck with the butterflies.

People came to volunteer to mount them on Popsicle sticks,

and others were stapled to hundreds of yards of material donated by a manufacturer in Conway.

Putting the butterflies out, the

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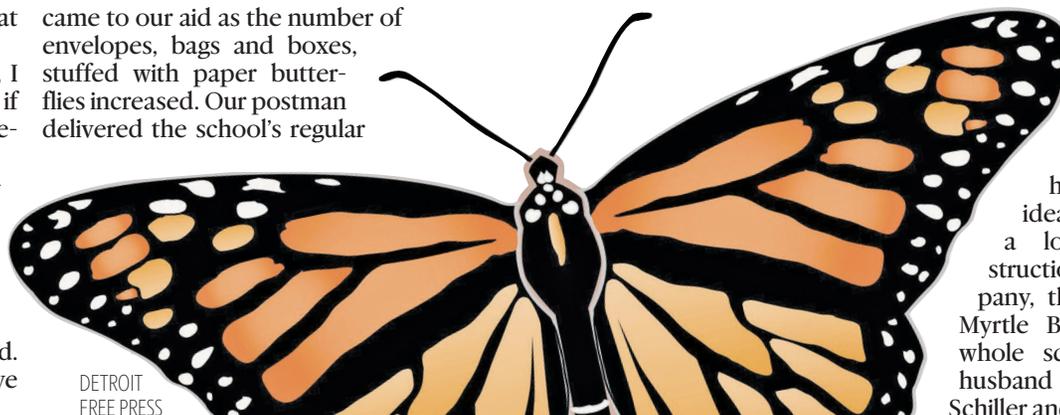
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DETROIT  
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Opening day, Thursday, April 22, 1998, was one of alternating rain and sunshine. It was decided to keep the display up until Monday, April 26.

The indoor display had a lot of special butterflies, such as two very large butterflies about 20 inches across. One was made by women from our Indian community, covered with seeds. And another large one was a jigsaw puzzle put together by my daughter and her youngest child.

Each butterfly was to represent the life and death of one child. There were no headstones for any of these children. My students accepted the display as the headstones for our lost children. Then one of my students, Becky, explained that butterflies have short lives just as the children murdered in the Holocaust.

The days following the Butterfly display involved clean up as our butterflies were "flying" all over town. In the school, we had to clear all the walls and windows. Some of the butterflies were packed away and stored for future use.

When the butterflies had originally arrived, the students retrieved the return addresses and as an important lesson, thank you notes were written to each contributor of the Butterfly project. A dedicated group of adults came to help stuff the "thank you" notes with a tiny butterfly. In the end, we sent thank you notes to over 3000 locations.

Years later, when Joy Glunt of Myrtle Beach began the process of fundraising, designing and erecting a memorial, it seemed fitting that the focus would be the children of the Holocaust and the butterfly was the logical symbol of "short lives" but everlasting beautiful memories.

The Memorial was dedicated in May 1, 2016. It is located at 1011 Crabtree Lane, Myrtle Beach, SC 29577.



# A Survivor's Tale by the Stepsister of Anne Frank

## 'EVA'S STORY'

**E**va Schloss' story is an amazing example of survival, determination, and persistence. While not nearly as known as the story of her stepsister, Anne Frank, it is just as compelling. I was lucky enough to spend a weekend with Mrs. Schloss as she "made the rounds" at the University of South Carolina, the Chabad House, and Koger Center for the Arts. We found time to tour Columbia and especially Memorial Park, where I proudly showed her the Holocaust Memorial, which was dedicated in 2001. Eva was very gracious in her praises of the memorial and of her reception in this Southern city.

Eva was born in Vienna, Austria, on May 11, 1929, the second child of Erich and Fritzi Geiringer. Their older son was Heinz Felix. The family was "well to do" and were surrounded by extended family. Erich owned a shoe factory, which was eventually moved to Holland in early 1938.

Soon, the anti-Semitic rhetoric and actions started to explode. The family moved to Belgium and then to Holland, seeking refuge from the German invasion. However, on May 10, 1940, the Germans invaded Holland, and Eva and her family found themselves living in a ghetto in Amsterdam. Here, Eva met and played with another young girl, Anne Frank, who was about her age. The families became close and shared their fears about the war and their situation.

On July 6, 1942, Heinz received orders to report for deportation to a labor camp. It was time for the family to hide. Erich felt that it would be too dangerous for the four of them to stay together, so Eva and Fritzi sought refuge in one hiding place and her father and brother in another.

Over the next two years, the family remained in hiding, stepping out only occasionally to see each other surreptitiously. This was a very difficult time for a young girl, who was isolated with her mom and saw few other people.

On May 11, 1944, Eva's 15th birthday, her family received a terrible surprise. Unbeknownst to the family, Eva and her mom had been followed after a clandestine visit to her father and brother. The hiding places were discovered. Eva was shocked to see her dad and brother at the Gestapo headquarters, where they were all interrogated, then taken to a Dutch prison. Three days later, they were taken to Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp.

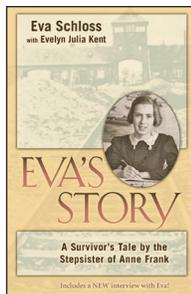
Just prior to the arrest, Fritzi had purchased a long coat and large hat for Eva and insisted, despite the heat, that Eva wear it when interrogated. Eva wore the coat and hat on the journey to the concentration camp, and because the hat was big and the coat long, Eva appeared older than she was and was selected to move to the "right" which meant life.

"Many mothers had lost daughters of my age. Ridiculous though it had looked on me, that hat and the long coat had saved my life," Eva said.



**EVA SCHLOSS**  
AS RELAYED  
TO LILLY FILLER

*Holocaust survivor  
London, England*



BEBETO MATTHEWS - AP

**The "New Dimensions in Testimony" exhibit at the Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York features a virtual presentation of Holocaust survivor Eva Schloss that answers spontaneous questions based on many hours of her recorded interviews.**

In Birkenau, Eva and Fritzi were "processed" and assigned to a work detail, "Canada." This was known as an elite work assignment, shifting through the clothing of all the new prisoners and separating the clothing – shoes, coats, dresses, etc. – for Nazi use. But it allowed the inmates to rummage through the pockets to find desired objects, like candy, food, utensils – a bonus for them!

It was during her confinement in Birkenau that Eva and her mom were reacquainted with Otto Frank, Anne's father. They would occasionally see the men, including her father and brother. However, after a while, Eva no longer was able to

see them. Presumably, they were transferred to another camp. Days were cold, and hunger permeated the thoughts of all the inmates. The fear of death hung over the camp as inmates came and left, some alive, some dead.

On Jan. 17, 1945, the camp emptied of the Nazis, and the Russian liberators entered. Although the language was very different, everyone seemed to understand that this was liberation from the German Nazis. Over the next few days, as the pantries were raided by the inmates and warm clothing secured, the thought of liberation filled everyone's minds.

Eva eloquently describes the



1963 AP FILE PHOTO

**After their spouses were killed, Otto Frank, left, married Elfriede "Fritzi" Geiringer, Eva's mother.**



COURTESY OF DOYLE STEVICK

**One of the final photos taken of Anne Frank.**

months on the move with the Russian army, the return to Amsterdam with her mother and finding out about the deaths of her father and brother. She remembers the reunion with Otto Frank as Fritzi lamented about losing her husband and son, and Otto mourned the death of his two daughters and wife.

The sadness and misery brought Otto and Fritzi together. They were married in 1953 and moved to Switzerland to work on the publication of the Anne Frank diary.

Thus, Eva became the stepsister of Anne Frank, a name synonymous with the Holocaust. Eva's story, too, is now told to the world.



# An Account of Kristallnacht

## KURT JESSELSON STORY

**A**lthough my parents' lives were completely disrupted by the Holocaust, their stories are not the tragic Holocaust stories of death camps and brutality. Instead, this is the story of families that had felt totally integrated into their German society, and very proud of their background and history. This is another dimension of the Holocaust history. Both of my parents' families had a long history in

Germany, tracing back to 1500 – I will tell the story of Kurt Jesselson, my father.

My father's family lived for generations in Neckarbischofsheim (NB), often described to me as a Garden of Eden. Jews first started living in NB in the 17th century, and my ancestors were there almost from the beginning of Jewish



**ROBERT JESSELSON**

*Son of Holocaust survivors Kurt and Ilse Jesselson  
Carolina Distinguished Professor, University of South Carolina School of Music  
Columbia, S.C.*

life. One of my prized treasures is the 1750 Haggadah inscribed by my great-great-grandfather in 1832, which we use every Passover. His family had several houses in town, a dry-goods store, and even a distillery.

My father left Germany for America in 1936. In order to get his American citizenship faster, he joined the Army, and was sent to work in Intelligence interviewing German POWs. My father returned to NB during the war, and a Christian neighbor who had rescued a holy Torah from the synagogue, gave it to him. It was given to Uncle Samuel, who then brought it to safety in Israel. My father died on March 5, 1987.



From left, the author's parents, Ilse and Kurt Jesselson, in the Canary Islands in 1977; Kurt Jesselson, with the U.S. Army in 1945 in Bremerhaven, Germany; and Samuel Jeselsohn in 1932 in Kohlhof, Germany.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF ROBERT JESSELSON

## SAMUEL JESELSON STORY

*According to my family, the Jews and Germans got along well there. However, on Kristallnacht, Nov. 9-10, 1938, the synagogue and school were destroyed. My great uncle Samuel Jeselsohn, the head of the congregation, witnessed the destruction, describing it in a document called "The End of Our Holy Congregation Neckarbischofsheim." I translated this description, which Uncle Samuel wrote in 1942 after emigrating to Israel.*

After a life of many hundreds of years, our holy community found a sad end in the year 1940. As the last Head of the community I led the congregation for 25 years... Then came the events of November 10, 1938. That morning shortly after 6 am I was called out of bed. Below stood a policeman, who demanded that I bring the Synagogue keys to him immediately. I answered – they are in my store in the next building, and I would get dressed and get them. I had no idea what was intended. The policeman took the keys and told me to go home. Shortly after-

wards he came back and took me to the Synagogue, where other policemen and about 25 SA people, most of whom I knew, waited for me. The oldest policeman told me that he had the responsibility to search the Synagogue. I answered that he could do that, but that there was nothing dangerous to the state inside. He demanded that I open the Torah shrine, and he took the scrolls and lay them on the floor. Then the SA leader came. I was brought with the policeman to the religious school building, and there he left me. But first I had to see that the SA man, who was not from the town, began to destroy the Torahs with a heavy axe.

We had been having services in the School building, because it was easier to heat than the actual Synagogue. Three Torahs were there. The School was also searched, and then I was told to go home. And now the personal danger to me became clear, though I escaped it through help from the Almighty. On the way

home a neighbor told me that it had been ordained to destroy the Synagogue and Religious school. This was begun immediately. With an eagerness (passion) they fulfilled the order. In the afternoon the oldest policeman came again and demanded that I prepare myself to be brought immediately to Heidelberg. What awaited me was rather clear – concentration camp. They brought me and the Gabbai and teacher Jakob Bloch to the train station at NB. There came a telephone call to bring me back to NB, where because of my age (60 years old) I was left.

The synagogue and religious school were destroyed; chairs burnt, Torahs taken away, prayer shawls and prayer books as well as all the items for the service stolen or destroyed... I didn't open my store any more, and two days later I sold my stores and wares all together to a non-Jew. In other areas people threw the wares of Jewish shop owners onto the street, stole and destroyed them, but the people of

the NB area were for the most part decent and friendly to Jews.

The Jews that still remained in NB in November 1940 – about 14 souls- were taken to the railroad station on a cold November night with not more than an hour's preparation and brought to the concentration camp in Gurs. There they languished under the worst imaginable living conditions, until they entered a better world.

Where for hundreds of years a holy Jewish life existed, where in the daily community prayers the minds turned to their Father in heaven, where the calm Shabbos peace lifted the souls, and the old melodies of the High Holidays illuminated and transfigured, only the stones could speak. I hope that all those who are now scattered in all parts of the world will never forget the old homeland, and teach their children all the good and beautiful things that were to be had at home. Then the old community will not have lived in vain."



# Complicated Memories

**L**iving in Berlin for two weeks forced me to confront my emotional and spiritual baggage. I came to witness the remnants of Jewish memory from what Elie Wiesel once called, “The Kingdom of Night.”

Second, I came to grips with just how complicated memory is when tracing footsteps from Berlin’s Jewish past. Finally, Germany is also learning how complicated embracing one’s national memory can be, as well as accepting their moral duty to resurrect those

memories for future generations.

Those memories invaded my soul. One evening we

attended a Mozart concert in the 18th century Charlottenburg Palace. The setting and the music were

enthralling when suddenly my mind took me



**RABBI BRAD BLOOM**

*Rabbi, Congregation Beth Yam Reform Synagogue  
Hilton Head, S.C.*

somewhere else. I imagined it was Kristallnacht – Nov. 9-10, 1938 – and I was sitting in the same seat listening to the same music. As synagogues and Jewish stores burned, Jewish Berliners were sent to Dachau concentration camp. I could hear that horrid and infamous German police siren racing down the street, taking Jews to the Gestapo for questioning. Memory is powerful, inspiring, and even frightening, all at the same time.

I traveled by train to Ravensbrück concentration camp, about an hour and a half north of Berlin. Ravensbrück was the death camp solely devoted to murdering



COURTESY OF BRAD BLOOM

**At left, Brad Bloom and his wife, Linda, visit the Berlin Wall, which divided East Germany from West Germany between 1961 and 1989. At right, inmates at the Sachsenhausen concentration camp near Berlin stand in line during attendance check in December 1938.**



1938 AP FILE PHOTO

women.

On another day trip, I stood inside a replica of the Jewish barracks in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, about 40 minutes by train to the northwest of Berlin. Sachsenhausen gained infamy as the prototype and administrative center of all concentration camps. Its specialty was political prisoners.

Even though the Nazis destroyed the gas chambers in both places, I stared into the ovens, and still I could feel the resonance of the indescribable suffering, fear and death that overshadowed every footprint I took in those blood-curdling death centers.

Many Germans contended that they had no idea of what was happening in their backyard to Jews – which is why I stood at railroad station track 17 leaving from the upper-class neighborhood of Grunewald in Berlin. The golden copper plaques hammered onto

the concrete staging area beside the tracks testified to each of the transports, the dates they left and the concentration camps they took Jews to until almost the end of the war.

And Germans would later say after the war ended that they did not know? We all know better.

One day, we visited West Berlin’s old city hall. This was the site of President John F. Kennedy’s famous speech when he said in German; “Ich bin ein Berliner,” or “I am a Berliner.”

There was an exhibition inside about the neighborhood and picture albums about Berlin Jewish notables – Albert Einstein, for example, who once lived in this area.

I came upon one album with a picture on the front of a teenager. This teen came from a prominent Berlin family whose parents sent him to America before the war broke out. As a young man, he completed his Ph.D. in histo-

ry from Harvard University and became one of the world’s leading historians of the Nazi period. He would also one day be my beloved history professor at the University of Wisconsin, where I received my degree in history.

That Jewish refugee, George Mosse, taught me to love history, which led me to become a rabbi.

Berlin is a city that has made an earnest effort to memorialize the Jewish Holocaust. The copper ornamental plaques hammered onto the city’s pavements with the engraved names of Jewish families who lived in these neighborhoods, the Jewish museums and the monuments to the murder of the Jewish people are all examples of what the next generations of Germans have created to own up to that horrific past.

Yes, they, too, albeit from a different perspective, are facing memory and its pain as well.

Memory leads us to so many

stories about the destroyed Jewish communities all over Europe, as well as to the survivors’ accounts and, of course, to the dead.

I have taught the Holocaust for years in my synagogue classes and in the universities, church groups and in the military.

I resisted going to Germany all these years, yet this unique trip provided me the opportunity to get close to the memories in a way that I had never done before.

I feel the urgency of the hour with the last generations still telling their stories.

It is, in fact, all about the stories that reminded me why the world must remember the Holocaust and every other example of genocide.

Our children and grandchildren must know and must see for themselves the remnants of the Kingdom of Night so that it will never happen again.



# The Fragility of Dutch Liberalism

## ANTISEMITISM IN THE NETHERLANDS

In June 2012, during a nationally broadcast soccer match between the Dutch teams Ajax (representing Amsterdam) and its arch rival Feyenoord (Rotterdam), thousands of hooligans in the stands began shouting “ Hamas, Hamas; Joden aan het gas,” or “ Hamas, Hamas; Jews to the gas.” Whenever Ajax players got close to the goal line, Feyenoord supporters hissed ominously, mimicking the sound of escaping gas that reverberated throughout the stadium.

Seventy years after the Nazi regime systematically murdered millions of Jewish men, women, and children in a state-organized genocide, Dutch soccer fans reminded the public that any atonement for this crime against humanity – or at the very least a shared sensitivity to its horrors – was merely skin-deep.

The association of Ajax with Amsterdam Jews has its roots in the location of the team’s former stadium, which stood near the Jewish neighborhood and consequently attracted many Jewish soccer fans.

But not one Ajax player on the field that June afternoon was of Jewish descent, nor were their coaches or team directors. Stunned by this public display of



PHOTO COURTESY OF SASKIA COENEN SNYDER

Fans of the Feyenoord soccer team, based in Rotterdam in the Netherlands, give a Nazi salute.

antisemitism from its own supporters (many of whom were Muslim but not exclusively so), Feyenoord officials denounced the actions of the spectators but quickly attributed the incident to the typical shenanigans of rowdy hooligans that shouldn’t be taken too seriously.

It was unacceptable, yes, but not anything that pointed to a larger problem in Dutch society as a whole. Eager to refocus attention on

the actual game, the incident disappeared from the news within days.

While current waves of antisemitism in the Netherlands (and western Europe at large) have clear links to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and to growing tensions emerging from sizable Moroccan and Turkish communities living in predominantly secular societies, it would be a mistake to assume that it is merely

Muslims who are responsible for the rise in anti-Semitic incidents. It is an easy form of finger-pointing that conveniently prevents a deeper reflection on the part of Dutch citizens and their behavior toward their Jewish neighbors.

### The Long-Term View of Holland

When we do take a long-term view and fold the Feyenoord incident into a longer pattern of anti-

Jewish sentiment, then difficult questions emerge:

Isn’t Holland supposed to be the tolerant one in Europe’s diverse family of nations?

Isn’t it the place where Jews found a home after the 1492 Spanish expulsion, where the largest Sephardic synagogue in the world emerged in 1675, where Jews could be Jews and thrive?

Isn’t Amsterdam (Mokum) a haven for pot-smoking hippies, gays and lesbians, people of all colors and creeds, and aren’t we proud of that legacy?

That the answer is simultaneously yes and no, and that there are clear limitations to Dutch tolerance is not always easy to acknowledge.

The fragility of Dutch liberalism, particularly when under duress, became painfully clear in the immediate postwar period. Seventy-five percent of the Dutch-Jewish population (an estimated 102,000 men, women, and children) had been deported and murdered during the war – a number significantly higher than that of other Nazi-occupied countries in western and northern Europe.

While Belgium lost 60 percent, France’s horrid statistic came to 26 percent and Denmark’s at a little over 1 percent. Even in fascist Italy, Jews had a higher survival rate than in Holland (20 percent of Italian Jews did not survive the Holocaust).

For a country that had long prided itself on its liberal attitudes, tolerance, and resistance toward inequality, the near annihilation of the Dutch-Jewish population made tragically clear that under certain conditions, all those principles gave way to self-preservation, fear, and passivity.

This is not to deny the brave actions of the Dutch Resistance,



PHOTO COURTESY OF SASKIA COENEN SNYDER

**A shelter at a bus stop is defaced with swastikas and other antisemitic symbols.**

or of the Dutch Communists who organized the February 1941 strike to protest Nazi legislation targeting Amsterdam Jews, nor to understate the courage of families who hid people, sometimes for months or years, in their attics and basements. Indeed, many more would have died had it not been for these acts of empathy and courage.

### Maintaining Tolerance

What it does indicate, however, is the difficulty of *maintaining* tolerance and ethical behavior at a time when those very principles are being severely challenged.

Resisting antisemitism and persecution were atypical precisely because it could come at a great cost. Most people were unable or unwilling to take the risk and consequently adjusted to the Nazi presence in Holland and to Nazi policies – a process that Dutch historians of Nazism and the Holocaust refer to as *accommodatie*.

In the Netherlands, a combi-

*Resisting antisemitism and persecution ... could come at a great cost. Most people were unable or unwilling to take the risk and consequently adjusted to ... Nazi policies – a process that Dutch historians ... refer to as 'accommodatie.'*

nation of factors explained the unusually high percentage of Jewish victims: the already high concentration of Jews in Amsterdam (where over half of the country's population lived); a civil (rather than military) administration under the authority of Reichskommissar Arthur Seyss-Inquart, which left much of the prewar bureaucracy intact and functioning "normally"; a culture of compliance and high regard for hierarchy; a meticulous and efficient municipality that provided the Nazi authorities with complete records of the Amster-

dam Jewish community; and geography (a flat country on the North Sea that shared an eastern border with Nazi Germany, which made hiding or fleeing difficult).

Added to this list should be muted anti-Jewish sentiments which, in the minds of many Dutch Christians, rendered Jews – however well acculturated – still different from their neighbors.

One 1943 diary entry by a traveling salesman, who recorded the events unfolding in Amsterdam, confided that while Jews "were people... they were not really pleasant people."



AP FILE PHOTO

**Nazi officers round up Dutch Jews during a raid in Amsterdam in this undated AP photo. Dutch bounty hunters, paid by the Nazis to track down Jews during World War II, captured thousands of fellow countrymen, including children, and sent them to their deaths.**

To this observer, Jews remained the Other. They may not have "deserved" this kind of persecution, but their suffering did not enrage him enough to trigger a response.

There is an argument to be made about the particular threat of inconspicuous, unspoken antisemitism as opposed to its shamelessly blatant variety.

The latter often provokes a reaction, a repudiation by liberal voices who remind the public that we should continue to be vigilant and speak out against expressions of bigotry, racial stereotyping, and hatred.

### Quiet Antisemitism

Quiet antisemitism, on the other hand, lingers and thereby remains unchallenged. In combination with other factors – such as conditions of war, occupation, militant authoritarianism, racial

ideology, and fear – such lingering resentment can turn lethal.

The Ajax-Feyenoord incident, the hissing sounds of which echoed through the soccer stadium, as well as the quick dismissal of its severity by Feyenoord officials, revealed that antisemitism in Holland (and elsewhere) didn't end in 1945.

New geo-political realities may have altered the narratives, the manifestations, and the actors involved, but the core sentiments remain the same – like old wine in new bottles. Our task, therefore, is not only to publicly oppose antisemitism wherever it raises its ugly head, but to also help prevent the socio-political conditions that allow it to thrive. Taking stock of 2017 alone, both in Europe and the United States, it appears that we haven't been particularly successful and that the task remains monumental indeed.



# Antisemitism and Israel: An Old Hatred Revived

Antisemitism is arguably the longest collective hatred in recorded human history, and that fact in itself means, that there is no connection between this old plague and the modern state of Israel.

Antisemitism existed when the Roman Empire destroyed the then Jewish state with the Temple in Jerusalem in 70 A.D. The Roman historian of the period Tacitus referred to the Jews in terms which today would be defined as Antisemitism.

Antisemitism existed during the Crusades, when entire Jewish communities in Germany and France were destroyed by the Crusaders on their way to the ports departing to the Holy Land.



**DR. JOSEF OLMERT**

*Adjunct professor of Middle East Studies, University of South Carolina Columbia, S.C.*

Antisemitism existed when the Catholic Church in Spain unleashed the Inquisition against the thriving Jewish community there.

Antisemitism existed when Martin Luther, the founder of the Reformation, called to “burn” the schools and synagogues of the Jews.

He said – and centuries later, Hitler did.

On many occasions, Antisemitism existed also in Muslim-dominated lands.

We can go on and on, but the historic picture is clear: Antisemitism is endemic, and its logical outcome is, therefore, that the very existence of a collective of Jews who define themselves in national, ethnic and religious terms, hence claim their indisputable right for



PHOTOS COURTESY OF DR. JOSEF OLMERT

**A protester holds up a caricature of Jewish stereotypes at a 2014 anti-war rally in Stuttgart, Germany. On July 8, Israel had launched Operation Protective Edge in response to Hamas launching rockets toward Israel, according to ABC News.**



**Protesters destroy a poster depicting the Israeli flag with a swastika in place of the star of David. The rally in support of Hamas occurred in January 2009 in Barcelona, Spain.**

independent statehood in their historic homeland is an anathema to the “right” order of things.

A challenge to long-held notions

about the Jews – in sum, something that is unnatural – should be resisted and, in the end of the day, be eliminated.

as isolated as its opponents describe it, and it has an array of productive relationships with over 150 states in the world.

Third, there are those who manage to put a distinct wedge between their opposition to certain policies and practices of Israel, and sheer, blatant antisemitism.

However, there are so many haters. They come from both the right and left wing; they are members of almost every religious community in the world. They are vocal; they are sincere in their motivation; and they are dangerous.

The fact is that Israel is the only state in the world whose very existence is called into question. This is pure antisemitism.

So, it is incumbent upon Israelis, Jews abroad and all people of good will to take seriously the screams of anti-Semites in Charlottesville, the threats of Iran to “erase” Israel off the map – and also those who pretend to be only anti-Zionist, not anti-Semites.

To be anti-Zionist is to deprive the Jews the God-given universal right to exercise their national and religious existence in their homeland.

THEN the Jews had nowhere to go in times of impending and actual calamity.

NOW they have. It is called Israel.

## Terms to know

### Zion

synonymous with Jerusalem, the hill of Jerusalem on which Judaism teaches the city of David was built.

### Zionism

an international movement begun in the 1890s for the return of the Jewish people to Zion, the land of Israel.

### antisemitism

a perception of Jews expressed as hatred.

Israel's very existence then becomes illegitimate in the eyes of the haters, and when put in an historic context, this state of affairs is not an aberration. Rather, it is the norm, as it follows 2,000 years of recorded antisemitism.

That said, there are three very significant points to be emphasized, so that we can fully assess the current state of affairs.

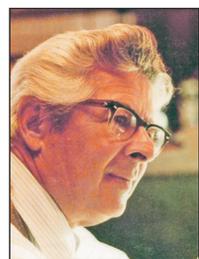
First, antisemitism has never been a universal phenomenon. Not ALL Catholics during the Inquisition, not ALL Protestants during the Reformation, not ALL Muslims during the Al-Muwahhidun atrocities in Spain, hated the Jews. Not All the Germans during the Nazi period hated the Jews, and far from ALL the Muslims, including Palestinians, hate the Jews today.

Second, the state of Israel is not



## A Theology of Hubris

It is story time at Beth Israel Synagogue. The students eagerly rush to hear Rabbi Chai Kholonick relate one of his tales. Seated at his desk, he watches as the young cheder (Hebrew) students file into the classroom. A hush falls upon the room as the Rebbe carefully settles himself in his chair. The lined, hoary face looks up. In it one sees the Old Testament prophet Isaiah crying out for social justice. In a resonant, mellifluous voice, the Rebbe begins. “Today we remember 6 million Jews who were murdered in Europe in a pogrom known as the



**JOSEPH J. LIPTON**

*Retired attorney  
for S.C. state legislators  
Columbia, S.C.*

Holocaust. It was in the Holocaust that mankind lost its innocence and the Christians lost their way. It was a time when Christians made a mockery of the Sermon on the Mount, the most famous of all speeches whose major message is the supremacy of love. In this sermon, Jesus pronounced the rule that governs human relationship and the role

of the Christian in that relationship. Jesus thus gave to those who assume the calling of Christian, the most onerous burden to carry. The class was spellbound. A lonely tear entered a furrow in the old Rabbi's face. It was as though he were in mourning for the followers of Jesus who committed the greatest betrayal.

This afternoon we will examine the questions: Why the Jew? How did the Jew become the world's scapegoat? And how did the word Jew become an anathema? It is said that hatred of the Jew is the longest hatred. But when one looks back over the centuries and ponders the carnage; how Christians have insulted G-d's image, how Christians have betrayed the commandment of Jesus. NO! It is not the longest hatred. It is the longest shame.

Now I ask: How did the ancient world of Christianity get to the modern world of the Holocaust? Once upon a time there was an Emperor named Constantine the Great. He ruled a vast territory known as the Roman Empire which bordered the Mediterranean



2010 AP FILE PHOTO

**Residents in the village of Oberammergau in southern Germany have performed a passion play once every 10 years since 1634. In the most recent performance, in 2010, the director eliminated several antisemitic elements that had raised concerns among Jewish groups in the past.**

basin. It so happens that various religious parties – Christians, Jews, pagans, and others brought unrest and uncertainty to the Empire with their proselytizing activities. This disturbance resulted in an intolerable situation which forced Constantine to take action. It was in the year 313 A.D. that the Edict of Milan permanently established religious toleration for Christianity and assured Christians of legal rights in the Roman Empire. Who could have predicted that the act alone presaged the future destiny of the Jewish people – a destiny of isolation, harassment, humiliation, exclusion, exile, torture and murder? In that fatal year, at that fatal moment, anti-Semitism was born. The antipathy was not labeled anti-Semitism until 1897, when Wilhelm Marr, the German agitator, coined the hyphenated opprobrium to designate then-current anti-Jewish campaigns in Europe.

When religion, any religion, becomes nationalized and operates under the auspices of the State, intolerance and hubris inevitably follows. It is a marriage that

Thomas Jefferson in 1850 referred to as “this loathsome combination of church and state.” In the Holocaust, 6 million Jews were murdered.

Indeed, such prolonged concentration on the Jew gives a sane person pause. There is a dichotomy in the body of Christianity. While Christianity preaches love, some Christians practice hatred. So, tell me, how did this long strange romance between the Catholic church hierarchy and the Jew start? Who perpetrated it? And how was it nourished so that its ardor and inventiveness has never diminished? The answer, my young friends, is so fantastic, so unreal, so ironic, that even Shakespeare could not have thought of it.

In the lore of the Catholic Church is the deep secret that the first 15 bishops of the church hierarchy were young, eager circumcised Jews and they refused tolerance to Jews who practiced the Mosaic law. And they introduced a new hatred to the world, religious anti-Semitism. Emboldened by the Emperor Constantine's protection and bedecked in their new regalia, ritual and

roguery, the original Catholic hierarchy and the bureaucracies thereafter inflicted upon the Jew, every humiliation and every criminal offense known to man. The 15 Jewish bishops made sure their brethren tasted their interpretation of the wrath of G-d. An ancient saying characterizes the Catholic hierarchy. “Decipimur specti recti” (we are deceived by the righteous). Fifteen Jewish men shaped, formed and executed a Catholic church's attitude toward the Jew that has been utilized with dedication and passion for 1,800 years. It was Titus Lucretius Carus (99-55 B.C.) who warned, “Tantum religio potuit suadare malorum.” (How great are the evils religion has managed to inflict.)

Hear the words of Dr. James Parkes, an English theologian: “In our own day and within our own civilization, more than 6 million murders are the consequence of the teaching about Jesus for which the Christian Church is ultimately responsible, and of an attitude to Judaism which is not only maintained by all Christian Churches, but has its ultimate resting place in the New Testament itself.”



# The Story of the 'Beloved'

I am not Jewish. I have not experienced antisemitism on a personal level. I view it through the lens of a small group of children who died a decade or more before I was born. They are the Beloved, 27 children of the 1930s whose portraits I have drawn in the past year. They range in age from 4 months to 7 years, and they are unique and delightful in the way only children can be.

There is little Alida who reminds everyone of the Gerber baby and Samuel of the beautiful curls. There is Fani, who sparkles like a tiny jewel, and Rachel and Abraham, two very serious little people. There is Gyorgy with the sweet little tan line left behind by his baby T-shirt. There are Hersch, and Edith, and Albert, and little Hanna Samson –



**MARY BURKETT**

*Retired pediatric nurse  
Commissioner,  
Columbia Holocaust  
Education Commission  
Columbia, S.C.*

each one so beautiful, so special, captured in a single moment of life.

These children were loved just as we love our children today. The little outfits so carefully chosen, and the curls carefully arranged testify to the attention and devotion of their parents.

That love and devotion could not save them, however, for they had committed the unpardonable sin of being born to Jewish par-

ents. To the German Nazis, they were not beloved children; they were “useless eaters,” meaning that they consumed calories, but did no work.

Tiny little Alida, just 4 months old, died in the gas chamber at Auschwitz in 1942 with both of her parents. That same year, Rachel and Abraham and Hanna died with their mothers at Auschwitz as well.

After the war ended, the guards at Auschwitz reported how tenderly mothers murmured to their children as they carried them to their deaths.

Edith was from the Netherlands, as were Alida, Rachel, Abraham, and Hanna. Edith and her parents were fortunate to be hidden in two safe houses when most Jews were deported from Holland

in 1942. Tragically, however, she was discovered in 1944 and died at Auschwitz a few days later. Her parents survived to rebuild a life without their beautiful little girl.

Sweet little Fani died at Auschwitz in 1942 also, but whether she had been taken from her mother, as thousands of children were, we don't know.

Hersch and Gyorgy were from Romania and Hungary respectively and survived until 1944.

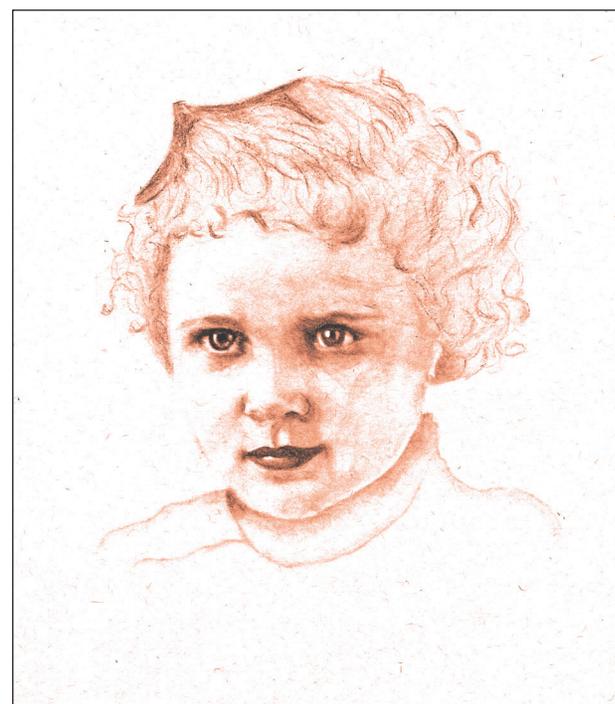
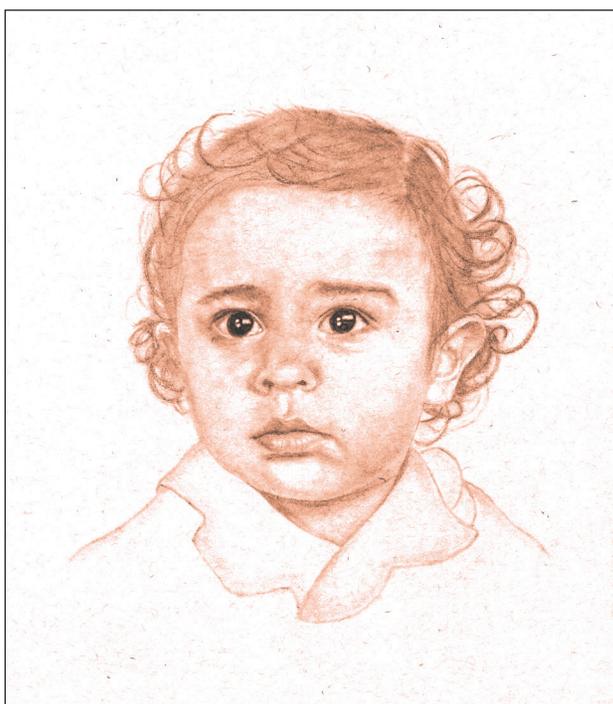
Samuel, with his beautiful black curls, lived in a Jewish ghetto in Poland for two years, despite critical shortages of food and water. On March 27, 1944, the Nazis rounded up the remaining 250 children in the ghetto and took them to their deaths at Auschwitz. Samuel was 5 years old on the cold spring day when he was taken from his moth-

er. She survived the war, immigrated to the United States and lived her remaining years in New York, surviving her little Samuel by almost half a century.

The Beloved are just 27 of the 1.5 million children who died at the hands of the Nazis and their allies. They were powerless against the virulent hatred of the Jews that existed in Europe, and their little lives were crushed as if they meant absolutely nothing.

Hatred has existed in some form on every page of the history of mankind, and our time is no exception. Each of us is presented with the eternal dilemma – we must decide whether we stand for good or for evil, for hatred or for love.

May we always remember the Beloved children and choose wisely.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MARY BURKETT

Three of the Beloved, from left: Alida, who died in 1942 in the gas chamber; Samuel, who was separated from his mother on March 27, 1944, when the Nazis took the remaining 250 children from a Polish ghetto; and Edith, whose family was arrested after their hiding place was discovered in 1944. All three died at Auschwitz.



# The Notoriety of World War II: The Holocaust

**Editor's note:** *The Teacher's Advisory Committee, an ad hoc committee of the S.C. Council on the Holocaust, established a scholarship essay program for high school seniors, awarding \$1,000 toward the South Carolina college of their choice. The prompt given students for the scholarship essay contest in spring 2017 was:*

*"In 2011, the S.C. Superintendent of Education proposed cutting the funding for the S.C. Council on the Holocaust. Write a convincing argument about the importance and relevance of Holocaust education to S.C. today."*

*This is the winning essay.*

The term Holocaust was historically defined as the sacrificial offering burned on an altar, originating from the Greek words "holos" (meaning whole) and "kaustos" (meaning burned). However, after the abhorrent acts undertaken by the German Nazi regime during World War II, the term has obtained a new horrid definition: the genocide of 6 million innocent European Jews and members of other persecuted groups. This horrible piece of human history revealed the darkest side of mankind and showed the immorality and cruelty of society. The Holocaust is something we must not forget or fail to produce awareness of. It is an event in our history that serves as a reminder that we are all human and all deserve equality; we all have the right to be heard and listened to and ultimately, we all have the right to live. The South Carolina Superintendent of Education's proposal of cutting the funding for the South Carolina Council on the Holocaust prevents the spread of awareness and remembrance of such an atrocious event. As stated on the website for the South Carolina Council on the Holocaust, the program was established "to develop an educational program to prevent future atrocities" and is "designed to honor the survivors of the Holocaust and their descendants and the South Carolinians and their descendants who participated in the liberation of the concentration camps." Without receiving proper funding, this program could become discontinued and the mission of the program will not be achieved. This is not a program that deserves to be cut from funding. This is a program that must stay in existence in order to relay the message that oppression should not be tolerated.

Why should we educate and inform South Carolinians about the macabre events of the Holocaust? It is without a doubt a complicated and sometimes difficult topic to discuss. It can be trying and gruesome. But nonetheless, the intellectual and moral principles brought forth from this tragedy are far too indispensable to



**PATRICIA COGDILL**

*Winner, the Teacher's Advisory Scholarship Contest  
Lexington, S.C.*

go left untaught or unheard of. Most people view the Holocaust as simply the horrific mass killing of the Jews under the control of the Nazi regime. However, its lesson and its cautionary message on human behavior should by no means whatsoever be treated as something trivial. It is much more than just a heartbreaking, cruel event in mankind's history. The Holocaust is one of the most effective subjects for examining basic moral issues. It provides an insight on how important democracy is and how it is truly a liberty that one should not take for granted. Holocaust education is pivotal and it is important that we instill the knowledge of what can take place if we allow prejudice, hatred, and ultimately mass murder to occur.

Studying the Holocaust has the potential to open the minds of hundreds and thousands of South Carolinian students. Many social studies professors find that a structured inquiry about the Holocaust can spark many different critical lessons on human behavior and it can address what it means to be a responsible citizen. There is no doubt that studying this atrocity can prevent another from happening. It can teach South Carolinians the importance of speaking up and stopping such cruelty. The Holocaust is certainly a hard piece of history to mull over, but it is well worth it. It is here to serve as a reminder to mankind that we have an evil and nefarious side, but it does not have to be exposed or used. The silence and indifference to the suffering of others can be stopped. The cruel and vicious treatment to those who are simply different does not have to be interwoven into typical human behavior. Researching, studying, and simply furthering



1945 AP FILE PHOTO

**A Polish youth, right, cries at the grave of his grandmother at the German concentration camp Nordhausen in April 1945. American troops, background, liberated the camp and ordered the townspeople to bury the dead, but the boy insisted on burying his grandmother himself.**

one's knowledge on the Holocaust can truly give students a new perspective of their freedoms and liberties. It can also teach them the roots and ramifications of prejudice, racism, and stereotyping within society; it can teach them how important it is to accept diversity and the value of pluralism.

Holocaust education relays a significant moral and historical lesson for today's society. Thus, it makes one ponder the question as to why the South Carolina Superintendent of Education proposed cutting the funding for the South Carolina Council on the Holocaust. Something as vital educationally should not be defunded. It is necessary that South Carolinians reflect and give consideration to the history of the Holocaust. Its importance from an educational standpoint should not be ignored and should not be left behind. It is a piece of human history that needs much more than our sorrow and heartfelt acknowl-

edgment. It needs to be taught and learned here in South Carolina. The South Carolina Superintendent of Education should not cut the funding for the South Carolina Council on the Holocaust because it is a program that sets out to teach the importance of the rejection of racism and oppression and the value of acceptance of others no matter their race, ethnic background or religious views.

The Holocaust was not an accident in history. It was something that could have been prevented and stopped. It occurred because individuals, organizations, and governments made cruel and inhumane choices that allowed prejudice, hatred, and ultimately mass murder to occur. It was a dismal time in human history, but it does not have to happen again. Through the education and teachings of the Holocaust and its importance in today's society, a tragedy like itself can lose its ability to occur ever again.



## HOLOCAUST EDUCATION RESOURCES

### COLUMBIA HOLOCAUST EDUCATION COMMISSION

[www.columbiaholocausteducation.org](http://www.columbiaholocausteducation.org)

Promotes awareness of the Holocaust and fosters education in grades K-12 throughout South Carolina. An



LYSSA HARVEY

*Co-chair, Columbia Holocaust Education Commission  
Teacher, therapist, artist*

outgrowth of the campaign to erect the Columbia Holocaust Memorial, the commission sponsors the "Holocaust Remembered" exhibit, including teacher education guides, and provides grants to educators and institutions to provide innovative, quality Holocaust education.

### SELDEN K. SMITH FOUNDATION FOR HOLOCAUST EDUCATION

[www.holocausteducationfoundation.org](http://www.holocausteducationfoundation.org)

Named in honor of the longtime chair of the South Carolina Council on the Holocaust and a retired history professor from Columbia College, the foundation provides funds to schools, colleges, churches, synagogues, civic groups and individuals for research, student field trips, teacher training and workshops, classroom supplies, Holocaust speakers, exhibitions, and related educational programs. Donations can be made via the website or mailed to The Selden K. Smith Foundation for Holocaust Education, c/o Minda Miller, Chair, P.O. Box 25740, Columbia, SC 29224.

### SC COUNCIL ON THE HOLOCAUST

[www.scholocaustcouncil.org](http://www.scholocaustcouncil.org)

■ **Graduate opportunities for teachers:** The council provides two excellent graduate opportunities for South Carolina-certified teachers: the Eastern European Travel/Study Tour of the Holocaust and the Holocaust Education Institute for Teachers. See the bottom of page 9 for details.

■ **Mini-Grant Program for Holocaust Education:** Funding is available for Holocaust education projects. Teachers are encouraged to apply. Subsidies may also be granted for teachers to participate in the above-mentioned educational opportunities. Project goals must coincide with the objectives of the Holocaust Council.

For further information, contact Dr. Christine Beresniova at [cberesniova@scholocaustcouncil.org](mailto:cberesniova@scholocaustcouncil.org).

■ **Teachers' Advisory Committee:** This group of teachers from around the state has developed a PowerPoint presentation and script available to teachers and holds educational conferences to assist with teaching the Holocaust. Daylong educational workshops are held in the fall. For more information, contact Emily Taylor, [etaylor@lexington4.net](mailto:etaylor@lexington4.net), or visit [www.scholocaustcouncil.org](http://www.scholocaustcouncil.org).

### US HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM: ON ANTISEMITISM

■ **Podcast: "Voices of Antisemitism,"** [www.ushmm.org/confront-antisemitism/antisemitism-podcast](http://www.ushmm.org/confront-antisemitism/antisemitism-podcast)

■ **Public radio special: "Confronting Hatred: 70 Years after the Holocaust,"** [www.ushmm.org/confront-antisemitism/confronting-hatred-70-years-after-the-holocaust/podcast-special](http://www.ushmm.org/confront-antisemitism/confronting-hatred-70-years-after-the-holocaust/podcast-special)

■ **Module: "Antisemitism,"** [www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005175](http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005175)

■ **Module: "Nazi Propaganda,"** [www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005202](http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005202)

ModuleId=10005202

■ **Module: "Racism,"** [www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10007307](http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10007307)

■ **Module: "Anti-Jewish Legislation in Prewar Germany,"** [www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005681](http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005681)

■ **Scholarly presentation: "Antisemitism: Special Two-Part Presentation,"** including Part I, "German Churches, Antisemitism, and the Holocaust," and Part II, "How Deep Are the Roots? Antisemitism, the Holocaust, and Now," [www.ushmm.org/research/scholarly-presentations/presentations-and-panel-discussions/antisemitism](http://www.ushmm.org/research/scholarly-presentations/presentations-and-panel-discussions/antisemitism)

■ **Lecture text: "Past Revisited: Reflections on the Study of the Holocaust and Contemporary Antisemitism,"** by Steven J. Zipperstein, J.B. and Maurice C. Shapiro Annual Lecture, 2003, [www.ushmm.org/m/pdfs/20031204-zipperstein.pdf](http://www.ushmm.org/m/pdfs/20031204-zipperstein.pdf)

■ **Photographs:** At <http://collections.ushmm.org/search>, enter "antisemitism." Under "filter your search," select "images," then "photographs."

■ **Bibliography:** See USHMM resources at [www.ushmm.org/collections/bibliography/antisemitism](http://www.ushmm.org/collections/bibliography/antisemitism).

### TOP 5 BOOKS ON ANTISEMITISM

From Abraham Foxman, emeritus director of the Anti-Defamation League.

■ **"Constantine's Sword,"** James Carroll.

■ **"The War Against the Jews, 1933-1945,"** Lucy S. Dawowicz.

■ **"The Siege,"** Conor Cruise O'Brien.

■ **"Trials of the Diaspora: A History of Anti-Semitism in England,"** Anthony Julius.

■ **"A Lethal Obsession,"** Robert S. Wistrich.

### RECENT PUBLICATIONS

■ Ivo Goldstein and Slavko Goldstein, "The Holocaust in Croatia" (University of Pittsburgh Press).

■ Deborah Lipstadt, "Holocaust: An American Understanding" (Rutgers University Press)

■ Joel E. Dimsdale, "Anatomy of Malice: The Enigma of the Nazi War Criminals" (Yale University Press).

■ Robert K. Wittman and David Kinney, "The Devil's Diary: Alfred Rosenberg and the Secrets of the Third Reich" (HarperCollins).

■ Mark Glicksman, "Stolen Words: The Nazi Plunder of Jewish Books" (Jewish Publication Society).

■ Michael Bazylar, "Holocaust, Genocide and the Law: A Quest for Justice in a Post-Holocaust World" (Oxford University Press).

■ Jeremy Black, "The Holocaust: History & Memory" (Indiana University Press).

■ Guenter Lewy, "Harmful and Undesirable: Book Censorship in Nazi Germany" (Oxford University Press).

### ONLINE RESOURCES

■ **Yad Vashem:** [www.yad-vashem.org](http://www.yad-vashem.org)

■ **Facing History and Ourselves:** [www.facinghistory.org](http://www.facinghistory.org)

■ **Centropa:** [www.centropa.org](http://www.centropa.org)

■ **Anti-Defamation League Hate Symbols Database:** [www.adl.org/education/references/hate-symbols](http://www.adl.org/education/references/hate-symbols)

■ **American Jewish Committee:** [www.ajc.org](http://www.ajc.org)

■ **FBI statistics on hate crimes:** <http://ucr.fbi.gov/ucr-publications#Hate>

■ **Holocaust Denial on Trial:** [www.hdot.org](http://www.hdot.org)

■ **Human Rights First:** [www.humanrightsfirst.org](http://www.humanrightsfirst.org)

■ **Middle East Media Research Institute:** [www.memri.org](http://www.memri.org)

■ **The Nizkor Project:** [www.nizkor.org](http://www.nizkor.org)

■ **Simon Wiesenthal Center:** [www.wiesenthal.com](http://www.wiesenthal.com)

■ **Southern Poverty Law Center:** [www.splcenter.org](http://www.splcenter.org)

■ **U.S. Department of State Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism:** [www.state.gov/s/rga/seas/index.htm](http://www.state.gov/s/rga/seas/index.htm)

■ **World Jewish Congress:** [www.worldjewishcongress.org](http://www.worldjewishcongress.org)

■ **Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism:** <http://ypsa.yale.edu>

■ **UN General Assembly resolution condemns Holocaust denial:** <https://news.un.org/en/story/2007/01/207002-un-assembly-condemns-holocaust-denial-consensus-iran-disassociates-itself>

## Community Yom HaShoah Commemoration

Sunday, April 15th at 5:00 pm

Beth Shalom Synagogue

5827 North Trenholm Road

Featuring Holocaust Survivor  
Dr. Susan Cernyak-Spatz

with Mary Burkett's BELOVED Sketches and the  
Columbia Holocaust Education Commission's  
HOLOCAUST REMEMBERED Exhibit

Visit [www.jewishcolumbia.org](http://www.jewishcolumbia.org) for more information

