



South Carolina Council on the Holocaust

Dear South Carolina Teachers,

Thank you for the work that you do to bring Holocaust education into the classroom. The South Carolina Council on the Holocaust exists by state legislative mandate to support you through training, resources, grants, and commemorative events.

As part of this work, the state of South Carolina will mark the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz concentration camp and killing center on January 28th, 2020. This date marks International Holocaust Remembrance Day. On this annual day of commemoration, the world honors the six million Jewish victims of the Holocaust and millions of other victims of Nazism and encourages communities to develop educational programs to help prevent future genocides.

Please join us for this event if you can either in person or via livestream from ETV.

10:30am

900 Senate Street, Columbia, SC

Free and Open to the Public

Livestream: www.sctev.org/Auschwitz.

To help you prepare your students, this accompanying packet of information provides resources and information about Auschwitz and the Holocaust, including links to survivor testimony from SC Holocaust survivors who were in Auschwitz. For additional questions about the Council please visit our website at www.scholocaustcouncil.org or contact me.

#WeRemember

Sincerely,

Christine Beresniova, Ph.d.

Executive Director

SC Council on the Holocaust

Providing education, resources, and grant money to teachers throughout the state of South Carolina in support of Holocaust education and commemoration

www.scholocaustcouncil.org | 803-351-0659 | education@scholocaustcouncil.org

TEACHING ABOUT THE HOLOCAUST 75 YEARS ON ABOUT AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU

Auschwitz-Birkenau is the most well-known killing and forced labor camp from the Holocaust. It represents the system of mass murder, thievery, and forced labor enacted by the Nazi Party against the Jews, Roma and Sinti (“gypsies”), Soviet POWs, and other groups in the 40,000+ camps and ghettos established throughout Europe as part of the Nazi “Final Solution” to murder the Jewish population of Europe.

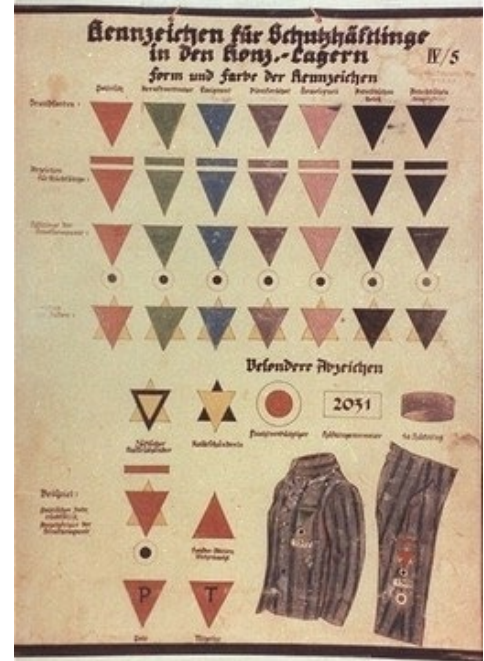
Referred to in German as *Konzentrationslager Auschwitz* or “KL Auschwitz”, Auschwitz-Birkenau was a complex of over 40 camps, subcamps, and killing centers that existed from 1940–1945. Its name was taken from the city in Poland where it was located, [Oświęcim](#), which was Germanized into the name Auschwitz. Its first prisoners were Polish prisoners. The camp expanded from a prison to a concentration camp and a mass killing center. From 1942, the majority of those sent to and murdered in Auschwitz were Jews. About one in six European Jews died at Auschwitz, with the total number of those killed ranging from 1 million to 1.5 million. (Some prisoners were never registered at the camp, making it difficult to calculate an exact tally.) Roma and Sinti prisoners were also sent to Auschwitz and murdered en masse.

Other groups of inmates included Polish prisoners, Jehovah’s witnesses, and Soviet prisoners of war.

In June 1945, the Soviets liberated Auschwitz and turned it into a POW camp for German prisoners. This lasted until 1947 when Auschwitz was turned into a memorial. Exhumation work there lasted over a decade. Today, Auschwitz-Birkenau is a memorial and museum with more than 2 million visitors a year.

Today, there are no Jews living in the town of Oświęcim. The last Jew to live in the city, [Shimshon Klueger](#), died in 2000 as a deeply traumatized man who believed the war was still going on. He is sometimes referred to as “The Last Jew of Auschwitz.”

Anyone who has seen a Holocaust survivor with a number tattoo is most likely looking at a camp inmate from Auschwitz where the tattooing practice was introduced and used due to the high death rate and difficulty in identifying corpses. It is a misconception that all camps tattooed prisoners. The US Holocaust Memorial Museum provides more information on [the system of tattoos used at Auschwitz](#).



WHY TEACH ABOUT THE HOLOCAUST?

There are many valid reasons to teach about the Holocaust today. Teaching about the Holocaust is important in the state of South Carolina for many reasons, including:

- South Carolina has long been home to a Jewish population, with Charleston home to the largest population of Jews in the United States in 1800
- Holocaust survivors settled in South Carolina after the war and contributed to the economic and cultural development of the state
- The military community of South Carolina was dramatically affected by mobilization efforts for World War II, including the opening of many new bases and airstrips and the re-opening of Ft. Jackson following its closure after World War I
- South Carolina is home to liberators of concentration camps who were some of the first witnesses in the world to what happened during the Holocaust
- The new SC Social Studies Standards require the teaching of the Holocaust at five grade levels because it is connected to understanding local, national, and international historical developments
- Teaching the Holocaust helps develop the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate through a focus on critical thinking and a global perspective
- World War II is a seminal event in American history, and it set the stage for contemporary conversations about democracy and human rights through the creation of documents like the Universal Declaration of Rights, from which we all benefit today.

APPROACHES IN HOLOCAUST EDUCATION

For those who are new to Holocaust education or those who want a refresher on integrating Holocaust topics into the classroom, the US Holocaust Memorial Museum offers resources on [Why Teach About the Holocaust](#) and [Guidelines for Teaching the Holocaust](#). These guidelines are summarized below. Clicking on each link will take you to a more detailed explanation of methods for teaching about the Holocaust in an accurate way in any discipline and at any grade level.

- [Define the term “Holocaust.”](#)
- [Do not teach or imply that the Holocaust was inevitable.](#)
- [Avoid simple answers to complex questions.](#)
- [Strive for precision of language.](#)
- [Strive for balance in establishing whose perspective informs your study of the Holocaust.](#)
- [Avoid comparisons of pain.](#)
- [Do not romanticize history.](#)
- [Contextualize the history.](#)

- [Translate statistics into people.](#)
- [Make responsible methodological choices.](#)

What is “Age-Appropriate” Holocaust Education?

The general rule of thumb in Holocaust studies is that only children aged 10 and above (about 5th grade) should be introduced to the Holocaust. When children of this age/grade are introduced to the subject, it is best to stick with the feelings associated with being left out of something rather than images of children being persecuted or murdered. Children should not be introduced to a world in which children are targets of mass annihilation. Books like *The Terrible Things* by Eve Bunting provide an allegory of the Holocaust that can be useful for discussing how we treat one another in the world.

Younger children are also able to understand the idea of authority (such as following rules set by parents, school principals, church leaders, etc.), and how it feels when the rules are unfair. The Nuremberg Laws and other [anti-Jewish legislation](#) show the increasing restrictions on Jews in German society, including their expulsion from the public school system and restrictions on owning pets, radios, and other commonplace items that students often take for granted.

Older students are more able to understand the darker human behaviors and political mechanisms associated with the Holocaust. A focus on the years 1933-1940 is particularly important to establishing the foundations of the Holocaust. A useful background film on the processes that led to the Holocaust can be found on the US Holocaust Memorial Museum’s website [The Path to Nazi Genocide](#) .

Care should be taken in using graphic images at any age, keeping in mind the following:

- Victims in the graphic images would likely never sanction the use of their images in such a humiliating manner
- Graphic images were often taken by the perpetrators
- There is little evidence that graphic imagery adds to the learning process, and we know that too much trauma can actually shut down the learning process.

Never force students to view or “linger on” graphic images (such as leaving them up on a powerpoint slide).

RELEVANT CONNECTIONS IN GENOCIDE AND HOLOCAUST STUDIES

Teaching about Auschwitz allows for the examination of many topics & themes in genocide and Holocaust studies, including:

- **The stages of genocide.** Genocide usually happens under the cover of war. It begins with socially “othering” groups, then moves into physically separating the “other” from society, and then results in the final stage of annihilating a group en masse with little protest from the general public.
- **The modern system of killing enacted by the Nazis.** The Nazis diverted considerable wartime resources to perpetrating mass murder against the Jews. This plan could have been prevented or interrupted if there had been more individual, national, and international wherewithal to do so.
- **The rich history of Jews in Europe,** including the diversity of thought and practice among different groups of Jews. Jewish life in Europe is dynamic and storied. Identities ranged from those with secular beliefs to Orthodox Jews who embraced literal interpretations of Biblical practice. The Holocaust often overlooks sources from the Jewish perspective, which should be highlighted.
- **The variety of groups** targeted in varying degrees by the hateful ideologies of the Nazi Party, such as the Roma and Sinti, handicapped German children, Jehovah’s witnesses, and homosexuals.
- **The role of women in the Holocaust,** especially as perpetrators against children who worked as nurses, teachers, and others in “helping” professions who turned on the very populations they were supposed to protect.
- **The role of the press and other forms of media,** which prompts questions about what people knew about the Holocaust and when, and what it meant for action or inaction
- **The wide range of responses to the Holocaust by ordinary citizens,** including the choice to do nothing at all. The Holocaust was mostly met with indifference by citizens preoccupied with their own lives or by those who looked the other way at how their professions facilitated the enactment of the Holocaust, such as the police, tax collectors, immigration officers, fire fighters, train drivers, and so on who allowed their daily work to be used in service to murderous ends.
- **The role of the US Military** especially in its liberation of the camps, its support of Holocaust victims, the establishment of Displaced Persons camps, and attempts to help victims return home or seek refuge
- **The creation of international organizations to protect the rights of all people.** The practice of contemporary democracy cannot be understood without having at least some background on the Holocaust and the failure of the international community to stop it.

USEFUL CONTEXT FOR UNDERSTANDING AUSCHWITZ

The camp system and the mass murder of Jews was the result of decades-long policies and social practices that systematically denied rights and protections to Jews and other minority groups (such as handicapped children, Jehovah's witnesses, and homosexuals) in German society. Therefore, it can be helpful for students to learn about the attitudes that came before the construction of the camps, so that they understand the processes that brought about such killing.

It helps students to learn more about the context of Jewish life in Europe prior to the Holocaust to understand who the Jews were and the contributions they made throughout history. Secondly, it can be useful for students to understand the [lengthy history of antisemitism](#), which is often called “the longest hatred.” Furthermore, students should understand that there were many pseudoscientific attitudes about other races that were commonly held by western politicians who accepted the “othering” of non-white groups all over the world. For example, we have recently learned that [Hitler's practices against the Jews were informed by the Jim Crow laws in the United States](#), making this context not only helpful, but topical for US classrooms.

Finally, it is helpful to remind students that even though the war ended in 1945, the re-integration of camp survivors into daily life took years. Understandably, no survivor was ever the same after the Holocaust, and their memoirs and oral testimonies help us understand the lifelong psychological battles that most endured. South Carolina is home to some Holocaust survivors and their families, some of whom provided testimonies that can be integrated into classroom teaching. **See Appendix A for local testimonies of Auschwitz survivors and liberators in SC.**

Overall, here are some additional topics that will help students understand the significance of the Holocaust and the fateful role that the Auschwitz camp system played in supporting the twisted Nazi ideology:

- The length and diversity of Jewish life in Europe. Jews have lived in Europe for centuries alongside other populations—See Appendix A: *Prewar Jewish Life in Europe*
- The factors that contributed to World War II and Nazi aggression, including the dangerous disdain for key principles of democracy, the political mobilization of antisemitism as a way to justify the political instability of Europe, and unfounded conspiracy theories blaming Jews for the suffering of Germany. See Appendix B: *Antisemitism and World War II*
- The long history of antisemitism in the world, which is frequently referred to as “the longest hatred.” See Appendix C: *Nazi Racial Ideology*
- The end of the war is not the end of the story. The difficult life of Jewish and other groups who survived the brutality of the Holocaust did not end after the camps were liberated, rather it was only the beginning of the reintegration into life. See Appendix D: *Post-War Reflections*

LITERATURE ABOUT AUSCHWITZ AND THE HOLOCAUST

The English language arts offer a robust opportunity to teach about the Holocaust. We offer one simple suggestion: When teaching literature about the Holocaust opt for a text that offers historically accurate depictions of the Holocaust even if the characters are fictionalized. Even stories based on real events may stretch the limits of truth. (For example, see the controversy over [The Tattooist of Auschwitz](#)) The Holocaust is first and foremost a historical event, so keep the need for historical accuracy in mind.

Books that stretch the limits of plausibility, such as the Boy in the Striped Pajamas, are strongly **discouraged** because they have no basis in reality. Inaccurate books only serve to confuse students about what happened. Additionally, books that are patent fiction open the door to Holocaust deniers. If you have a question about what is an effective teaching tool, the US Holocaust Memorial Museum offers a rubric for deciding about resources. **See Appendix E for the Rubric: Evaluating Sources**

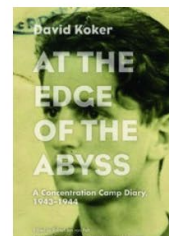
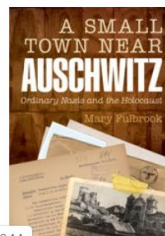
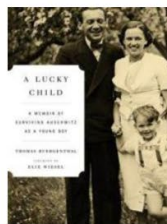
In general, The Jewish Book Council has a [page](#) that outlines fiction and non-fiction books about Auschwitz suited to older teens and adults. This does not serve as an endorsement of these books, but a consolidated place to browse new titles that may be of selected in conjunction with the USHMM Rubric for Evaluating Resources.



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[Book Search](#) [Reading Lists](#) [Israel Bookshelf](#) [Review for Us](#) [Submit a Book for Review](#)

Holocaust: Auschwitz



The Jewish Book Council also offers a page listing recent works [for Young Adults](#) about the Holocaust. See same selection caveat as above.

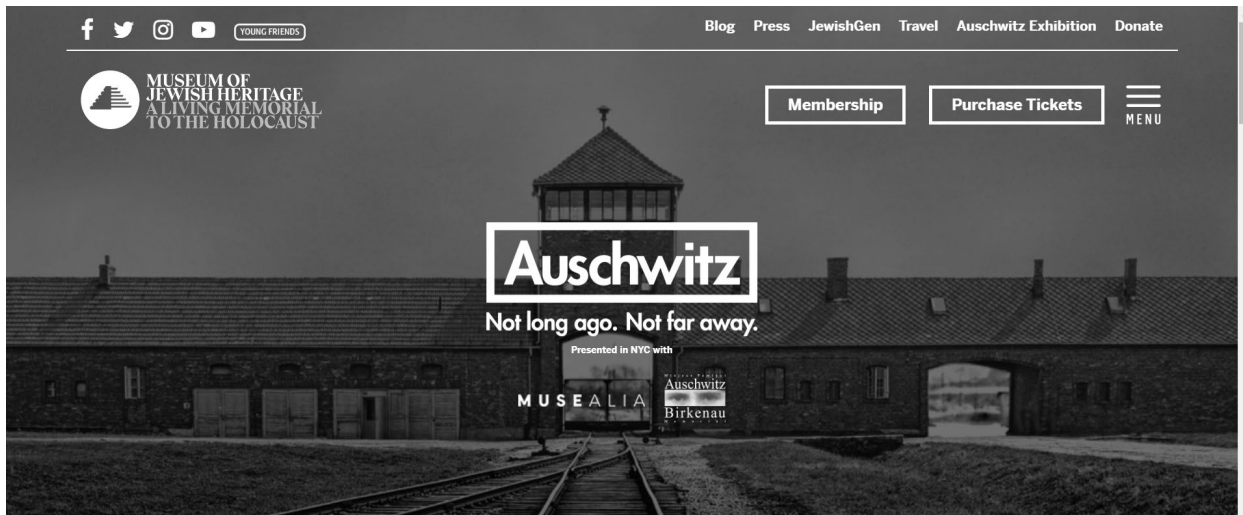
For educators grappling with how to select children's books about the Holocaust, it can be helpful to consult The New Yorker article [How Should Children's Books Deal with the Holocaust](#)

for discussions about the pitfalls associated with literary interpretations of the Holocaust. There is deep controversy associated with some children’s literature because it is so implausible. The article from [the Holocaust Education Learning Center](#) in Queensgate, England discusses alternatives to one of the most problematic texts currently in use.

HISTORICALLY ACCURATE RESOURCES FOR TEACHING ABOUT AUSCHWITZ AND ITS LIBERATION

THE MUSEUM OF JEWISH HERITAGE: A LIVING MEMORIAL TO THE HOLOCAUST (New York City)

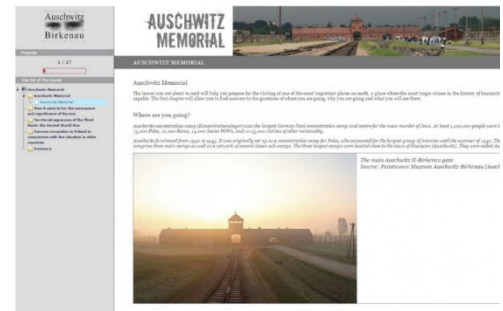
Presently, the Museum of Jewish Heritage is hosting the exhibition *Auschwitz: Not long ago. Not far away.* You can access information about [the exhibition online.](#)



This groundbreaking exhibition brings together more than 700 original objects and 400 photographs from over 20 institutions and museums around the world. It is the most comprehensive exhibition dedicated to the history of Auschwitz and its role in the Holocaust ever presented in North America, and an unparalleled opportunity to confront the singular face of human evil—one that arose not long ago and not far away.

AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU MEMORIAL (Poland)

This is the site of Auschwitz and its subcamps. It is now a memorial, museum, archive, and educational resource. They provide [Educator Resources about Auschwitz](#), including the following lessons:



- [Auschwitz – concentration and extermination camp](#)
- [Preparation for a visit at the Auschwitz Memorial](#)
- [Sonderkommando](#)
- [Evacuation and liberation of Auschwitz](#)
- [Deportations of Hungarian Jews to Auschwitz](#)
- [The Roma in Auschwitz](#)
- [From the uprising Warsaw to Auschwitz](#)
- [The first deportations of Poles to Auschwitz](#)
- [Resistance Movement in Auschwitz](#)
- [Escapes from Auschwitz](#)

THE UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM (Washington DC)

This museum is the US authority on Holocaust education. They offer an online Holocaust Encyclopedia, ready-made lesson plans, access to primary source artifacts from the Holocaust.

Their resources about Auschwitz include:

- [Auschwitz through the Lens of the SS: Photos of Nazi Leadership at the Camp](#)
- [From the Permanent Exhibition—Model of Auschwitz Crematorium](#)
- [View photographs \(Holocaust Encyclopedia\)](#)
- [View historical film footage \(Holocaust Encyclopedia\)](#)
- [View survivor testimonies \(Holocaust Encyclopedia\)](#)
- [View maps \(Holocaust Encyclopedia\)](#)
- [Auschwitz \(Holocaust Encyclopedia article\)](#)
- [The United States and the Holocaust: Why Auschwitz was not Bombed \(Holocaust Encyclopedia article\)](#)
- [Tattoos and Numbers: The System of Identifying Prisoners at Auschwitz \(Holocaust Encyclopedia article\)](#)
- [Witnesses for Change: Stories of Liberation \(USC Shoah Foundation Institute\) \(external link\)](#)

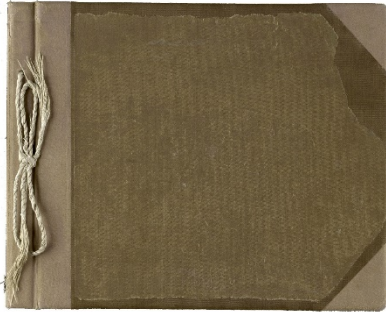
PUBLISHED IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM

- [Eyewitness Auschwitz](#)
- [Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp](#)
- [At the Mind's Limits](#)
- [People in Auschwitz](#)
- [The Bombing of Auschwitz](#)

- [Triumph of Hope](#)

YAD VASHEM: THE ISRAEL REMEMBRANCE AUTHORITY AND HOLOCAUST MUSEUM (Jerusalem)

Yad Vashem is home to a unique teaching resource: the rare “Auschwitz Album.”



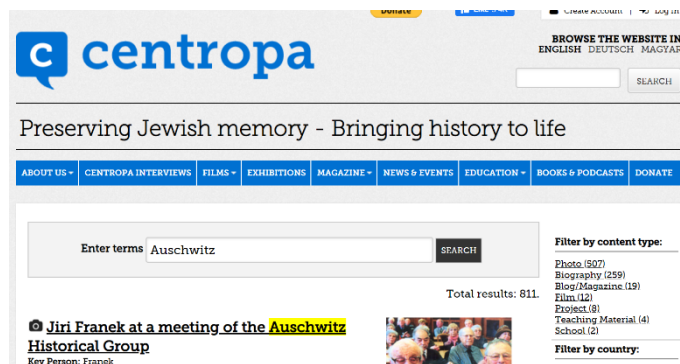
The Auschwitz Album is the only surviving visual evidence of the process leading to the mass murder at [Auschwitz-Birkenau](#). It is a unique document and was donated to Yad Vashem by [Lilly Jacob-Zelmanovic Meier](#).

To view the Auschwitz Album [click here](#).

The photos were taken at the end of May or beginning of June 1944, either by Ernst Hofmann or by Bernhard Walter, two SS men whose task was to take ID photos and fingerprints of the inmates (not of the Jews who were sent directly to the gas chambers). The photos show the arrival of Hungarian Jews from Carpatho-Ruthenia. Many of them came from the Berehovo Ghetto, which itself was a collecting point for Jews from several other small towns.

CENTROPA (Vienna)

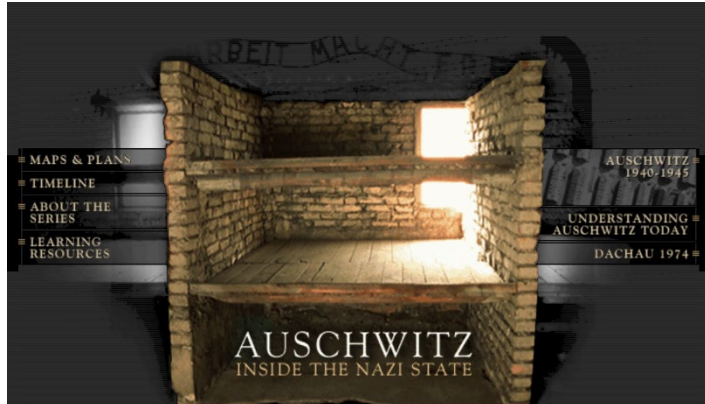
Between 2000 and 2010, Centropa interviewed 1,200 Jewish Holocaust survivors still living in Central and Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union and the Balkans. They digitized more than 20,000 of their photographs and asked them to tell us their stories about the entire 20th century--as they lived it. Their stories can be found through this website translated into English. Resources specific to Auschwitz can be found by [narrowing the search](#) with the term “Auschwitz.”



PBS TELEVISION: AUSCHWITZ—INSIDE THE NAZI STATE (online)

This series was produced by PBS to document the systematic mass killings by the Nazi State. The writer and producer Laurence Rees remarks about the series: “The series uses Auschwitz as a prism to try and understand the whole of the extermination process and something of the mentality of the people who committed the crime. We're looking at the killings on the eastern front. We're looking at the deportations across Europe. We're looking at the course of the war as it affected this place. It's a much bigger canvas. Auschwitz has a physical beginning in May 1940 and a physical end in January 1945. What happens in Auschwitz and the decisions made by people running Auschwitz actually mirror the bigger decisions which are being taken elsewhere.

Many people think they know the story of Auschwitz. It's the place where Jews were murdered. End of story. But for nearly the first year and a half of its operation, there were only a handful of Jews sent to Auschwitz. Its main purpose was to house Polish political prisoners and then Soviet prisoners of war. It had nothing to do with the mass extermination program.



But you can only begin to understand why it evolves into an extermination camp once you understand how it goes through this phase of doing something completely different.”

To view the series, including teaching guides and resources, [visit the PBS website](#)

APPENDIX A

South Carolina Survivor Testimonies Connected to Auschwitz

Some of the Holocaust survivors who settled in South Carolina were imprisoned at Auschwitz. For those who wish to incorporate local testimony into their teaching, below are some representative examples of SC survivors who mention Auschwitz in their oral testimonies. A full library of testimonies from survivors and liberators can be found at www.scholocaustcouncil.org



Ben Stern

Video Interview: [Part 1](#) | [Part 2](#)

Transcript: [Part 1](#) | [Part 2](#)

Discusses Auschwitz by name: Interview Pt. 1, 37:52 – 47:41

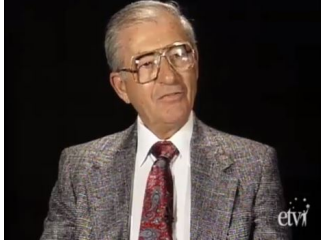


Jadzia Stern

Video Interview: [Part 1](#) | [Part 2](#)

Transcript: [Part 1](#) | [Part 2](#)

Discusses Auschwitz by name: Interview Pt. 1, 33:22 – 49:30



Felix Goldberg

[Video Interview](#)

[Transcript](#)

Discusses Auschwitz by name: 25:35 – 36:43



Joe Engel

[Video Interview](#)

[Transcript](#)

Please also see the documentary made about Joe Engel: [To Auschwitz and Back: The Joe Engel Story](#) (Director: Ron Small; Anchor Media Group)



Pincus Kolender

[Video Interview](#)

[Transcript](#)

Discusses Auschwitz by name: 12:00 – 35:58



Rudy Herz

Video Interview: [Part 1](#) | [Part 2](#) | [Part 3](#) | [Part 4](#)

Transcript: [Part 1](#) | [Part 2](#) | [Part 3](#) | [Part 4](#)

Discusses Auschwitz by Name: Interview Pt. 1, 47:51 – 1:00:23

APPENDIX B

Teaching about the long history of Jews in Europe

In order to for people to make sense of the Holocaust they must first understanding something about the long history of Jews in Europe, including the diversity of Jewish practices found there depending on the varying degrees of religious observance in different groups. Some Jews were assimilated into Western dress and behavior, such as in Germany and Amsterdam, and some were socially segregated due to their literal adherence to practices of dress, eating, worship, marriage, such as most shtetls in the Russian Pale of Settlement.

A useful resource for all ages to learn about different Jewish practices is [Projections of Life: Jewish Life Before World War II](#) produced by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. This film includes spliced together home movies prior to World War II made all over Europe, including the Soviet Union. This allows viewers to see Jews prior to the war and in footage made by other Jews.

A possible writing activity to use with students of all ages is a version of a “found poem.” Ask students to view a few of the movie clips to understand what filming a home movie looked like at the time and to learn a little about Jewish life in Europe. Then ask them to watch a few more clips, but this time they need to jot down words or images that strike them about the Jewish life they are seeing. Try to let them watch enough clips that they see the diversity present in upper class Jewish life, poverty, Jewish life in cities, Jewish life in villages, etc.

They should not include anything about the Holocaust because the aim is to think about what they are seeing in terms of the filmmakers preserving Jewish life before the war.

Then ask students to break into groups. They should read and reflect on the words they wrote down and compose a “found poem” together that describes Jewish life before the war

APPENDIX C

Victims of Nazi Racial Ideology

from the US Holocaust Memorial Museum’s [Holocaust Encyclopedia](#)

The Holocaust

The [Holocaust](#) is an event central to our understanding of western civilization, the nation state, modern bureaucratic society, and human nature. It was the premeditated mass murder of millions of innocent civilians. Driven by a racist ideology that regarded Jews as “parasitic vermin” worthy only of eradication, the Nazis implemented [genocide](#) on an unprecedented scale. They slated all of Europe’s Jews for destruction: the sick and the healthy, the rich and the poor, the religiously orthodox and converts to Christianity, the aged and the young, even infants.



The Margules children wearing Jewish badges

The Margules children wearing Jewish badges. Originally from Warsaw, the Margules family settled in [Paris](#) in the 1930s. Three of the children were deported and killed in 1942. Only one daughter (pictured at the bottom right) survived the war. Paris, France, 1941.

US Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Mirka Margules Weinberger

About two out of every three Jews living in Europe before the war were killed in the Holocaust. When World War II ended in 1945, six million European Jews were dead; more than one million of the victims were children. Even this [statistic](#) is misleading, because most of those who survived resided in areas of Europe not occupied by Germany during the war: eastern areas of the Soviet Union, Great Britain, Bulgaria, and neutral states like Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, and Sweden. Tens of thousands of Jews also survived in German-occupied Europe mostly in hiding or as prisoners in concentration camps until liberation. The Germans and their collaborators were relentless in hunting down and killing Jews in the areas of Europe that they controlled.

Much has been written about what took place during the era of the Holocaust and where, when, and how the Nazis carried out their murderous plans. To begin to comprehend the Nazis' actions, however, one must first consider and understand the theoretical underpinnings that led them to conceive of such plans in the first place. Examining the Nazi ideology of race partly explains this relentless commitment to the physical annihilation of the European Jews.

To access the Encyclopedia Entry on VICTIMS OF NAZI RACIAL IDEOLOGY, please click [here](#) to be taken to the Holocaust Museum's website

It provides information for students to discuss key critical thinking questions:

- How did Nazi antisemitism build on earlier and existing attitudes and beliefs?
- Why are labeling a minority as an enemy and segregation from society both considered as possible warning signs for genocide?
- How can knowledge of the events in Germany and Europe before the Nazis came to power help citizens today respond to threats of genocide and mass atrocity in the world?

APPENDIX D

Post-War Reflections on Auschwitz

In May 2019, Time Magazine published a story examining [Why Auschwitz plays such a central role in Holocaust remembrance](#). In it, historian Robert Jan Van Pelt says that, although Auschwitz is one of a dozen sites used as a Nazi Killing Center during the Holocaust, it has established a significant place in the public memory of the Holocaust. Auschwitz serves as the preeminent example of Holocaust brutality, modernization gone wrong, and murder. Yale Historian Timothy Snyder argues that Auschwitz has become a symbol of remembrance because there were actually survivors left to tell their stories, unlike killing centers such as Treblinka where only 67 people survived out of more than 90,000. Whatever the reason for its central place in contemporary memory, Auschwitz-Birkenau stands as an important site in both history and collective memory that scholars and ordinary citizens alike still discuss.

The US Holocaust Memorial Museum provides a resource called [Encountering Auschwitz](#) that discusses modern-day experiences attempting to make sense of the horror that took place at the camp.

VOICES FROM AUSCHWITZ

Because there were survivors from Auschwitz willing to tell their stories, their voices should become a part of our classroom lessons.

—BART STERN

So I was hiding out in the heap of dead bodies because in the last week when the crematoria didn't function at all, the bodies were just building up higher and higher. So there I was at nighttime, in the daytime I was roaming around in the camp, and this is where I actually survived, January 27, I was one of the very first, Birkenau was one of the very first camps being liberated. This was my, my survival chance.

—FRITZIE WEISS FRITZSHALL

The train arrived in the middle of the night, so we were greeted by very bright lights shining down on us. We were greeted by soldiers, SS men, as well as women. We were greeted by dogs and whips, by shouting and screaming, orders to try to empty the train, by confusion... There is no way to describe your first coming to Auschwitz.

—LILLY APPELBAUM LUBLIN MALNIK

And they said, "From now on you do not answer by your name. Your name is your number." And the delusion, the disappointment, the discouragement that I felt, I felt like I was not a human person anymore.

In 2015, CNN produced a documentary film [Voices of Auschwitz](#).



The South Carolina Council on the Holocaust (SCCH) was established in 1989 through a state legislative mandate. It operates in collaborative partnership with the state legislature and the SC Department of Education to promote awareness about the Holocaust and to honor the survivors and concentration camp liberators who call South Carolina home. To this end, the Council supports teacher training programs, special events that discuss Holocaust history, human rights, and genocide, and annual Holocaust commemorations around the state.

For information about teacher programs please visit our [Programs Page](#).

For information about our mini-grant program, please visit our [Grants Page](#).
