



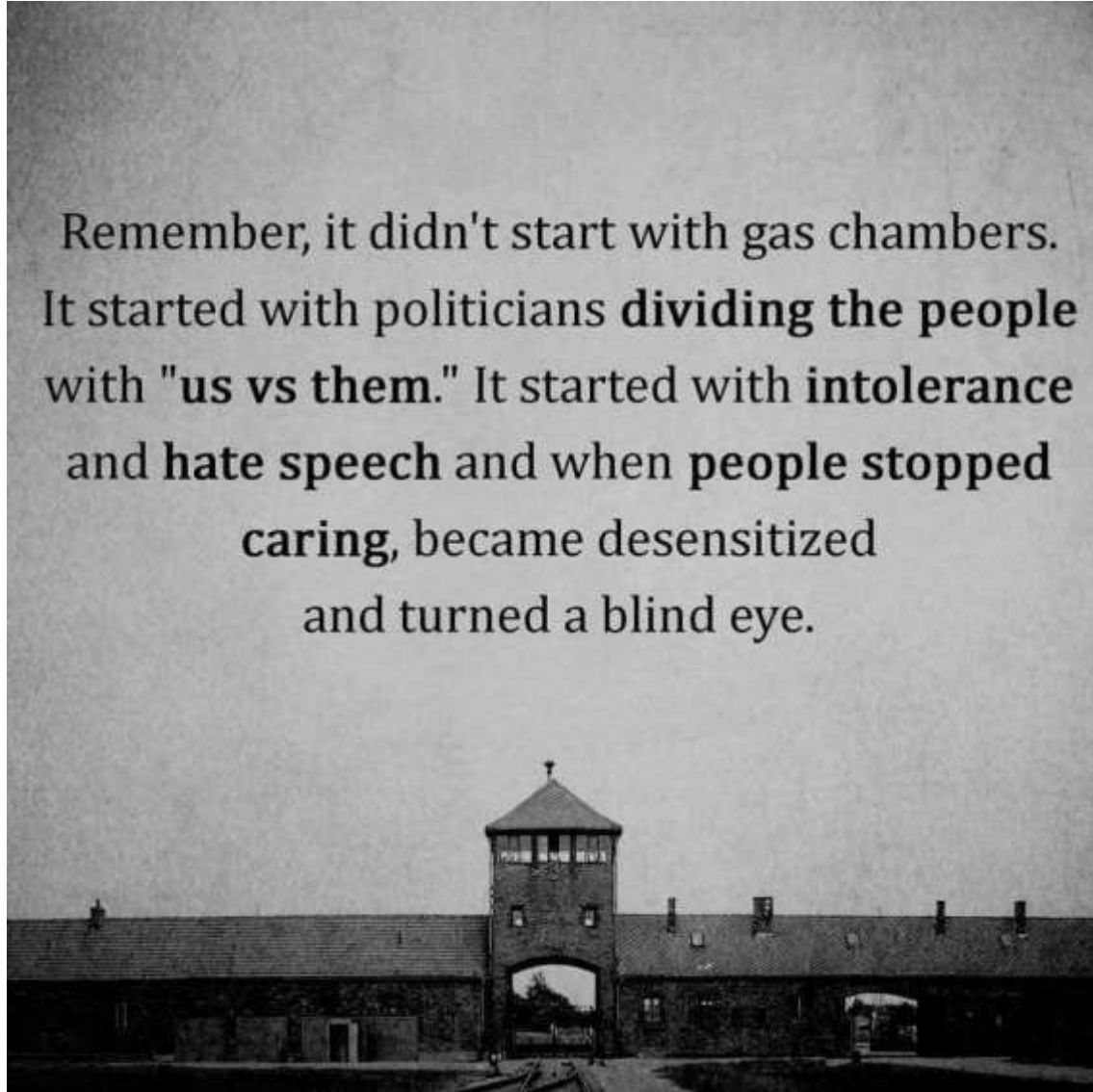
The Holocaust did not begin in the gas chambers... it began with words

Presentation to Trustees and Senior Team
Shelley Laskin & Shari Schwartz-Maltz

August 28, 2019



Remember, it didn't start with gas chambers.
It started with politicians **dividing the people**
with "**us vs them.**" It started with **intolerance**
and **hate speech** and when **people stopped**
caring, became desensitized
and turned a blind eye.

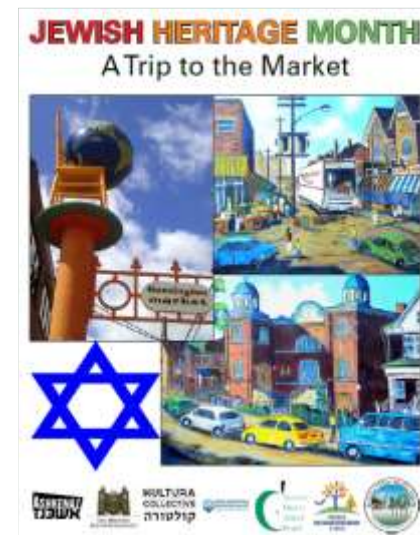


Presentation

- 1 Setting the Context – What led us here
- 2 ‘Leaders of Change’ Experiential Journey
- 3 Holocaust Education – What we are doing and next steps
- 4 Discussion / Questions

TDSB Jewish Heritage Committee (JHC)

- TDSB is proud to support Heritage Months so that students in our schools can be proud of their backgrounds and others can learn from them
- The TDSB's JHC is made up over 70 staff across every level of the system as well as Trustees
- Since its inception in 2015, JHC activities have always been focussed around teaching and learning



Liberation75

- 75 years after liberation from Nazi tyranny, this anniversary will be marked by remembering the victims, honouring the survivors, showcasing the future of Holocaust education, reflecting on antisemitism in the world, celebrating the role of the liberators, and committing to protecting freedom, diversity, human rights and inclusion
- This initiative is being supported by leading Holocaust education, genocide prevention, and human rights organizations in the world
- **TDSB is a participating sponsor** – as such, this year, the TDSB JHC is committed to Holocaust and genocide prevention education <http://www.liberation75.org>



The poster features the Liberation75 logo at the top, which consists of a stylized blue and yellow star with the number 75 inside. Below the logo is the text "LIBERATION75" and "United Gathering of Holocaust Survivors, Descendants, Educators and Friends". The main headline is "SAVE THE DATE!" in large blue letters. Below that is the tagline "The Future is Now: Holocaust Education in Times of Change" in orange and yellow. The poster lists two events: a "FREE Professional Development Symposium for Teachers" on June 1st, 2020, at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, and a "FREE Education Day for Students" on June 2nd, 2020. A list of featured organizations is on the right side, including the Anne Frank House, Azrieli Foundation, Canadian Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center, Canadian Jewish Holocaust Survivors and Descendants, Canadian Society for Yad Vashem, Canadian Museum for Human Rights, Centre for Holocaust Education and Scholarship at Carleton University, Echoes & Reflections, Facing History and Ourselves, Fighting Antisemitism Together (FAST), Montreal Holocaust Museum, Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre, Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, USC Shoah Foundation, Yad Vashem, and Zoryan Institute. The poster also includes the text "...and so many more!" and "REGISTER EARLY FOR THIS ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME EVENT! SPACE IS LIMITED!" and "REGISTRATION OPENS SEPTEMBER 10th, 2019".

LIBERATION75
United Gathering of Holocaust Survivors, Descendants, Educators and Friends

SAVE THE DATE!

The Future is Now:
Holocaust Education in Times of Change

Metro Toronto Convention Centre
South Building, 222 Bremner Boulevard

FREE Professional Development Symposium for Teachers

June 1st, 2020 4:30 pm – 7:30 pm
Dinner included!

FREE Education Day for Students

June 2nd, 2020 9:30 am – 2:30 pm
(Registration begins at 8:15 am!)
A full day of the world's best educational programming, created specifically for students of all knowledge levels (Grades 7 – 12)

FEATURING · interactive learning · film screenings · workshops · performances · presentations by acclaimed experts from around the world · testimonies and conversations with Holocaust survivors · explorations in technology and art - and more!

FEATURED ORGANIZATIONS

Anne Frank House
Azrieli Foundation
Canadian Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center
Canadian Jewish Holocaust Survivors and Descendants
Canadian Society for Yad Vashem
Canadian Museum for Human Rights
Centre for Holocaust Education and Scholarship at Carleton University
Echoes & Reflections
Facing History and Ourselves
Fighting Antisemitism Together (FAST)
Montreal Holocaust Museum
Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre
Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
USC Shoah Foundation
Yad Vashem
Zoryan Institute

...and so many more!

REGISTER EARLY FOR THIS ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME EVENT! SPACE IS LIMITED!

REGISTRATION OPENS SEPTEMBER 10th, 2019

Leaders of Change

- Because of our commitment to *Liberation75*, and our personal experiences, we applied for, and were accepted as part of the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem (CSYV) Scholarship Program (fully-funded), **'Leaders of Change'** joining leaders in education from across Canada to Berlin and Poland to interact with European Holocaust history in a personal, intense and experiential way
- **Our goal - through our students - to help build a more humane world**



The Holocaust

- The Holocaust began with Hitler's rise to power in January, 1933 and ended May 8, 1945 on VE Day (Victory in Europe) when the Allies of World War II formally accepted Nazi Germany's unconditional surrender
- During this time over 6 million Jews and millions of others (including Soviet prisoners of war, political prisoners, Polish people, people with disabilities, homosexuals, Sinti and Roma, Jehovah's Witnesses, Catholic Clergy, Eastern European intellectuals) were murdered by the Nazi's
- During this period over 5,000 Jewish communities were wiped out and 2 out of every 3 European Jews were killed
- Prior to the Holocaust there were 18M Jews world-wide; estimates of the current world Jewish population is 13M

It is true that not all the victims
were Jews, but all the Jews were
victims

- Elie Wiesel

The Journey



Jewish Life in Berlin



Stolperstein (Stumbling Stones)



Tiergartenstraße 4

Memorial for Victims of National Socialist "Euthanasia" Killings



Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe



Memorials to Homosexuals, Sinti and Roma



The 'Final Solution' of the Jewish Question

Land	Zahl
A. Altreich	131.800
Ostmark	43.700
Ostgebiete	420.000
Generalgouvernement	2.284.000
Bialystok	400.000
Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren	74.200
Estland - judenfrei -	
Lettland	3.500
Litauen	34.000
Belgien	43.000
Dänemark	5.600
Frankreich / Besetztes Gebiet	165.000
Unbesetztes Gebiet	700.000
Griechenland	69.600
Niederlande	160.800
Norwegen	1.300
B. Bulgarien	48.000
England	330.000
Finnland	2.300
Irland	4.000
Italien einschl. Sardinien	58.000
Albanien	200
Kroatien	40.000
Portugal	3.000
Rumänien einschl. Bessarabien	342.000
Schweden	8.000
Schweiz	18.000
Serbien	10.000
Slowakei	88.000
Spanien	6.000
Türkei (europ. Teil)	55.500
Ungarn	742.800
UdSSR	5.000.000
Ukraine	2.994.684
Weißrußland ausschl. Bialystok	446.484
Zusammen: über	11.000.000

K210405 372029



Grunewald Station



Radegast Station



Warsaw Ghetto Uprising



"Though it be to die, we will fight...
We will fight not for ourselves but for future generations...
Although we will not survive to see it,
our murderers will pay for their crimes
after we are gone. And our deeds will live forever."
IZMAK KATZNELSON



Polin Museum



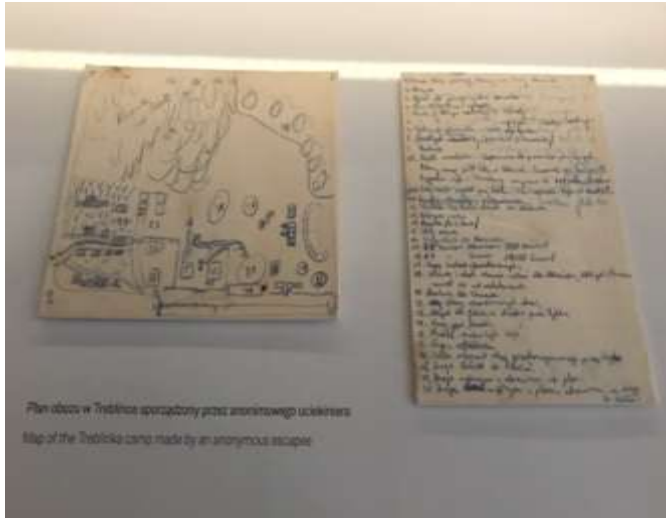
1000 Years of Polish Jews



The Zookeeper's Wife



The Ringelblum Archives – Importance of Documenting



Plan obozu w Treblince sporządzony przez anonimowego uciekiniera
Map of the Treblinka camp made by an anonymous escapee



Gela Seksztajn's drawing of her daughter Margolit, of whom she writes in her testament:
I do not ask for praise, only for me and my daughter to be remembered. This talented little girl is named Margolit Lichtensztejn. ...

Gela Seksztajn, „Śpiąca dziewczynka”,
kredka na papierze

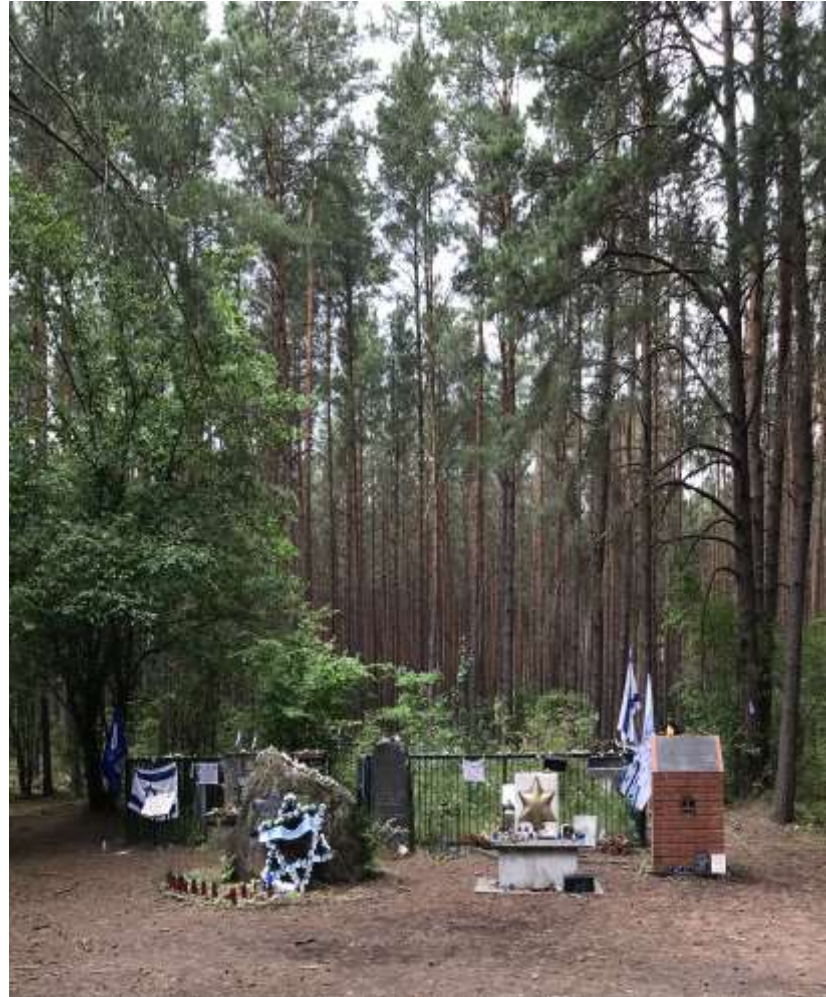
Gela Seksztajn, "Sleeping Girl,"
chalk on paper



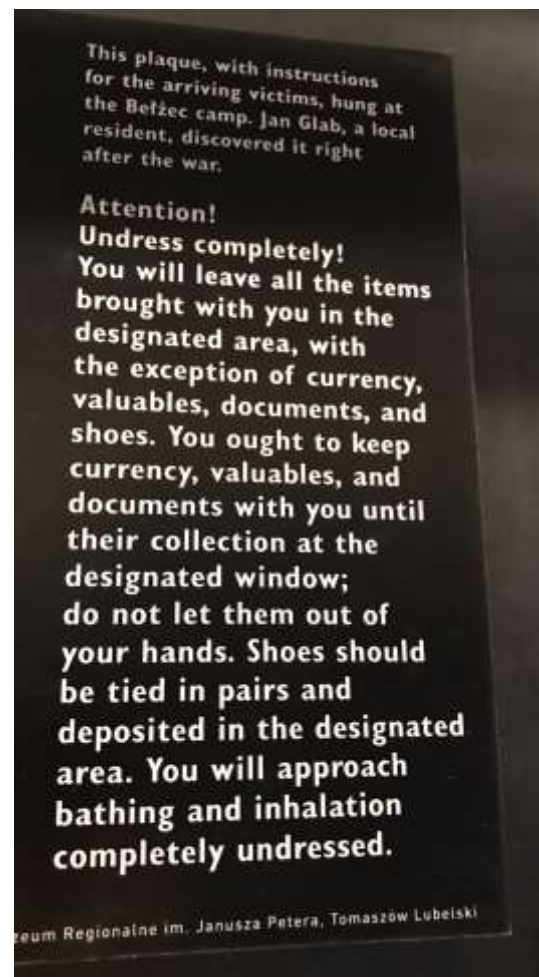
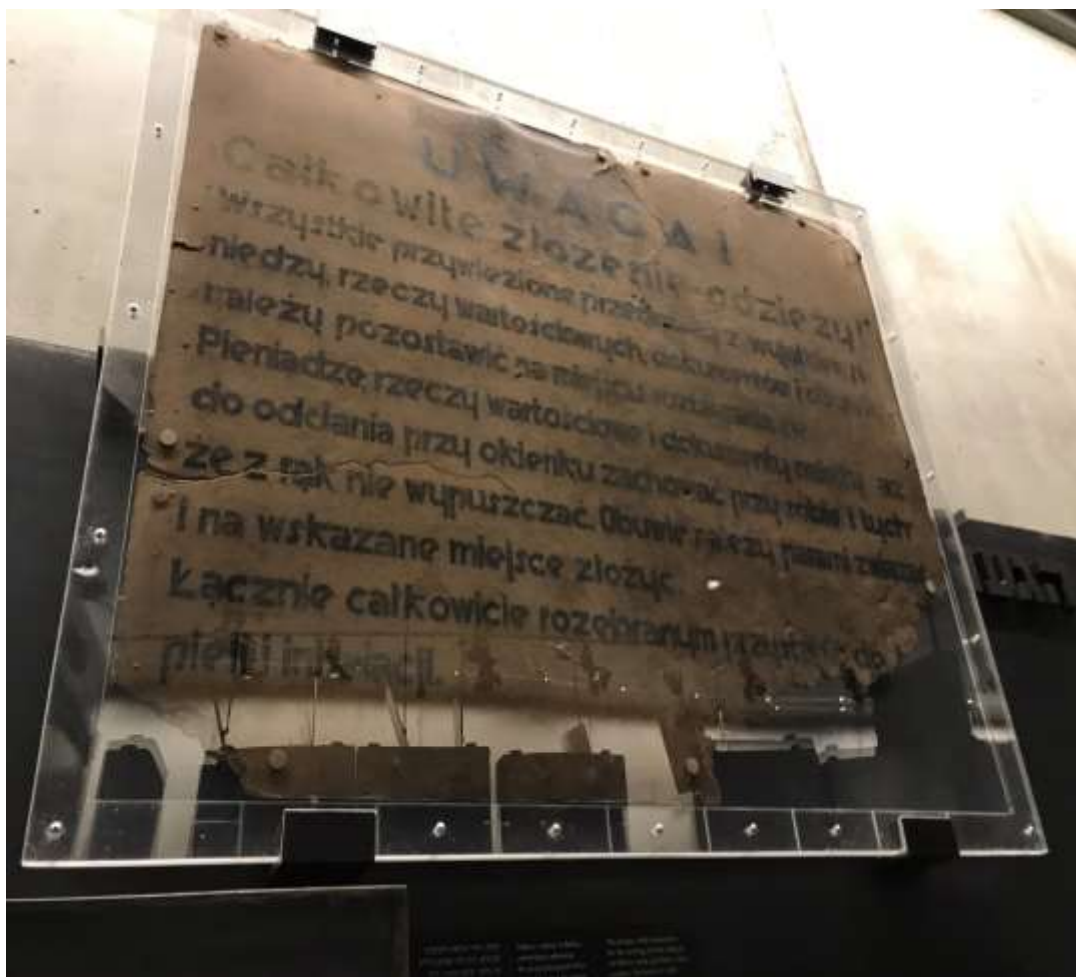
Treblinka – Killing Centre



Lopuchowa Forest



Bełżec Killing Centre



Bełżec – Deception

Concrete number plaques most probably issued to the Bełżec victims as a deposit slip for the left personal valuables before the victims entered gas chamber, found at the Bełżec site during the archeological surveys of 1997-2000.



Bełżec – Remembrance



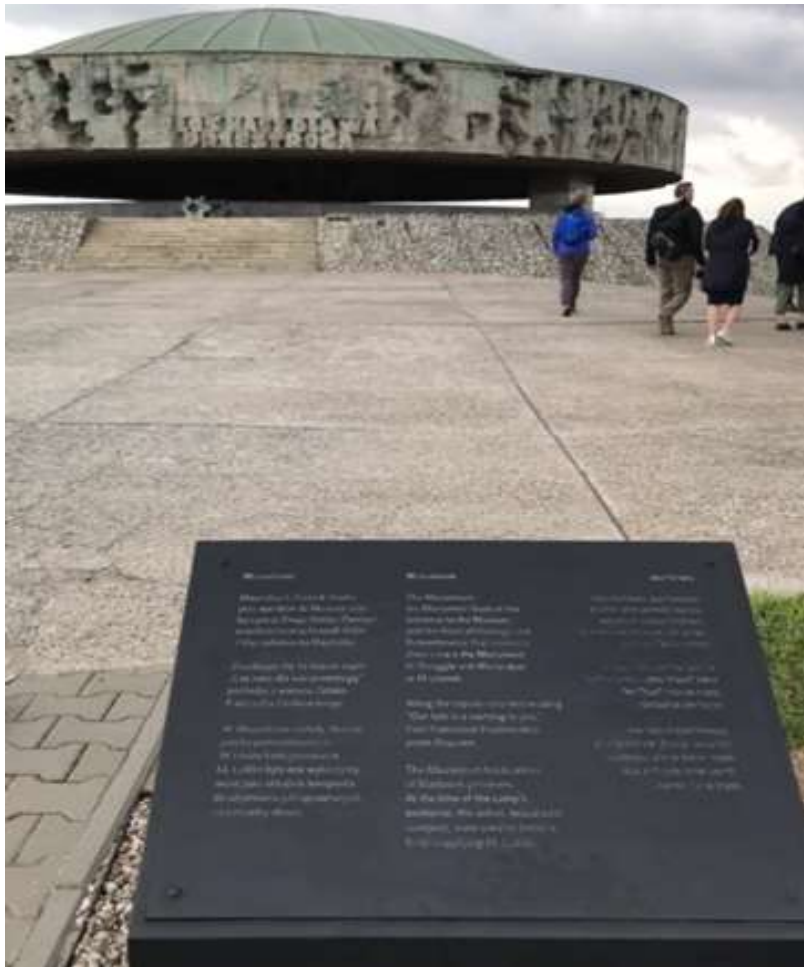
Majdanek – Gas Chambers



Majdanek - Barracks



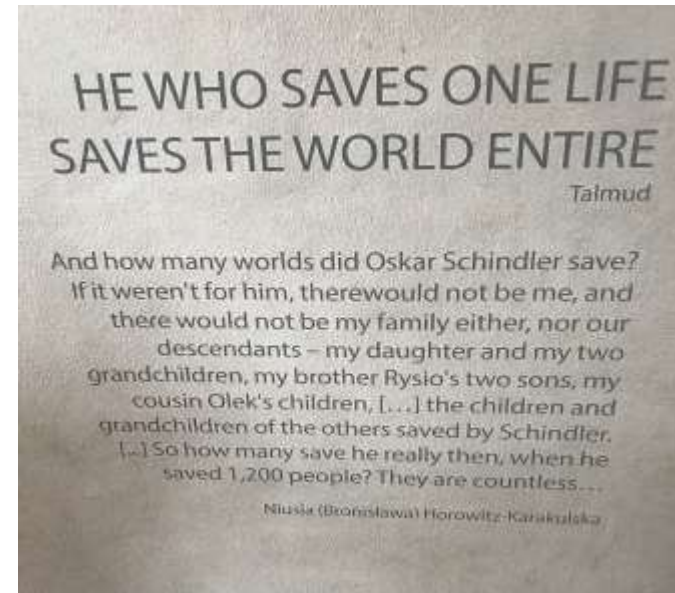
Majdanek - Life in Ashes



Righteous Among Nations



Oskar Schindler's Factory - Płaszów



From all over Europe - Murdered at Auschwitz



KL AUSCHWITZ WAS THE LARGEST NAZI GERMAN CONCENTRATION CAMP AND SINCE 1942 ALSO MASS EXTERMINATION CENTRE FOR JEWS.
IN THE YEARS 1940-1945, THE NAZIS DEPORTED AT LEAST 1,300,000 PEOPLE TO AUSCHWITZ:

- 1,100,000 JEWS,
- 140,000-150,000 POLES,
- 23,000 ROMA /GYPSIES/,
- 15,000 SOVIET PRISONERS OF WAR,
- 25,000 PRISONERS FROM OTHER ETHNIC GROUPS.

1,100,000 OF THESE PEOPLE DIED IN AUSCHWITZ. APPROXIMATELY 90% OF THE VICTIMS WERE JEWS. THE SS MURDERED THE MAJORITY OF THEM IN THE GAS CHAMBERS.



“Work Sets You Free”



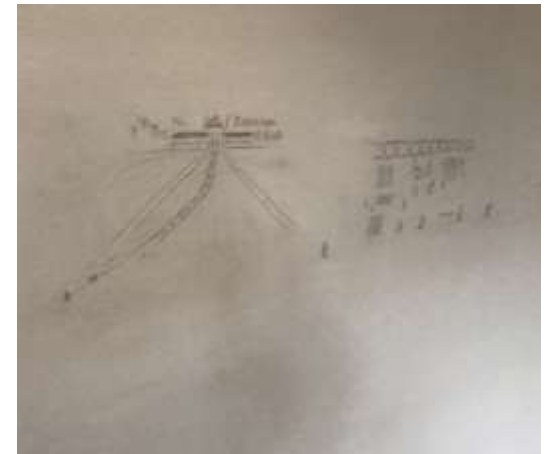
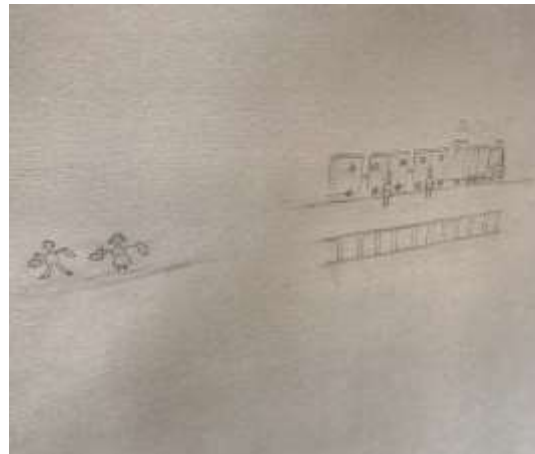
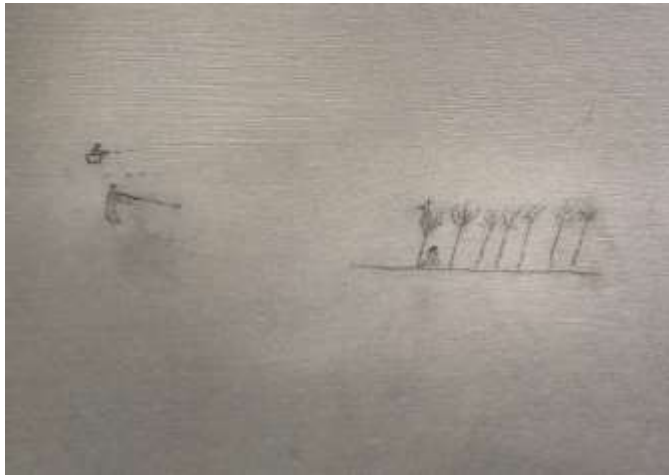
Plundered Belongings...



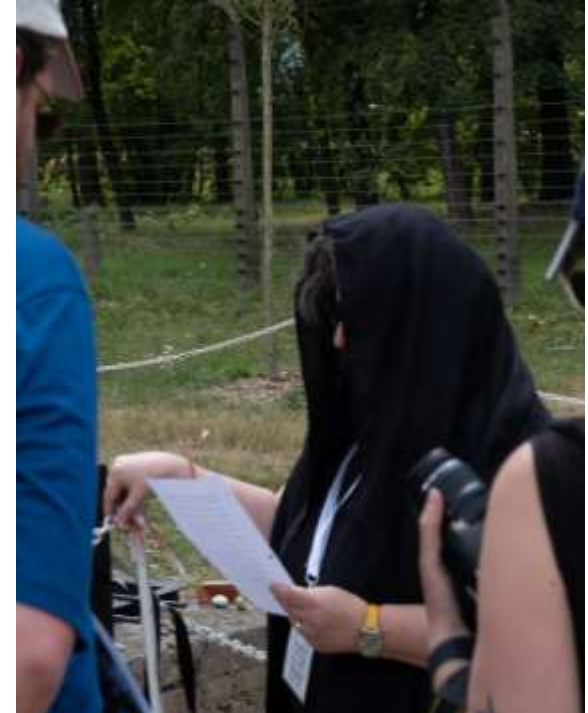
'Canada'



1,500,000 Jewish Children Murdered



Remembering...



Every Person has a Name



... | **Laskin, Abram**, Feodosiya, Russia (USSR), Murdered in Feodosiya, Russia (USSR), Place of death unknown | **Laskin, Azriel**, 1895, Jelgava, Latvia, Murdered in Dachau | **Laskin, Bunia**, Jelgava, Latvia, Murdered in Stutthof, Danzig | **Laskin, Dvora**, Darshunishok, Lithuania, Murdered in Dachau | **Laskin, I**, 1895, Novoaleksandrovsk, Russia (USSR), Murdered in Novoaleksandrovsk, Russia (USSR) | **Laskin, Isaak**, 1906, Odessa, Ukraine (USSR), Place of death unknown | **Laskin, Israel**, 1885, Jelgava, Latvia, 1895, Mitau, Latvia, Murdered in Dachau | **Laskin, Izya**, Shemberovo, Belorussia (USSR), Place of death unknown | **Laskin, Khaim**, Kaunas, Lithuania, Murdered in Kaufering, Germany | **Laskin, Mark**, 1937, Orsha, Belorussia (USSR), Place of death unknown | **Laskin, Masha**, Lubcz, Poland, Place of death unknown | **Laskin, Meyer**, Starodub, Russia (USSR), Murdered in Starodub, Russia (USSR) | **Laskin, Moisel**, 7/9/1937, Orsha, Belorussia (USSR), Murdered in Vitebsk, Belorussia (USSR) | **Laskin, Rachel**, Lubcz, Poland, Place of death unknown | **Laskin, Rachela**, 15/4/1915, Lodz, Poland, Place of death unknown | **Laskin, Rivka**, Kaunas, Lithuania, Murdered in Kaunas | **Laskin, Sara**, Lubcz, Poland, Place of death unknown | **Laskin, Sara**, Zinkiv, Ukraine (USSR), Place of death unknown | **Laskin, V**, 1930, Novoaleksandrovsk, Russia (USSR), Murdered in Novoaleksandrovsk, Russia (USSR) | **Laskin, Veniamin**, 1894, Kronshtadt, Russia (USSR), Murdered in Ezel, Estonia | **Laskin, Yitzhak**, Lubcz, Poland, Place of death unknown | **Laskina, R**, 1893, Novoaleksandrovsk, Russia (USSR), Murdered in Novoaleksandrovsk, Russia (USSR)

Extent of the Horror...

- <https://youtu.be/449ZOWbUkf0>
- Drone Video of Auschwitz Remains Reveals the Extent of Horror of Holocaust - In 2016, the BBC received permission from the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum to fly a drone over the camp, giving people a bird's eye view of the place where over 1.1 million men, women, and children lost their lives from 1942 to 1945



Universality of “Hate”

- Hate speech has been normalized – rhetoric used by those in power contributes to the growing climate of resentment and hatred of the ‘other’, the ‘outsider’, the ‘stranger’... ***we have been here before***
- Antidote – human kindness, empathy, compassion
- The importance of the “**upstander**” as opposed to the “bystander” – an upstander is defined as someone who recognizes when something is wrong and acts to make it right.
- ***"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."*** – Anne Frank

Signs of Antisemitism... Everywhere



- Rise of antisemitic incidents – in Europe and at home
- According to the most recent B'Nai Brith's Annual Audit of Antisemitic Incidents, 2018 saw a 16.5% increase with 2,041 recorded incidents compared to 1,752 incidents in 2017
- ***“No human race is superior; no religious faith is inferior. All collective judgments are wrong. Only racists make them.” – Elie Wiesel***

Lessons from the Holocaust

- Lesson 1: The Importance of Holocaust Remembrance –
The Responsibility of Memory
- Lesson 2: The Danger of State-Sanctioned Incitement to Hatred and Genocide – **The Responsibility to Prevent**
- Lesson 3: The Danger of Silence, The Consequences of Indifference –
The Responsibility to Protect
- Lesson 4: Combating Mass Atrocity and the Culture of Impunity –
The Responsibility to Bring War Criminals to Justice
- Lesson 5: The Trahison des Clercs –
The Responsibility to Talk Truth to Power
- Lesson 6: Holocaust Remembrance –
The Responsibility to Educate
- Lesson 7: The Vulnerability of the Powerless –
The Protection of the Vulnerable as the Test of a Just Society

[7 Lessons from the Holocaust](#) by Irwin Cotler (Jerusalem Post, January 30, 2011)

The Need for Holocaust Education

- **1 in 5** young Canadians either hasn't heard of the Holocaust or isn't sure what it was
- **2/3** of those surveyed either didn't know how many Jews were murdered or greatly underestimated the number
- **Nearly 1/2** of the respondents could not name a single concentration camp
- **Few** Canadians believe there are many neo-Nazis in Canada today
- But... **82% of respondents believe all students should learn about the Holocaust in school**, while 85% said it is important to keep teaching about the Holocaust so that it does not happen again.

"I swore never to be silent whenever and wherever human beings endure suffering and humiliation.
We must always take sides.

Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented.
Sometimes we must interfere. When human lives are endangered, when human dignity is in jeopardy,
national borders and sensitivities become irrelevant.

Wherever men and women are persecuted because of their race, religion, or political views,
that place must - at that moment - become the center of the universe."

Elie Wiesel

Hope... not just death

- Graphically recounting the Holocaust's horrors — stories of gas chambers, crematoriums, death camps, sadistic SS guards, mass graves — is not the only way to honor the dead and educate the living...
- ***"You cannot just say one way. You have to mention the horrors and you also have to point out the people among us who could not be destroyed. We maintained our humane feelings and our desire to help others."*** - [Arthur B. Shostak](#), a retired sociologist from Philadelphia's Drexel University who advises curators

Surviving and Thriving... one Story



Photo Credit – CBC



Photo Credit – National Post

Hedy Bohm... from retelling her story as a survivor of Auschwitz to students at Birchmount Collegiate... to being honoured at their Prom... gave testimony against Oskar Groening, a German SS guard known as the “Bookkeeper of Auschwitz” who was convicted in 2015 of being an accessory to the murder of 300,000 Hungarian Jews... two of which were Hedy’s parents

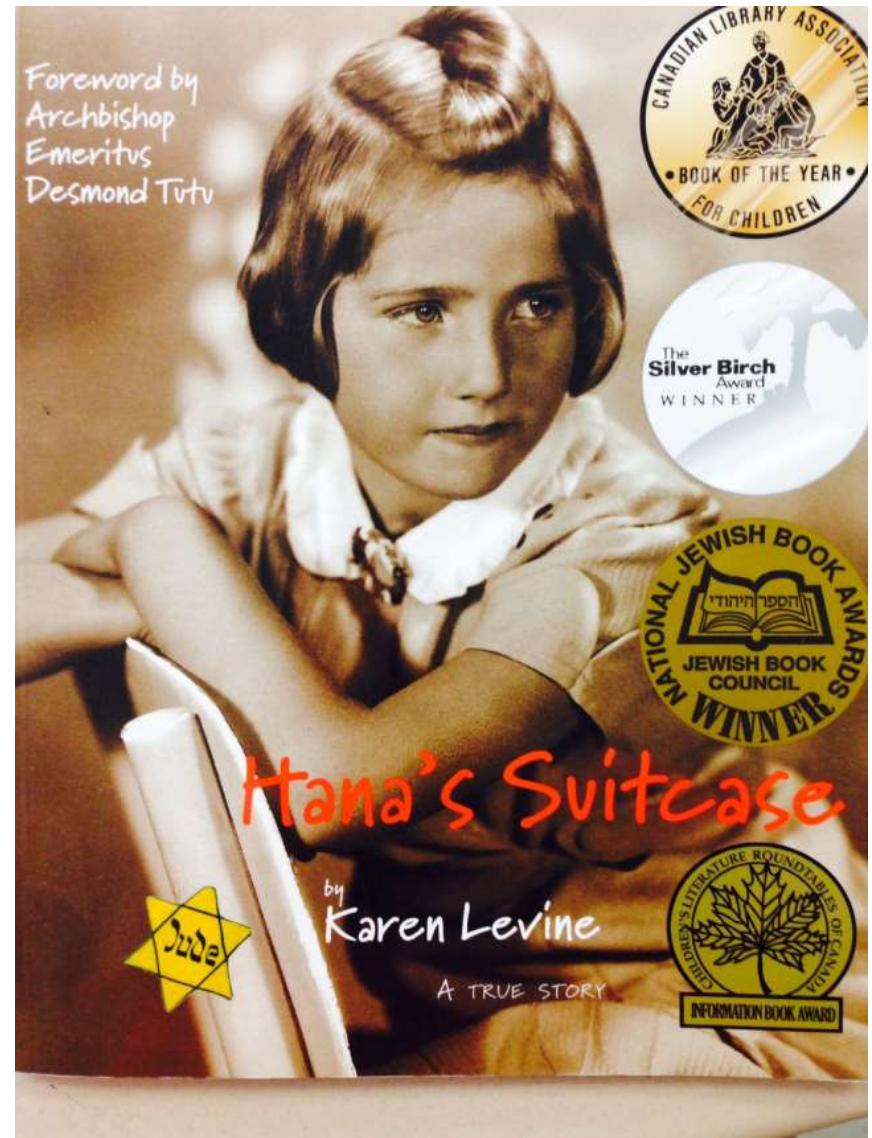
CSYV Holocaust Memorial Site



- The Canadian Society for Yad Vashem (CSYV) Holocaust Memorial Site in Earl Bales Park stands at the heart of CSYV's mission to educate Canadians about the Holocaust by sharing the facts and universal lessons of the Shoah through its educational and commemorative activities
- <https://yadvashem.ca/>

Middle School Literacy Project: “Hana’s Suitcase”

- More book awards than any other children’s book in Canada
- First school board to do “One Book Event”
- Deep discount by publisher
- Lesson plans to be provided to teachers
- Multiple author visits, visit to Canada by curator from Japan, artifacts from Hana’s niece who lives in Toronto





Secondary School Film Project: “The Last Goodbye”

- Toronto survivor return to Majdanek
- USC/Spielberg/Shoah Foundation has selected TDSB as first Board in the world to roll out film and accompanying educational materials
- Shoah Foundation to waive all licensing fees for the year and contract a VR firm

Liberation75 **Ambassadors**

- 75 TDSB Grade 11 students from diverse backgrounds and multiple schools to visit Berlin and Poland summer 2020
- Spread the learning in our high schools beginning September 2020



Never Again is Now

If we held 1 minute of silence for every victim of the Holocaust then we would be silent for eleven and a half years.



Always remember, never forget.

Thank You!

A REALLY BIG
THANK YOU

WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOUR SUPPORT.
WITH HEARTFELT GRATITUDE.