

Avoiding the Complex History, Simple Answer Syndrome: A Lesson Plan for Providing Depth and Analysis in the High School History Classroom

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THE UNITED STATES Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) identifies several key methodological considerations (teaching guidelines) teachers should use as they develop and implement Holocaust units of study. One such guideline states that Holocaust curricula should “Avoid simple answers to complex history.”¹ While the museum’s guidelines apply specifically to teaching about the Holocaust, the same prescription should be applied to the teaching of all history. Much research concludes, however, that depth and analysis are missing from most high school history courses, resulting in what may be called the “complex history, simple answer syndrome.”

Several causes of this problem have been suggested. Ravitch holds that the lack of depth that plagues most high school history textbooks is a major problem, contending that “there seems to be something in the very nature of today’s textbooks that blunts the edges of events and strips from the narrative whatever is lively, adventurous, and exciting.”² Because “90 percent of all classroom instruction in social studies is regulated by textbooks”³ that are bland “catalogues of factual material..., not sagas peopled with heroic and remarkable individuals engaged in exciting and momentous events,”⁴ the study of history becomes “a mad rush through time and space”⁵ during which the superficial treatment of most topics is the rule rather than the exception.

This author's detailed study of the coverage of the Holocaust in the world history and United States history textbooks that are most frequently used in today's American high schools describes many of the problems associated with textbook-driven social studies instruction on the topic.⁶ The four world history and four United States history textbooks reviewed fail to define the Holocaust adequately; do not contextualize the Holocaust within the umbrella framework provided by World War II; propose a deterministic view of Holocaust history; present a simplistic view of the topic; contain inaccurate factual and inferential statements; outline the *what* but not the *why* of the Holocaust; fail to establish the critical roles (e.g., perpetrators, victims, bystanders, rescuers, and resisters) played by individuals during the event;⁷ do not present the critical topic of antisemitism⁸ in both historical (e.g., religious and cultural) and modern (e.g., racial) contexts; overemphasize Hitler's role; and fail to use the term "race" properly when discussing Nazi ideology. As a result, students who use these textbooks often develop faulty perceptions of the Holocaust while missing the opportunity to consider a complex historical topic at anything but the most superficial level.

Problems that result from the use of high school history textbooks are compounded by the inadequate instruction in both historical content and pedagogy that many high school teachers receive while in college. Burson thus holds that "If a high school history teacher graduates ill-educated students, his history and education professors must accept part of the responsibility."⁹ Because the majority of high school history teachers did not major in the discipline,¹⁰ a lack of substantial and sophisticated content knowledge forces them to provide surface-level instruction, because "You can't teach what you don't know."

The lack of knowledge that many teachers have about Holocaust history serves as an example of the general situation discussed above. An extensive survey of teachers who include the Holocaust in the curricula of their high school history courses reveals that "Twice as many teachers cited their own high school coursework as a source of Holocaust knowledge, compared with professional development (52 percent and 23 percent, respectively)."¹¹ Given that much of that instruction was probably textbook driven and because many teachers indicate that they use textbooks to build their personal knowledge of the Holocaust—a higher figure than those who have participated in formal training about the event (e.g., graduate coursework, professional development, and/or other sources of content and pedagogical mastery)¹²—a self-perpetuating situation is in place.

The teaching approaches used in many high school history courses compound this situation. For example, the lecture method that continues to dominate high school history courses forces each student to become

“a passive receiver of more information than one could ever hope to comprehend, analyze, and encode.”¹³ Combining such pedagogy with superficially written textbooks that are designed to cover as many topics as possible within a limited amount of space results in history courses that are “deficient in themes and depth,”¹⁴ thus providing few opportunities for students to engage in meaningful, rigorous debate.¹⁵ As a result, the typical high school history course becomes a “breathless rush from point to point” that is “fatal to rigorous thinking.”¹⁶ It should not be surprising, therefore, that many students view the study of history as meaningless and irrelevant to their daily lives¹⁷ because “The ‘metadiscourse,’ or suggestions of judgment, points of emphasis, doubts, and uncertainty are absent”¹⁸ in the typical textbook-driven high school history course.

Thus, a compelling argument can be made that students will be better served by being given opportunities to confront complex historical situations on multiple levels than by continuing to participate in traditionally structured courses that may be described as being “history on roller skates” or “a mile wide and an inch deep.” Examining history from the perspective of investigators who wrestle with involved scenarios for which no simple answers exist, or from which no obvious conclusions can be drawn, allows students to understand the historiographic process and the complex nature of historical events, while gaining valuable practice in applying analytical and critical thinking skills. This paper provides a lesson plan that illustrates the application of such higher-order thinking processes to a specific historical topic.

Historical Context of the Lesson Plan

This discussion expands a lesson plan that is found on the USHMM’s website (www.ushmm.org). It is based on a question that is frequently asked by students as they study the Holocaust: “Why didn’t the Jews leave Germany?”

An overview of the situation involved will provide historical contextualization for the lesson plan. Circumstances affecting Jews varied greatly from place to place across Europe during the late 1800s and early 1900s. For example, open and sometimes violent antisemitism was common in Eastern Europe, as can be seen in the frequent occurrence of pogroms in the Russian Empire (1881-1883, 1903, 1905-1906).¹⁹ From the legal perspective, the passage of openly antisemitic laws in the newly reconstituted Poland in the years following World War I made it clear that “The Jews were held responsible for every calamity that beset the nation.”²⁰ As a result, Jews in Eastern Europe harbored few illusions about the precarious nature of their existence.

This environment was not matched in Western Europe. The Enlightenment, emancipation, political liberalism, and the emergence of the modern capitalist state brought sweeping changes in the social order, leading to a situation in which “It would seem that anti-Jewish prejudice in Central and Western Europe should have ended when it became clear that industrialism had no religion and that progress required the energies and abilities of all... Increasingly, Jews entered the political and economic fabric of Western society.”²¹ While some factions in Western Europe opposed this trend, “their denunciations found few echoes and the wrenching Dreyfus trial in France was viewed by many as the final gasp of a briefly revived anti-Semitism”²² because the eventual repudiation of the charges levied against Dreyfus “was viewed by liberals everywhere as symbolic of the modern attitude of decency toward all. The continued anti-Semitism in Russia and Poland was seen as a symptom of the benighted Slavic states. For Western Europe, assimilation seemed the key to an ancient enigma.”²³ It appeared, therefore, that the coming of emancipation, giving full (or nearly full) legal status to Jews in many Western European countries, should have ended “the Jewish problem” once and for all.

The situation in the German Empire prior to World War I illustrates the complex nature of this process. Examples of social and economic exclusion still existed, to be sure, but the promise of legal equality led many Jews in Germany to view their group as “another German tribe, like the Bavarians or the Saxons, albeit of a different religion.”²⁴ Focusing on the egalitarian social order that seemed to be developing, many Jews in Germany were drawn to Reform Judaism, a movement that redefined Judaism in modern terms: henceforth, being a Jew in Germany would have a religious rather than a national connotation.²⁵ Thus, one could be both a Jew and a German or, perhaps more cogently, a Jewish German, *a German who happened to be a Jew*. Given this context, few people saw the potential danger involved in the concurrent rise of racial antisemitism, a new phenomenon that defined Jews in terms of biology rather than religious belief or social practice. In time, this new form of antisemitism would lead to annihilation, the final phase of Hilberg’s three-tiered paradigm of anti-Jewish behavior.²⁶

The turbulence that plagued Weimar Germany during the 1920s and early 1930s complicated the situation in which Jewish Germans found themselves. They thought that their fighting and dying in defense of the Fatherland during World War I demonstrated their loyalty to Germany and trusted that full legal equality would be achieved in the democratic nation that had emerged from the war. However, the debilitating economic, political, and social problems that surfaced in Germany in the 1920s led to the emergence of extreme political factions from both ends of the political spectrum. In this context, the fact that anti-democratic right

wing opponents of the Weimar government saw it as being “Jewified”²⁷ and decadent would become critically important.²⁸ In addition, Jews were prominent in highly visible professions (e.g., entertainment, journalism, law, and retail ownership), thus giving credibility, however spurious, to long-held beliefs about the purported Jewish domination of the nation’s economic and cultural life.²⁹

Jewish and non-Jewish Germans alike experienced both unprecedented freedom and previously unimagined political and economic instability during the Weimar Era.³⁰ For Jews, however, an added danger existed within this odd dichotomy; old prejudices were poised and ready, waiting for an opportunity to resurface. Recognizing the existence of this undercurrent within German society, the emerging Nazi Party soon realized that considerable political success might be achieved by building its entire political agenda on one issue, antisemitism.³¹

The naivety of Jewish Germans, many of whom loved Germany and considered themselves to be fully German, now became a critical factor affecting how they evaluated their situation relative to the Nazi Party’s growing influence in the country. Nazi propaganda was bothersome, to be sure, but many Jewish Germans reasoned that most Germans were too cultured, too sophisticated, and too civilized to succumb to such nonsense. If, by some chance, the Nazis did come to power, the rule of law would surely curtail their activities. For most Jewish Germans, therefore, any discussion of emigrating was countered with a “Be strong, be patient, it will pass” approach to the indignities that were being endured.³² Few people could imagine even a fraction of what was to come.

We now turn to the situation regarding emigration as it evolved from 1933-1938. Approximately 525,000 Jews lived in Germany when Hitler became chancellor in January 1933.³³ From 1933-1935, increasing pressures placed on Jewish Germans by the Nazi regime began to marginalize their legal and economic position in society, causing many Jews to wonder, perhaps all too vaguely, if they had a future in Germany. The enactment of the Nuremberg Laws (September 1935), which disemancipated the Jews through a legal process,³⁴ caused many Jews to redefine their status in Germany. They were now *German Jews* (Jews who happened to live in Germany) instead of *Jewish Germans* (Germans who happened to be Jews). As a result, rapidly increasing numbers of German Jews began to consider emigration as a viable and perhaps even necessary option.³⁵

Over time, the Nazi regime accelerated and intensified its use of legal and governmental pressures on German Jews in order to implement “forced emigration,” a policy through which the government made it increasingly difficult for Jews to live in the Reich. As a result, approximately 25% of Germany’s Jews had emigrated more-or-less voluntarily by the end of

1937.³⁶ In March 1938, however, the *Anschluss* brought 185,000 Austrian Jews under Nazi control.³⁷ Within a few months, the relative rate of Jewish emigration from Austria far exceeded similar movement from Germany, a circumstance resulting from the fact that “The persecution in Austria, particularly in Vienna, outpaced that in the Reich. Public humiliation was more blatant and sadistic; expropriation better organized; forced emigration more rapid. The Austrians... seemed more avid for anti-Jewish action than the citizens of what became the Old Reich.”³⁸ Encouraged by the success of strident anti-Jewish policies in Austria, the Nazi regime soon intensified its persecutions in Germany proper. For example, 1,500 Jews labeled as antisocials were sent to KZ Buchenwald in June 1938,³⁹ the same month in which members of the Hitler Youth participated in a wave of vandalism against Jewish-owned shops in Berlin.⁴⁰ Despite some reluctance to offend the sensibilities of foreign governments and the international press, the Nazi government continued to implement policies designed to force Jews from German life. The long-term goal of such policies was stated clearly by Goebbels in the following diary entry dated July 24, 1938: “The main thing is that the Jews [i.e., all German Jews as a collective unit] be pushed out. Within ten years they must be removed from Germany.”⁴¹

Despite the evolution of the regime’s anti-Jewish persecutions, however, emigrating remained a problematic course of action for many German Jews. What has been called “the emigration quandary”⁴² involved such complicated factors as varying economic situations faced by rural and urban Jews; divergent gender-based perspectives and approaches; and the sense that leaving might be an act of betrayal. In fact, this latter view was expressed by none other than the famed Rabbi Leo Baeck when he said, “I will go, when I am the last Jew alive in Germany.”⁴³ Perhaps more importantly, a sense that the current troubles could be endured continued to exist; thus, one woman summarized the feelings of many German Jews when she said, “[we] saw it getting worse. But until 1939, nobody in our circles believed it would lead to an end [of German Jewry].”⁴⁴

Despite an ongoing reluctance on the part of many German Jews to decide that it was time to leave, the pace of emigration continued to accelerate during the late 1930s; this was especially evident after the *Kristallnacht* (November 1938).⁴⁵ As a result, more than 400,000 German and Austrian Jews had emigrated by the outbreak of World War II. Primary places of immigration included France, Belgium, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, China (Shanghai), Palestine, South Africa, South America, and the United States.⁴⁶

The possibility of emigration diminished rapidly, however, as World War II approached. Complicated German emigration regulations coupled with restrictive immigration policies enacted by most nations around the

world, as evidenced by attitudes expressed at the Evian Conference (July 1938),⁴⁷ made it increasingly difficult for would-be refugees to leave the Reich.⁴⁸ In the United States, for example, public opinion surveys showed that 95% of those polled disapproved of Nazi policies toward German Jews; however, only 9% favored increasing immigration quotas. In particular, American Jews were ambivalent about what the country's response to the plight of German and Austrian Jews should be. On one hand, they wanted to help; on the other, the increasingly hostile strain of antisemitism that was evolving in the United States made them hesitant to press for anything approaching an "open door policy" that would help Jews who were suffering under the Nazi regime.⁴⁹

A similar disconnect existed in government policies in the United States. Entry regulations were liberalized in 1937 and 1938, but the immigration quotas for German and Austrian refugees were not filled in either year.⁵⁰ In addition, the Wagner-Rogers Child Refugee Bill (1938) was rejected by the Senate,⁵¹ and the well-known case of the *St. Louis* (May-June 1939) further illustrates the closing of the window of opportunity that would-be refugees encountered.⁵² Thus, the German Foreign Office could gloat that "Since in many countries it was recently regarded as wholly incomprehensible why Germany did not want to preserve in its population an element like the Jews...it appears astounding that countries seem in no way anxious to make use of those elements themselves now that the opportunity offers."⁵³ While emigration from the Reich (including Austria) peaked in 1939 with the departure of more than 120,000 Jews,⁵⁴ tens of thousands more were unable to leave because of policies implemented by the German government as well as dozens of countries throughout the world. The start of World War II in September 1939 brought a dramatic reduction in emigration, which would virtually halt as the war expanded to include much of the European continent. Any German or Austrian Jew who had not emigrated would soon be engulfed by the Final Solution.

A Lesson Plan for Confronting Historical Complexity

General Comments

The goal of this lesson plan is two-fold: 1) to provide students with factual knowledge about Jewish emigration from Germany during the Nazi era; and 2) to complicate student thinking about that emigration, thus fostering analytical and critical thinking processes that will allow students to consider historical events in increasingly sophisticated ways.⁵⁵ The lesson plan is designed to allow students to move beyond the state of being "passive receivers of knowledge" by a) constructing critical questions and b) examining data that will allow them to consider those questions while

developing an appreciation for the complexity that is central to many historical situations. This lesson plan will likely take two or three class periods to complete.

The documents used in this lesson plan may be found on the USHMM's website. Access the main site at www.ushmm.org and take the path to the materials by clicking on the following internal links: 1) Education; 2) For Teachers; and 3) Online Teacher Workshop. Scroll down the Online Teacher Workshop page and click the link under Sample Lessons. The Sample Lesson page includes different historical questions for students to explore. Scroll down to "2. Why didn't they all leave?" to find text that introduces the lesson plan, a map image, and two handouts ("Documentation Required for Emigration from Germany" and "Documentation Required for Immigration Visas to Enter the United States").

Step One

Students should first be introduced to factual content regarding Jewish emigration from Germany. Reference should be made to the map found at USHMM's website, "Jewish Emigration from Europe, 1933-1940."⁵⁶ The article titled "Refugees" (found in the Holocaust Encyclopedia on the museum's website) may be used to provide necessary historical context and background.

Step Two

Having learned details regarding Jewish emigration from the Reich, including the fact that many Jews did leave Germany prior to 1939, students engage in a brainstorming session that develops questions focusing on the following themes: 1) "What would be involved in emigrating from Germany?" and 2) "What would be involved in immigrating to another country?" Students may find it helpful to organize data based on these two questions in a format that allows them to conduct a point/counterpoint consideration of their findings. The website's text suggests some of the questions that students might consider and notes several critical teaching points that should be stressed in guiding students through the lesson plan. Students will develop a broad range of questions that might include such items as: 1) What would you do with your property?; 2) What would you do if Grandma wouldn't leave?; 3) What would you do with your pets?; 4) How would you decide where to go?; 5) How would you decide what to take with you?; 6) How would you pay for transportation?; 7) How would you function in a country whose language, laws, and customs were unfamiliar to you?; and 8) What would you do for a job in your new country? The number and range of questions that might be developed is almost limitless; as such, students will be engaged in a constructivist

activity during which an evolving discussion will be created as class sessions progress.

Other questions raised might include: 1) What level of persecution and threat, real and/or perceived, had to exist before people decided to leave?; 2) Why did some people decide to leave at early stages in the Nazi era (e.g., prior to 1935), while others never made that decision or made it after it was too late to emigrate?; and 3) Why didn't the logic of "a fire alarm in the night" take hold in the thinking of many German Jews? If not mentioned during the brainstorming session, the following questions should be added by the teacher: 1) What factors kept someone from leaving?; 2) What event or situation might push a person over the edge and make him/her decide that it was time to leave?; 3) What did someone have to do in order to leave Germany?; and 4) What did someone have to do in order to settle someplace else?⁵⁷ Practical, emotional, and psychological factors should all be considered as the questions are being examined.

Two concept maps, one focusing on emigration from Germany and the other centering on immigration into the United States, should be developed as questions are proposed. Links between various questions within each concept map as well as across the two concept maps should be noted as the questions continue to develop.

Step Three

Students are then given copies of the handouts "Documentation Required for Emigration from Germany" and "Documentation Required for Immigration Visas to Enter the United States" as well as a copy of the concept maps that have been developed. They should study the documents to determine how various regulations noted on the handouts align with the questions that have been developed. Additional questions that develop during the discussion should be added to the concept maps. Students should consider seemingly insignificant questions that, in fact, had great bearing on the process of completing two complicated sets of procedures within a limited time frame and during a time of increasingly tense international relations. For example, one immigration requirement demanded six notarized copies of an "Affidavit of Support and Sponsorship (Form C)" had to be submitted to the American government. How simple was it to make six copies of a form in the days before photocopying machines were readily available?

Similarly, noting that the United States was in the midst of the Great Depression, what factors would a potential American sponsor have to consider before agreeing to assume financial responsibility for a relative from Germany whom he/she had probably never met? How would a German Jew obtain an "Affidavit of Good Conduct" from an agency of

a government whose laws had declared him/her to be *persona non grata* because of his/her very existence? How would a German Jew who was trying to emigrate to the United States communicate efficiently with a prospective American sponsor, especially as the international situation was deteriorating, thus limiting contacts between people in Germany and the rest of the world? In an era that did not have e-mails and faxes, how could documents be sent back and forth within the relatively short time frames during which various steps of both the emigration and the immigration processes had to be completed? Note also that the United States tightened its immigration requirements in September 1939, the month in which World War II began in Europe.

Step Four

Having considered these factors, students revisit the question “Why didn’t the Jews leave Germany?”, focusing on the period prior to September 1, 1939, the start of the war in Europe. As the discussion progresses, stress that apparently simple, straightforward historical situations are often multi-layered and complex. When possible, answer questions by referring specifically to the two documents used in the lesson plan. Be sure that students consider both tangible and intangible aspects involved as individuals decided whether or not to leave the country that had been home to their families for many generations. As needed, additional historical information about the topic may be accessed from the USHMM website and from other sources.

Step Five

To demonstrate mastery of the topic being studied, students might develop essays that discuss both the historical situation that has been studied and their understanding of the complex nature of that circumstance. These essays should display an awareness of historical processes as well as factual knowledge of this aspect of Holocaust history. Providing students with a rubric to highlight these points in addition to normal mechanical and stylistic requirements would help students organize their thoughts and develop their essays.

Alternatively, students might discuss the writing prompt, “Given all of the impediments to leaving Germany that existed during the Nazi era, how was it possible that so many Jews did, in fact, leave before World War II began?” This topic reverses the preconceived notion that is inherent in the commonly asked question on which this lesson plan is based—that is, “Why didn’t the Jews leave Germany?” Posing this contrapositive question serves to complicate students’ thinking about this event and the historical process in general. Students might also research the stories of

individuals who either emigrated from Nazi Germany or who tried to do so but could not. To aid this research, students should access the USHMM website, which includes several short film segments in which refugees and would-be refugees tell their stories. Immigration policies enacted by various nations could also be investigated, as could unique situations such as the *Kindertransport* and the voyage of the *St. Louis*; again, the USHMM website can provide detailed information about specific situations that occurred in the context of the refugee crisis in particular and the Holocaust and World War II in general.

Step Six

Having read the student essays, the teacher may use them to guide a concluding class discussion on the topic. The teacher should evaluate both the historical content knowledge and the level of analytical thinking displayed as a means of judging student learning and the strengths and weaknesses of the lesson plan as it has been implemented.

Student presentations on various topics could lead to further discussion and evaluation of the lesson plan's central question.

Notes on Using the Lesson Plan

Teachers must be careful to present the question, "Why didn't the Jews leave Germany?" within its proper historical context. The situation being examined was unique to Germany (and later to Austria); thus, it does not apply to the more than 90% of European Jews who did not live in the Third Reich prior to the start of World War II. With the exception of those Jews who lived in annexed regions of Czechoslovakia, Jews living outside the Reich (which included Austria after the *Anschluss*) were not subject to Nazi policies until their areas came under military occupation during World War II; consequently, German emigration policy had no effect on them, as any consideration of emigrating was a moot point once an occupation by German armed forces had begun.

Designed primarily for use in high school history courses, this lesson plan may be incorporated into other courses as suggested in the USHMM statement, "Incorporating a Study of the Holocaust into Existing Courses."⁵⁸ It can be used to "examine the responses of governmental and nongovernmental organizations in the United States to the plight of Holocaust victims..."⁵⁹ The lesson plan may also be used to study the dynamics of American self-interest given the continuing effect that the Great Depression had on the United States during the late 1930s and as an expression of isolationism in the nation's foreign policy. This application of the lesson plan would allow students to "examine the dilemmas that

arise when foreign policy goals are narrowly defined, as solely in terms of national interest, thus denying the validity of universal moral and human principles.”⁶⁰ The lesson plan could also be used as part of a general examination of America’s response to the evolving situation in Europe prior to the start of World War II. It may also serve as an introductory piece that helps prepare students to examine American and international responses to later genocides (e.g., Bosnia, Rwanda, Darfur) and could become part of a study of current immigration policies and the public controversy regarding them. As such, connections between the lesson plan and the study of governmental decision making and public opinion could also be developed.

The lesson plan also illustrates the systematic and bureaucratic nature of the Holocaust, points that are emphasized in the USHMM’s definition of the event.⁶¹ Considering this focus would allow students to “examine the role of the Nazi bureaucracy in implementing policies of murder and annihilation”⁶² or, at least, to consider the steps that led to such policies; this approach is consistent with the USHMM’s suggestions regarding the incorporation of the study of the Holocaust into government courses—but it could also be incorporated into history curricula.

Benefits of the Lesson Plan

The study of history at the high school level is often hindered by approaches that are dominated by oversimplification and generality. This lesson plan, which may be adapted for use with many different topics, can move students beyond the superficial level in their study of history. As such, benefits accruing to students through the completion of this lesson plan include:

1. learning and practicing the investigative process of history;
2. developing an in-depth study of an important historical topic;
3. applying critical thinking skills in the drawing of inferences and implications at higher-order conceptual levels;
4. applying the constructivist approach to studying history;
5. analyzing historical data drawn from various sources; and
6. utilizing an exemplary educational website as a reference source.

Conclusion

This lesson plan asks students to evaluate the decision to stay or leave Germany from the perspective of German Jews (or Jewish Germans) who were faced with what became, in time, a matter of life or death. In doing so, students learn that “Historical thinkers try to empathize, to truly understand

people and events *within the framework of their time*,⁶³ a critical factor in learning both historical content and the historical process [italics added for emphasis]. Students thus become engaged with the study of history while gaining both specific historical knowledge and valuable insights into the human experience.

Beyond that, they will realize that studying history can be an energizing activity in which the “stuff” of real life can be confronted and, to a certain degree, experienced.

Notes

1. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), *Teaching about the Holocaust: A Resource Book for Educators* (Washington, D.C.: Author, 2001), 3.
2. Diane Ravitch, *A Consumer's Guide to High School History Textbooks* (Washington, D.C.: Thomas B. Fordham Institute, 2004), 63, <http://www.edexcellence.net/detail/news.cfm?news_id=329>.
3. George W. Maxim, *Dynamic Social Studies for Constructivist Classrooms; Inspiring Tomorrow's Social Scientists* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson, 2006), 437.
4. Gilbert T. Sewall, “Literary Lackluster,” *American Educator* 12, no. 1 (1988): 35.
5. Ravitch, 65.
6. David H. Lindquist, *Coverage of the Holocaust in High School United States History and World History Textbooks* (Washington, D.C.: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2006), 89-107.
7. Raul Hilberg, *Perpetrators, Victims, Bystanders: The Jewish Catastrophe 1933-1945* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1992), ix. Hilberg focuses on the three roles identified in his book's title. Many Holocaust educators add rescuers and resisters to this list.
8. Spelling antisemitism is problematic. Various forms used by authors include anti-semitism, Anti-semitism, anti-Semitism, antiSemitism, and antisemitism. Except when quoting other sources, the last form noted will be used in this paper. For a rationale for the use of this form of the word, see Doris L. Bergen, *War and Genocide: A Concise History of the Holocaust*, second ed. (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2009), 4.
9. George Burson, “A Lack of Vision: The Bradley Commission Report,” *The History Teacher* 23, no. 1 (November 1989): 60.
10. Sarah Drake Brown, “State Certification Requirements for History Teachers” (ERIC Digest: ED 482210, December 2003). Brown references a nationwide survey indicating that 71% of middle school history teachers do not have a history major, while 11.5% lack even the most minimal certification. At the high school level, 62.5% do not have a history major, and 8.4% have no certification in the subject.
11. Mary Beth Donnelly, “Educating Students about the Holocaust: A Survey of Teaching Practices,” *Social Education* 70, no. 1 (January/February 2006): 51.
12. *Ibid.*, 53.
13. Rodney M. White, “An Alternative Approach to Teaching History,” *OAH Magazine of History* 8, no. 2 (Winter 1994): 58.

14. Allen E. Yarema, "A Decade of Debate: Improving Content and Interest in History Education," *The History Teacher* 35, no. 3 (May 2002): 391.
15. John C. Simmonds, "History Curriculum and Curriculum Change in Colleges and Universities of the United States: A Study of Twenty-Three History Departments in 1988," *The History Teacher* 22, no. 3 (May 1989): 305-306.
16. Robert L. Hampel, "Too Much is Too Little," *Social Education* 49, no. 5 (May 1985): 364.
17. Ronald W. Evans, "Social Studies under Fire: Diane Ravitch and the Revival of History," *Georgia Social Science Journal* 20, no. 1 (Winter 1989): 9.
18. Frederick D. Drake and Lynn R. Nelson, *Engagement in Teaching History: Theory and Practices for Middle and Secondary Teachers* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson, 2005), 100. Drake and Nelson cite Avon Crismore, "The Rhetoric of Textbooks: Metadiscourse," *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 16, no. 3 (July-September 1984): 279-286, and Sam Wineburg, *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts: Charting the Future of Teaching the Past* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2001).
19. Yehuda Bauer, *A History of the Holocaust* (Danbury, CT: Franklin Watts, 1982), 32-33, 43.
20. Rita Steinhardt Botwinick, *A History of the Holocaust: From Ideology to Annihilation*, third ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2004), 142.
21. *Ibid.*, 20.
22. *Ibid.*
23. *Ibid.*
24. Bauer, 40.
25. *Ibid.*, 38.
26. Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1985), 7.
27. *Ibid.*, 75-76.
28. Botwinick, 117.
29. *Ibid.*, 117-118.
30. *Ibid.*, 117.
31. *Ibid.*, 118.
32. *Ibid.*
33. USHMM, *Teaching about the Holocaust*, 20.
34. Donald Niewyk and Francis Nicosia, *The Columbia Guide to the Holocaust* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 6-7.
35. For a detailed discussion of the historical context on which the lesson plan is based, see Bauer, *A History of the Holocaust*, Chapters 5 and 6.
36. Michael Berenbaum, *The World Must Know: The History of the Holocaust as Told in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*, second ed. (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), 43.
37. *Ibid.*
38. Saul Friedlander, *Nazi Germany and the Jews, Volume I: The Years of Persecution, 1933-1939* (New York: Harper Collins, 1997), 241.
39. *Ibid.*, 261.
40. *Ibid.*, 261-262.
41. *Ibid.*, 262-263.
42. Marion A. Kaplan, *Between Dignity and Despair: Jewish Life in Nazi Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 62.
43. *Ibid.*, 62-64.
44. *Ibid.*, 67.
45. Bauer, 129.

46. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, *Historical Atlas of the Holocaust* (New York: Macmillan, 1996), 26-27. It should be noted that more than 120,000 Jewish refugees settled in countries that were later occupied by Germany at some point prior to or during World War II. As a result, their refuge from Nazi persecution was temporary.

47. Berenbaum, 46.

48. Martin Gilbert, *Atlas of the Holocaust* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1993), 22. As an example, the Australian delegate at the Evian Conference rationalized his country's reluctance to accept Jewish refugees by stating, "Since we have no racial problem, we are not desirous of importing one."

49. Berenbaum, 51, 53.

50. David Wyman, *Paper Walls: America and the Refugee Crisis 1938-1941* (New York: Pantheon, 1985), 221.

51. *Ibid.*, 75.

52. Berenbaum, 53-54.

53. *Ibid.*, 46.

54. Bauer, 109.

55. For a general discussion about "complicating students' thinking," see "'Complicating' Students' Thinking Vis-à-Vis the History of the Holocaust," in Samuel Totten, *Holocaust Education: Issues and Approaches* (Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 2002), 91-113. Totten discusses the question, "Why didn't the Jews leave Germany?" on page 101.

56. This map may be accessed on the USHMM website below the "Why didn't they all leave?" text.

57. These questions are used by Warren Marcus, program specialist for the USHMM, during teacher workshops he conducts at various sites around the United States. An online version of his teacher workshop may be found on the USHMM website.

58. USHMM, *Teaching about the Holocaust*, 9-15.

59. *Ibid.*, 9.

60. *Ibid.*

61. *Ibid.*, 3.

62. *Ibid.*, 13.

63. Drake and Nelson, 11.

Appendix

Resources for Studying about the United States and the Holocaust

Abzug, Robert H. *America Views the Holocaust, 1933-1945: A Brief Documentary History* (New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1999).

Abzug, Robert H. *Inside the Vicious Heart: Americans and the Liberation of Nazi Concentration Camps* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985).

Cheatle, Lori (Director). *From Swastika to Jim Crow* [DVD] (New York: The Cinema Guild, 2000).

- Feingold, Henry L. *The Politics of Rescue: The Roosevelt Administration and the Holocaust, 1938-1945* (New York: Holocaust Library, 1980).
- Gruber, Ruth. *Haven: The Dramatic Story of 1,000 World War II Refugees and How They Came to America* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2000).
- Kurth, James R. and Laurence Jarvik (Producers). *Who Shall Live and Who Shall Die?* [DVD] (New York: Kino International Video, 2007).
- Lefkovitz, Elliott and Nancy Partos (Producers). *The Double Crossing: The Voyage of the St. Louis* [VHS] (Teaneck, NJ: Ergo Media, 1992).
- Lipstadt, Deborah. *Beyond Belief: The American Press and the Coming of the Holocaust, 1933-1945* (New York: The Free Press, 1985).
- Lookstein, Haskel. *Were We Our Brothers' Keepers? The Public Response of American Jews to the Holocaust 1938-1944* (New York: Vintage Books, 1988).
- Morse, Arthur D. *While Six Million Died: A Chronicle of American Apathy* (Woodstock, NY: The Overlook Press, 1983).
- Neufeld, Michael J. and Michael Berenbaum (Eds.). *The Bombing of Auschwitz: Should the Allies Have Attempted It?* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2003).
- Newton, Verne W. (Ed.). *FDR and the Holocaust* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1996).
- Ogilvie, Sarah and Scott Miller. *Refuge Denied: The St. Louis Passengers and the Holocaust* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006).
- Ostrow, Marty (Producer). *America and the Holocaust: Deceit and Indifference* [DVD] (Boston, MA: PBS WGBH, 2005).
- Roberts, Timothy (Director). *Opening the Gates of Hell: American Liberators of the Nazi Concentration Camps* [VHS] (Teaneck, NJ: Ergo Media, 1992).
- Rosen, Robert N., Gerhard Weinberg, and Alan M. Dershowitz. *Saving the Jews: Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the Holocaust* (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 2007).
- Rubenstein, William D. *The Myth of Rescue: Why the Democracies Could Not Have Saved More Jews from the Nazis* (London, U.K.: Routledge, 1999).
- Wyman, David S. *The Abandonment of the Jews: America and the Holocaust, 1941-1945* (New York: New Press, 2007).
- Wyman, David S. and Rafael Medoff. *A Race against Death: Peter Bergson, America, and the Holocaust* (New York: New Press, 2004).