

Holocaust Education NEW!

For comments, suggestions, or corrections to the material below, contact [Tony Tavares](#).

Introduction

Our society is composed of people from diverse linguistic and cultural origins. It is important that all Manitobans have a good understanding and appreciation of the richness of our human diversity, our roots, and our people's stories, in order to develop a sense of community and intercultural understanding. This should include an awareness of how issues of contemporary racism and inequality are rooted in our history.

Within this context, it is important that all students know and understand some of the more important aspects of the Holocaust. The Holocaust is of enduring significance to Canadians and the world as a whole because there are important lessons to be learned from it about human rights and responsibilities, the power of hatred and discrimination, and the challenge of democracy in multi-ethnic and multicultural societies. The severity and extent of the persecution experienced by Jews, homosexuals, and other targeted groups, leading up to and during World War II, has no parallel in history. It is important that we remember the Holocaust, and the international complacency and social and political conditions that allowed it to occur, so that we may avoid similar events today and in the future.

The Meaning of the "Holocaust"

The term "Holocaust" is derived from the Greek term for a burnt offering. In contemporary literature and history, it is used to refer to the systematic Nazi destruction of European Jewry, which began in 1933 when Adolph Hitler was appointed Chancellor of Germany. This tragic event is estimated to have reduced the world's total Jewish population by over one third. While Jews were a primary target during the Holocaust, the Roma people ("Gypsies"), Jehovah's Witnesses, homosexuals, people with disabilities, and political enemies were also targeted by the Nazis, and were victims of persecution and violence.

There is evidence that the Nazis picked out and specifically targeted the Jews, from the very beginning of the rise of the Nazi party in 1919 to the very end of the party with Hitler's Testament of April 29, 1945. In 1919, Hitler had written a letter to a Herr Gemlich, in which he called for the removal of the Jews if he ever took power. The Holocaust, or the "Final Solution," followed a period of increased hostility and persecution exacted by the military and government officials, beginning in 1933 when Hitler became Chancellor of Germany. The Holocaust, from its conception to its implementation, was rooted in a long history of anti-Semitism in Germany and throughout Europe, and had a distinctly Jewish aspect to it. Arguably, without this Jewish aspect, there would have been no Holocaust.

The Goals of Holocaust Education

As the Holocaust is one of the most extensively documented historical events, it is one of the most effective subjects for an educational and critical examination of basic moral and social issues. A structured and critical inquiry into the Holocaust will provide many insights into contemporary issues of human rights and democracy in ethnically, culturally, and religiously diverse societies.

Canada, like many of its allies during the Holocaust, was complacent and demonstrated little compassion or concern for the victims of Nazism. Therefore, the study of the Holocaust and Canada's struggle with its own problems and challenges related to anti-Semitism, racism, and xenophobia will shed light on the challenges facing our society, then and today. As Canadians work to build a better society, understanding, knowing, and learning from the Holocaust is vitally important. It teaches us about the importance of resistance, solidarity, resiliency, and survival, even in the face of unimaginable horrors.

Through a study of the Holocaust, students can come to realize that

- democratic institutions, values, and human rights are not a given, nor are they automatically sustained; rather, they need to be appreciated, nurtured, and protected
- silence and indifference to the suffering or persecution of others, or to the infringement of civil and human rights in any society, can, regardless of intention, perpetuate the problems
- the Holocaust was not an accident in history; it was rooted in a history of intolerance and prejudice in European societies and individuals. Organizations and governments made choices which not only legalized discrimination, but which allowed prejudice, hatred, and, ultimately, mass murder to occur

Connections to the Manitoba Social Studies Curriculum

The Manitoba social studies curriculum supports the continued development of the multicultural, multiracial, and pluralist democracy that is Canada. The events that take place in our classrooms shape, and are shaped by, larger social currents that define who we are and where we are headed as a society. To be successful, schools in general, and social studies classrooms in particular, must be guided by democratic social goals and values that affirm our human diversity, and that demonstrate a quest for greater equity in our institutions and in society as a whole.

As part of Manitoba's new Kindergarten to Grade 8 social studies curriculum, Middle Years students have the opportunity to focus on the history of Canada (Grades 5 and 6), and to explore issues related to the Holocaust (Grade 6).

Senior Years students have opportunities to focus on the Holocaust in the current Senior 3 Canadian History course. (The new Senior 3 curriculum is under development, and is likely to have similar opportunities for study.)

Holocaust Awareness Week

The Jewish communities in Winnipeg and throughout the province and country include many individuals and families who are survivors of the Holocaust or who are related to survivors, and many more individuals who lost family members and loved ones during the Holocaust. While the Jewish community in Manitoba is diverse and composed of families and individuals who immigrated to Canada from many different countries, all members of the community have been affected by the Holocaust.

Over the period of a decade or more, Jewish communities, Holocaust educators, and researchers in Winnipeg and other centres spoke with each other about their despair born of the Holocaust and Nazi genocides, and their hope that there was something of value to be learned from the Holocaust and applied in present-day societies. This led to the development of a variety of initiatives to record the experiences of Holocaust survivors, and the development of other educational initiatives. One of these, Holocaust Awareness Week, is an annual educational outreach initiative intended to remember the Holocaust, not only as historical fact and as a memorial to its millions of victims, but also as a warning. This initiative provides programs and resources that bear witness to Holocaust events, explore issues arising from the attempted extermination of Jews and other targeted groups, and apply lessons learned from the Holocaust to contemporary issues.

This year's Holocaust Awareness Week took place May 2-8, 2005, and coincided with the 60th anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi concentration camps and the end of World War II. In Winnipeg and in other centres, various community groups offered Holocaust awareness presentations and discussions about the lessons brought forth from the Holocaust. For more information on Holocaust Awareness Week activities and related programs in Winnipeg, see Holocaust Programs & Services in Winnipeg.

Holocaust Awareness Committee of the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg

The Holocaust Awareness Committee of the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg is composed of survivors, members of the Second Generation Group, alumni of the March of the Living, and educators. The committee

- produces The Holocaust Remembered, a comprehensive newsletter, twice annually (spring and fall). For more information or to be placed on the mailing list, telephone the Department of Community Relations: (204) 477-7423
- organizes Holocaust Awareness Week, a week of commemorative services and educational programs around Yom Hashoah
- organizes Kristallnacht programming (Night of Breaking Glass, November 9, 1938. This marks the point when the persecution of Jews in Germany was accelerated. Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels initiated this free-for-all against the Jews, which resulted in nearly 1,000 synagogues being set on fire, more than 7,000 Jewish businesses and homes being looted, approximately 100 Jews being killed, and as many as 30,000 Jews being arrested and sent to concentration camps.)

The Holocaust Awareness Committee works closely with the [Freeman Family Foundation Holocaust Education Centre](#), which offers educational programming and resources related to Holocaust education. The Freeman Family Foundation Holocaust Education Centre thrives as a separate physical space within the Marion and Ed Vickar Jewish Museum of Western Canada. Visitors enter by walking through a replica of the boxcar doors, which sealed the fate of so many transported to the death camps during the days of the Holocaust. The centre contains permanent exhibits, including photographs, original documents and artifacts donated by Manitoba Holocaust survivors and their families.

For further information on the [Freeman Family Foundation Holocaust Education Centre](#), visit their website or contact them c/o Jewish Heritage Centre, phone (204) 477-7458, fax (204) 477-7465, or email cdivinsky@jhcwc.org or cdivinsky@aspercampus.mb.ca

Anti-Semitism, Holocaust Denial, and the Web

Over the past two decades, an organized effort to deny or minimize the established history of Nazi genocide against the Jews has emerged. In Canada, the United States, and other parts of the world, the movement has drawn attention in recent years as a result of “revisionist” conferences, websites which purport to correct myths or challenge the veracity and accuracy of historical data and research, the publication of books and magazines, and the publication of editorial-style advertisements in college/university campus newspapers. Often, the conferences, websites, and ads claim to call for “open debate on the Holocaust.” While they acknowledge the fact of Nazi anti-Semitism, they question whether this hatred resulted in the atrocities and genocide documented by survivors and historians.

Similar propaganda has established a presence on the Internet. In addition to creating their own home pages, Holocaust deniers and hate groups have “crashed” the sites of legitimate Holocaust and Jewish discussion groups in an effort at anti-Jewish provocation and self-promotion.

As a result, educators engaged in Holocaust education should screen websites carefully for authenticity and accuracy, and should expect that students who come across Holocaust denial websites or literature may raise questions about the Holocaust. It may be prudent for educators to be proactive, and to include the study of Holocaust denial and contemporary anti-Semitism in Holocaust education units or lesson plans.

Holocaust Education Resources

There are many websites with information on the Holocaust and Holocaust awareness resources. The following is a sample of some of the sites available that may be of interest to teachers and students. The sites are organized into four categories: [Historical Resources](#), [Canadian Sites](#), [Lesson Plans and Teachers' Resources](#), and [International and Other Relevant Organizations](#).

Historical Resources

Yad Vashem: The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority

Yad Vashem is the Jewish people's memorial to the murdered Six Million, and symbolizes the ongoing confrontation with the rupture engendered by the Holocaust. Containing the world's largest repository of information on the Holocaust, Yad Vashem is a leader in Shoah education, commemoration, research, and documentation. The Yad Vashem website offers many resources of interest to teachers and students. Information on an annual teacher summer institute in Holocaust education is available on the site.

<http://www.yadvashem.org.il/>

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum is America's national institution for the documentation, study, and interpretation of Holocaust history, and serves as this The United States of America's memorial to the millions of people murdered during the Holocaust. This is a major site for educators and research on the Holocaust. The museum has a wealth of information for research and offers complete lessons plans on "How to teach the Holocaust".

<http://www.ushmm.org/museum/>

The History of Anti-Semitism Sites

The Holocaust has its origins in the long history of anti-Semitism in Europe. An understanding of how anti-Semitism contributed to the conditions that allowed the Holocaust to occur, and for so many people to "close their eyes" to the atrocities committed, may be gained by exploring anti-Semitism historically and in contemporary settings. Many websites have sections that deal with anti-Semitism.

Antisemitism

David Dickerson maintains a web education site with information and links to various aspects of Jewish history and culture, including a section on the historical and contemporary manifestations of Antisemitism.

<http://ddickerson.igc.org/antisemitism.html>

The Centre for German-Jewish Studies

The University of Sussex provides excerpts from religious and historical texts which illuminate anti-Semitism in Europe and provide a historical context for the Holocaust.

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/Units/cgjs/teachingpack/histantisem.html>

Australian Memories of the Holocaust

This is an excellent educational website on the Holocaust with resources on the history of anti-Semitism in general, and Nazi Anti-Semitism specifically.

<http://www.holocaust.com.au/home.htm>

Forgive, But Never Forget

This is another excellent website which, in the section on anti-racism, features information and links to resources on anti-Semitism and hatred on the Internet.

<http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Lobby/4430/index.htm>

The Holocaust Project

Educators may find this a useful site for research, and to access primary or historical documents. The goal of the site is to provide a detailed chronology and deeper understanding of how the Holocaust came about—and why. The site provides a large body of hard-to-find information in one convenient database, including texts, maps, photos, videos, audio clips, interviews, eyewitness testimonies, and rare German documents, many of them translated into English for the first time.

<http://www.humanitas-international.org/holocaust/homepage.htm>

The Holocaust Memorial Center

This is the website of the first American museum dedicated to remembering and preserving the history of the Holocaust. A virtual tour of the museum and its exhibits is available, as well as a variety of resources on Holocaust education.

<http://holocaustcenter.org/>

Canadian Sites

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth: Holocaust Bibliography 124 KB

This is an annotated list of some resources about the Holocaust available from the Instructional Resources Unit of the Department. Please note that there are additional resources not listed in the bibliography; contact Reference and Information Services for further information and assistance.

http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/ks4/iru/publications/bibliographies/the_holocaust-2001-11.pdf

Open Hearts: Closed Doors

This is a section of the Virtual Museum of Canada, which is dedicated to showcasing a collection of high-quality, online cultural content, including virtual exhibits and an image gallery. It features resources related to an exhibit on young Jewish orphans who immigrated from Europe after the end of the war as part of the War Orphans initiative. It offers learning resources including a teacher's guide, orphan's stories, an artifacts collection, and a glossary.

<http://virtualmuseum.ca/Exhibitions/orphans/english/index.html>

The HopeSite: The Web's Centre for Holocaust Education

This site is sponsored and developed by the Victoria Holocaust and Remembrance and Education Society. It features teaching materials, interactive student resources, historical documents and pictures, stories of individuals, anti-racism resources, and a bibliography of videos on hate.

<http://www.hopesite.ca/>

The Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre

This site offers a variety of teaching resources and includes information on how to order *Too Close to Home: Anti-Semitism and Fascism in Canada, 1930s–1940s*, which is an excellent resource for exploring a shameful part of Canadian history—a time when Nazi ideology and anti-Semitism permeated Canada's cultural and political landscape, and was reflected in Canada's restrictive immigration policies.

<http://www.vhec.org/ResourcesTeachers.html>

Filmography: An Annotated Filmography of Canadian Produced Films and Videos on the Holocaust

This "filmography" was developed by Gary Evans, historian and author, who teaches in the Department of Communication at the University of Ottawa. He wrote two groundbreaking books on Canadian film and culture, and was a contributing historian to, and editor of, the renowned CD-ROM and website, "A Teacher's Guide to the Holocaust."

<http://www3.sympatico.ca/mighty1/film.htm>

Learning from the Past: Teaching for the Future

This program in Holocaust and anti-racism education is an initiative of The Centre for Jewish Studies and The Canadian Centre for German and European Studies at York University in Toronto. It brings together Canadian university students and students from Germany and Poland to explore how best to counter racism—including anti-Semitism—through teaching about the Holocaust. It also involves experts and members of the broader public in all three countries. It features an excellent array of resources on Holocaust education.

<http://yorku.ca/tfff/Links.htm>

Canadian Jewish Congress

The Canadian Jewish Congress website offers information and resources related to the Holocaust, throughout Canada and in other centres.

<http://cjc.ca/>

Canadian Council of Christians and Jews

CCCJ is a national, non-sectarian organization dedicated to promoting cultural, racial, and religious equality among the people of Canada through the development and implementation of education and research initiatives. The Council is committed to organizing and acquiring resources for scholarships, lectures, publications and videos, research, and conferences—endeavours to teach Canadians about the dangers of prejudice and the value of diversity and a shared sense of community. The site features information on programs and activities sponsored

by the organization.
<http://www.cccj.ca/HomePage.htm>

League for Human Rights of B'nai Brith Canada

This part of the B'nai Brith website features an online teacher's guide for Yom ha-Shoah Holocaust Memorial Day. Additional resources on Holocaust education are also available.
<http://www.bnaibrith.ca/league/hh-teachers/guide07.html>

The Nizkor Project

The Nizkor Project grew out of the desire to counter Holocaust denial and hate activity on the web. The site endeavours to provide teachers with teaching resources to bolster democratic, multicultural, and multiracial education. It features a variety of Holocaust research guides and links to resources related to the Holocaust and Nazism.
<http://www.nizkor.org/>

Lesson Plans and Teachers' Resources

A Teacher's Guide to the Holocaust

This teacher resource was produced by the Florida Center for Instructional Technology, College of Education, University of South Florida. The content is presented from three perspectives: Timeline, People, and The Arts. The authors caution that Holocaust study is a very sensitive subject, and the appropriateness of material is dependent upon individuals. They offer guidelines for selecting resources for classroom use.
<http://fcit.usf.edu/holocaust/intro/intro.htm>

The Jewish Heritage Video Collection

This site provides information on the television series on anti-Semitism, *The Longest Hatred*, which was broadcast on PBS in 1991. (Robert S. Wistrich, an historical adviser to the series, wrote a companion book, *Antisemitism: The Longest Hatred*.) The film *The Longest Hatred* consists of three parts, each slightly less than an hour long. The first part is entitled "From the Cross to the Swastika," the second part focuses on anti-Semitism in Germany today, and the third part focuses on anti-Semitism in the Arab world.
http://www.jhvc.org/video_library/index.php?film_id=12

Holocaust Teacher Education Resource Center

This site is dedicated to the memory of the Holocaust. It strives to combat prejudice and bigotry by transforming the horrors of the Holocaust into positive lessons. Sponsored by the Holocaust Education Foundation, Inc., it features a variety of resources, including unit and lesson plans for different grade levels.
<http://www.holocaust-trc.org/lesson.htm>

Holocaust Cybrary: Remembering the Survivors

This excellent site was launched in 1995 and is dedicated to keeping the memory of the Holocaust alive. It features educator and student resources including lesson plans, an image bank, art exhibits, stories and experiences of survivors, and "Tracing Families"—a resource for helping those looking for family members who may have survived the Holocaust.
<http://remember.org/>

Holocaust Unit Plans and Resources

This site is part of a web-based resource for teachers, maintained by Jerrie S. Cheek of Kennesaw State University. It offers a description of, and links to, a variety of unit and lesson plans on the Holocaust and related subjects for different grade levels.
<http://webtech.kennesaw.edu/jcheek3/holocaust.htm>

The Holocaust Children

This is an online unit for teaching about the Holocaust and its impact on children. It was developed by the Keystone Central School district in Pennsylvania.
<http://www.kcsd.k12.pa.us/~rwykoff/holocaust/index.htm>

Holocaust and Resistance

This lesson plan on the Holocaust and Resistance is featured on the EDSITEment, a site by the National Endowment for the Humanities, in partnership with the National Trust for the Humanities

and the MarcoPolo Education Foundation. It features online humanities resources from some of the world's great museums, libraries, cultural institutions, and universities. In the lesson plan, students reflect on the Holocaust from the point of view of those who actively resisted Nazi persecution. After reviewing the history of the Holocaust, in order to understand the legal and bureaucratic authority with which the Nazis systematically enforced their policies, students debate options for resistance and their likely outcomes.
http://edsitement.neh.gov/view_lesson_plan.asp?ID=275

International and Other Relevant Organizations

The Centre for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at the University of Minnesota

This site provides a list of, and links to, Holocaust organizations worldwide. It is composed of several sections, including a virtual museum of Holocaust and genocide-related art; a section dedicated to histories, narratives and documents, educational resources, links, and a bibliography; and contact information.

<http://www.chgs.umn.edu/>

Jewish-Christian Relations

This site is owned and maintained by the International Council of Christians and Jews, which has 38 Christian-Jewish and interreligious member organizations in 32 countries. Its headquarters is in the Martin Buber House in Heppenheim, Germany, where the great Jewish thinker lived until Nazi persecution forced him to flee. The site features articles and book reviews, and links to resources on anti-Semitism, world religions, and interfaith education.

<http://www.jcrelations.net/en/>

Diversity Tool Kit

This site is part of a funded project to assist teachers, students, scholars, and activists who wish to promote equity and the acceptance of differences within schools and communities. Its featured resources, which fit under the broad umbrella of social justice, cover a large and diverse range of approaches, interests, and fields of study and action. While the site is not specific to Holocaust education, educators will find the resources useful, especially the information on the STOP program (Students and Teachers Opposing Prejudice) initiative.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/~dtoolkit/>