

CH. 1: A HISTORY OF ANTI-SEMITISM

CH. 2: HITLER'S RISE

IN

THE HOLOCAUST

A NORTH CAROLINA TEACHER'S RESOURCE

FEATURING THE NARRATIVES OF HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS

WHO BECAME NORTH CAROLINA RESIDENTS

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North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

I ■ A HISTORY OF ANTI-SEMITISM ■

OVERVIEW

- *"The anti-Semitic episodes from my childhood, painful though they were, were just the prelude to the horror that was to follow. Nothing in the experience of the European Jews prepared us for the destruction that was to come."* _____ Morris Glass

The roots of anti-Semitism—prejudice against Jews—go back to ancient times. Throughout history, the seeds of misunderstanding can be traced to the position of the Jews as a minority religious group. Often in ancient times, when government officials felt their authority threatened, they found a convenient scapegoat in the Jews. Belief in one God (monotheism) and refusal to accept the dominant religion set the Jews apart from others in pre-Christian times. At first, Christianity was seen as a Jewish sect, but this changed as Christianity developed and became a powerful force in the Roman Empire.

CHRISTIANS EARLY TARGETS OF ROMAN PERSECUTION In 63 BCE, the Romans conquered Jerusalem, center of the Jewish homeland. During the early period of Roman rule, Judaism was recognized as a legal religion, and Jews could practice their religion freely. The early Christians, however, were subject to Roman persecution since they were considered to be heretics (believers in an unacceptable faith). Once Christianity took hold and spread throughout the empire, and after several Jewish revolts against Roman power in the first century CE, Judaism became the target of Roman persecution.

CHRISTIANITY BECOMES STATE RELIGION IN ROMAN EMPIRE In 380 CE, the Emperor Theodosius I made Christianity the state religion of the Roman Empire. The Church demanded the conversion of the Jews because it insisted that Christianity was the only true religion. The power of the state made Jews outcasts when they refused to renounce their faith. They were denied citizenship and its rights. By the end of the fourth century, Jews had been stamped with one of the most damaging myths they would face. For many Christians they had become the "Christ-killers," blamed for the death of Jesus. While the actual crucifixion of Jesus was carried out by the Romans, responsibility for the death of Jesus was placed on the Jews.

NEW LAWS SET JEWS APART The Justinian Code, compiled by scholars for the Emperor Justinian (527-565 CE), excluded Jews from all public places, prohibited Jews from giving evidence in lawsuits in which Christians took part, and forbade the reading of the Bible in Hebrew (only Greek or Latin were allowed). Church Council edicts forbade marriage between Christians and Jews and outlawed the conversion of Christians to Judaism in 533 CE. In 1215, the Fourth Lateran Council stamped the Jews as a people apart through its decree that Jews were to wear special clothes and markings to distinguish them from Christians. Although the Church passed four decrees concerning Jews, it was up to individual states to impose the new decrees. Some rulers willingly accepted the restrictions while others did not.



"Burning of the Jews," woodcut, 1493, depicting the massacre of Jews accused of using Christian blood in their rituals ("blood libel")

The Council of Basel (1431-43) established the concept of physical separation in cities with ghettos. It decreed that Jews were to live in separate communities, isolated from Christians except for reasons of business. Jews were not allowed to go to universities. They were required to attend Christian church sermons.

RELIGIOUS MINORITIES HARSHLY TREATED IN THE MIDDLE AGES In Europe, during the Middle Ages—from 500 to about 1450 CE—all religious nonconformists were harshly treated by ruling authorities. Heresy—holding an opinion contrary to Church doctrine—was a crime punishable by death. Jews were seen as a threat to established religion. As the most conspicuous non-conforming group, they were often attacked. At times it was easy for ruthless leaders to convince their largely uneducated followers that all “nonbelievers” must be killed. Sometimes the leaders of the Church aided the persecutions. At other times, the Pope and bishops protected Jews.

CRUSADES The Crusades, which began in 1096, led to increased persecution of Jews. Religious fervor reached fever pitch as the Crusaders made their way across Europe toward the Holy Land. Although anger was originally focused on the Muslims controlling Palestine, some of this intense feeling was redirected toward the European Jewish communities through which the Crusaders passed. Massacres of Jews occurred in many cities on the route to Jerusalem. In the seven-month period from January to July 1096, approximately one fourth to one third of the Jewish population in Germany and France, around 12,000 people, was killed. These persecutions caused many Jews to leave western Europe for the relative safety of eastern Europe.

MANY OCCUPATIONS CLOSED TO JEWS In western and southern Europe, Jews could not become farmers because they were forbidden to own land. Land ownership required the taking of a Christian oath. Gradually more and more occupations were closed to them, particularly commerce guilds [business and merchant groups]. There were only a few ways for Jews to make a living. Since Christians believed lending money and charging interest on it—usury—was a sin, Jews were able to take on that profession. It was a job no one else wanted. It also provided Jews with portable wealth if they were expelled from a region or nation.

BLACK DEATH LEADS TO SCAPEGOATING

The Black Death, or bubonic plague, led to intense religious scapegoating in western Europe. It is estimated that between 1348 and 1350 the epidemic killed one third of Europe’s population, perhaps as many as 25 million people. Many people believed the plague to be God’s punishment for their sins. For others, the plague could only be explained as the work of demons; this group chose as their scapegoat people who were already unpopular in the community. Because Jews followed religious laws of hygiene (including not drinking from public wells), they tended to suffer less from the plague than their Christian neighbors. Yet rumors spread that the plague was caused by the Jews who had poisoned wells and food. The worst massacre of Jews in Europe before Hitler’s rise to power occurred at this time. For two years, a violent wave of attacks against Jews swept over Europe. Tens of thousands were killed by their terrified neighbors despite the fact that many Jews also died of the plague.



Pogrom in the Jewish ghetto of Frankfurt, Germany, 1614

Not only were Jews blamed for the Black Death, but they were also accused of murdering Christians, especially children, in order to use their blood during religious ceremonies. The “blood libel,” or ritual murder, as it is known, can be traced back to Norwich, England, where around 1150 two clergymen charged that the murder of a Christian boy was part of a Jewish plot to kill Christians. Despite the fact that the boy was probably killed by an outlaw, the myth persisted. Murdering Jews was also justified with other reasons. Jews were said to desecrate churches and to be disloyal to rulers. Those who tried to protect Jews were ignored or persecuted themselves.

EXPULSION FROM WESTERN EUROPE By the end of the Middle Ages, fear and superstition had created a deep rift between Jews and Christians. As European peoples began to think of themselves as belonging to a nation, Jews again became “outsiders,” expelled from England in 1290, from France in 1306 and 1394, and from parts of Germany in the 1300s and 1400s. They were not legally allowed in England until the mid-1600s and in France until the 1790s after the French Revolution.

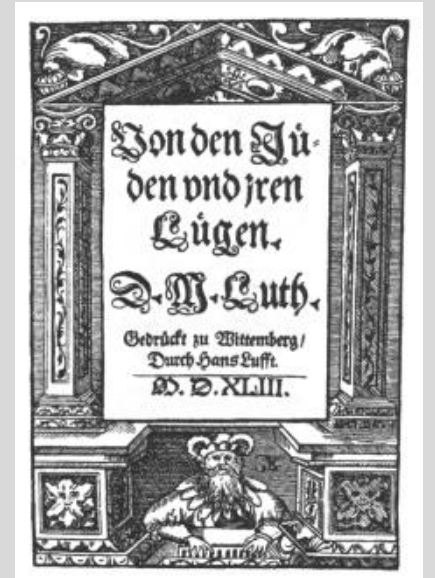
GOLDEN AGE AND INQUISITION IN SPAIN Unlike Jews in other parts of western Europe, the Jews of Spain enjoyed a golden age of political influence and religious tolerance from the 11th to the 14th centuries. However, in the wave of intense national excitement that followed the Spanish conquest of Granada in 1492, both Jews and Muslims were expelled from Spain after the unification of Spain under Ferdinand and Isabella. Unification had been aided by the Catholic Church which, through the Inquisition, had insisted on religious conformity. Loyalty to country became equated with absolute commitment to Christianity. From 1478 to 1765, the Church-led Inquisition burned thousands of Jews at the stake for their religious beliefs.

PROTESTANT REFORMATION The Protestant Reformation, which split Christianity into different branches in the 16th century, did little to reduce anti-Semitism. Martin Luther, who led the Reformation, was deeply disappointed by the refusal of the Jews to accept his approach to Christianity. He referred to Jews as “poisonous bitter worms” and suggested they be banished from Germany or forcibly converted. In *On the Jews and Their Lies*, Luther advised:

First, their synagogues or churches should be set on fire. . . Secondly, their homes should likewise be broken down and destroyed. . . They ought to be put under one roof or in a stable, like gypsies. . . Thirdly, they should be deprived of their prayerbooks. . . Fourthly, their rabbis must be forbidden under threat of death to teach anymore.*

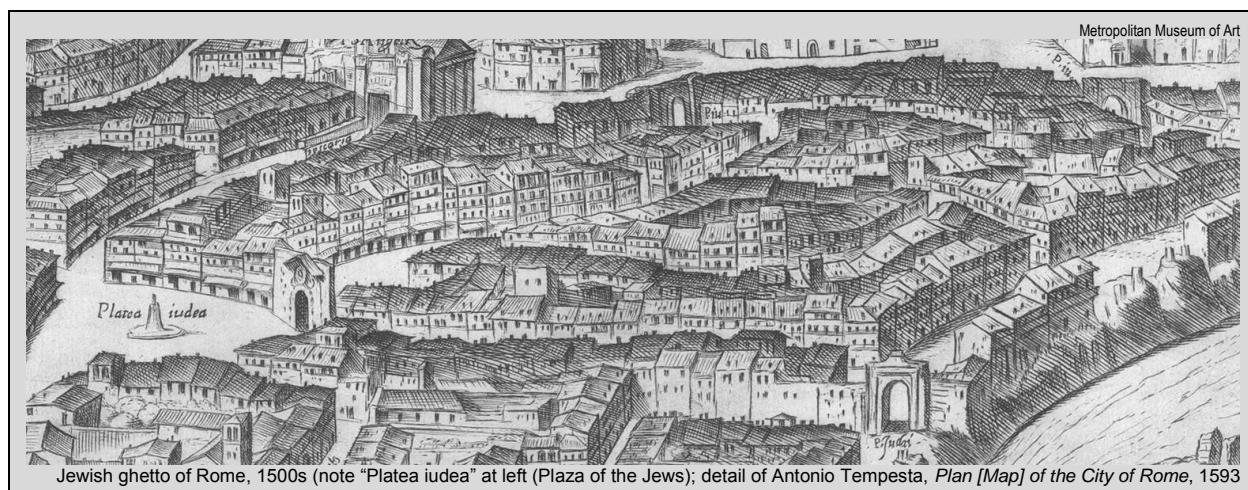


Medieval illustration depicting Jews (wearing yellow badges) being burned at the stake (Schilling, *Bildchronik*, 1515)



Luther's *On the Jews and Their Lies*, 1543

* Since the end of World War II, most Lutherans have denounced the views of Luther toward the Jewish people, and many Lutheran denominations have issued official statements condemning anti-Semitism. In 1982, for example, the Lutheran World Federation stated that “We Christians must purge ourselves of any hatred of the Jews and any sort of teaching of contempt for Judaism.”



SEPARATED IN GHETTOS Religious struggles plagued the Reformation for over 100 years as terrible wars were waged between Catholic and Protestant monarchs. Jews played no part in these struggles. They had been separated completely during the Middle Ages by Church law, which had confined the Jews to ghettos. Many ghettos were surrounded by high walls with gates guarded by Christian sentries. Jews were allowed out during the daytime for business dealings with Christian communities, but had to be back at curfew. At night, and during Christian holidays, the gates were locked. The ghettos froze the way of life for the Jews because they were segregated and not permitted to mix freely. They established their own synagogues and schools and developed a life separate from the rest of the community.

ENLIGHTENMENT AND FRANCE In the 1700s, during the period known as the Enlightenment, philosophers stressed new ideas about reason, science, progress, and the rights of individuals. Jews were allowed out of the ghetto. The French Revolution helped many western European Jews rise above second-class status. In 1791 an emancipation decree in France gave Jews full citizenship. In the early 1800s, most German states including Bavaria and Prussia, and many western European countries passed similar orders, but they did not eliminate their restrictions on Jews. By 1871, virtually all legal restrictions on Jews had been removed in Germany.

Although this new spirit of equality spread, many Jews in the ghetto were not able to take their places in the “outside world.” They knew very little about the world beyond the ghetto walls. They spoke their own language, Yiddish, and not the language of their countrymen. The outlook of thinkers of this period shifted from a traditional way of looking at the world, which stressed faith and religion, to a more modern belief in reason and the scientific laws of nature. A new foundation for prejudice was laid, which changed the history of anti-Semitism. Now pseudo-scientific reasons were used to show differences between Jews and non-Jews and set them apart again in Europe.

NATIONALISM IN GERMANY In the early 1800s, strong nationalistic feelings stirred the peoples of Europe. Much of this feeling was a reaction against the domination of Europe by France in the Napoleonic Era. In Germany, many thinkers and politicians looked for ways to increase political unity. Impressed by the power France had under Napoleon, they began to see solutions to German problems in a great national Germanic state.

The French intellectual Joseph Arthur de Gobineau was an early proponent of “scientific racism”—using pseudo-science to justify theories of racial supremacy and the “Aryan master race.” Writing in the mid-1800s, Gobineau blamed the decline of civilizations on degeneration resulting from the interbreeding of superior and inferior racial groups. He cited the white race, or

Aryans as he called them, as the superior race from which all civilizations were formed. The term “Aryan” originally referred to peoples speaking Indo-European languages. Racist scientists distorted its meaning to support ideas that pointed to those of German background as examples of “racially superior” Aryan stock.

RACE REPLACES RELIGION AS BASIS FOR PREJUDICES

The word *anti-Semitism* first appeared in 1873 in a book entitled *The Victory of Judaism over Germanism* by Wilhelm Marr. Marr’s book marked an important change in the history of anti-Semitism. In his book Marr stated that the Jews of Germany ought to be eliminated because they were members of an alien race that could never be fully a part of German society.



ARYAN SUPERIORITY

Marr’s ideas were influenced by other German, French, and British thinkers who stressed differences rather than similarities among people. Some of these thinkers believed that western European Caucasian Christians were superior to other races. Although the term *Semitic* refers to a group of languages, not to a group of people, these men created elaborate theories to prove the superiority of the Nordic or Aryan people of northern Europe and the inferiority of Semitic people, of Jews. Houston Stewart Chamberlain, a German of British descent, wrote of the superiority of the Germanic race and his fears of its dilution through mixture with inferior races. His work also stressed the incompatibility of the Jewish and Germanic “races.” Others promoted racial theories based on the ideas of Sir Herbert Spencer and the Social Darwinists, who applied Darwinism to cultural change, proposing that cultures evolve through natural selection and the survival of the fittest. Chamberlain argued that cultural groups with superior physical and mental traits would eventually dominate inferior groups. Some saw the struggle for racial purity as a battle between the “racially superior” Germanic peoples and the “inferior” races, including Jews.

RUSSIA AND FRANCE IN THE LATE 1800S

In other parts of Europe, anti-Semitism took different forms. In Russia, massacres of Jews—pogroms—were ordered by the czars; in parts of Russia these savage attacks on Jews continued into the 20th century. In Ukraine, from 1919 to 1921, between 100,000 and 200,000 Jews were massacred in an estimated 1300 pogroms. In France from 1894 to 1906, the Dreyfus Case revealed the depth of anti-Semitism in that

country. Alfred Dreyfus, a Jewish captain in the French army, was falsely accused of giving secret information to Germany, and was convicted in two highly divisive trials. Although Dreyfus was cleared of all charges, the “Dreyfus Affair” brought strong anti-Jewish feelings to the surface in France.

Until the late 1800s, anti-Semites had considered Jews dangerous because of their religion. They discriminated against Jews because of their beliefs, not because of what they were. If Jews converted to Christianity, resentment of them decreased. After Marr’s book and other anti-Semitic publications appeared, Jews were thought of as a race for the first time. Being Jewish was no longer a question of belief, but of birth and blood. It was claimed that because Jews were a race, they could not change, and they were considered deeply different from everyone else. That single idea became the cornerstone of Nazi anti-Semitism. Under the Nazis, traditional Christian-based anti-Semitism would combine with pseudo-scientific racism, economic depression, and political instability to set the stage for the Holocaust.



ONLINE RESOURCES

- Resources from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM)
 - ♦ Anti-Semitism encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/antisemitism
 - ♦ Video: “European Antisemitism from Its Origins to the Holocaust” (13:44)
www.ushmm.org/confront-antisemitism/european-antisemitism-from-its-origins-to-the-holocaust
 - ♦ Jewish Life in Europe before the Holocaust
encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/jewish-life-in-europe-before-the-holocaust
- Resources from Facing History and Ourselves
 - ♦ The Ancient Roots of Anti-Judaism (video: 11:26, with transcript)
www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/video/ancient-roots-anti-judaism
 - ♦ The Roots and Impact of Anti-Semitism (lesson)
www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/teaching-holocaust-and-human-behavior/roots-and-impact-antisemitism
- Challenging Anti-Semitism: Myths and Facts (Anti-Defamation League, ADL)
 - ♦ Lesson
www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/lesson-plans/challenging-anti-semitism-debunking-the-myths-and
 - ♦ Text (46 pp.): *Challenging Anti-Semitism: Myths and Facts*
www.adl.org/sites/default/files/documents/assets/pdf/education-outreach/CAS-Myths-and-Facts.pdf
- Strategies in Facing Anti-Semitism (Yad Vashem and the Simon Wiesenthal Center)
www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/education/educational_materials/strategies.pdf
- SEE the online Holocaust teaching resources recommended by North Carolina Holocaust educators. ■
www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/holocaust-council/resources/teachingresources.pdf



Access the valuable teaching resources of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum at www.ushmm.org/educators/teaching-about-the-holocaust. The museum’s offerings include lesson plans, teaching guidelines, online activities, interactive maps, audio and video collections, the *Holocaust Encyclopedia*, and other exemplary classroom resources.

LESSON ■ ANTI-SEMITISM IN PREWAR EUROPE

■ Narrative: Morris Remembers the Threat

Many people think the virulent anti-Semitism that led to the Holocaust was unique to Nazi Germany—that the particular circumstances of Germany’s defeat in World War I, the economic hardships of the 1920s and ’30s, Hitler’s hatred of Jews, and his ability to channel German public opinion, all created a singular explosion of lethal anti-Semitism. But while the scale and organization of the Nazis’ mass murder of the Jews and other hated groups are unprecedented, the history of violent anti-Semitism in Europe is not.

Have students view and discuss the online video “European Antisemitism from Its Origins to the Holocaust” (13:44) from the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, at www.ushmm.org/confront-antisemitism/european-antisemitism-from-its-origins-to-the-holocaust. The site includes a transcript and discussion questions.

Then lead students in a discussion of the Pyramid of Hate (in Supplemental Materials). What levels of the pyramid have they witnessed in their school, community, and beyond? (Which have they done themselves, perhaps?) How have they responded?

Introduce the North Carolina survivor whose narrative is presented here. **Morris Glass** was born in Poland in 1928, the youngest of four children in a close family within a strong Jewish community. While he has warm memories of childhood, he also knew the daily threat of anti-Semitic taunts and attacks—usually accepted and even promoted by non-Jewish adults.

Have students consider these questions as they read Morris’s narrative. Remind them they’re reading about Poland in the 1930s, when Morris was a boy in elementary school.

1. What anti-Semitic insults and attacks does Morris relate in his narrative? How common were they? How did he and his friends respond?
2. How did a policeman respond when asked to help a Jewish boy who’d been beaten? How does Morris characterize the policeman’s response?
3. How is it apparent from Morris’s narrative that most non-Jewish adults would respond the same as the policeman?
4. What guidance did Morris’s parents give him about reacting to anti-Semitic acts? What advice did his father give him? How did his mother try to reassure him?
5. Why did Morris think the post-Olympic festival would be free of anti-Semitic attacks? What happened?
6. Why do you think Morris and his friends still felt “proud to be citizens of Poland” despite the anti-Semitism they experienced?
7. How does Morris’s experience reflect the history of European anti-Semitism as presented in the video?
8. Why, despite his experience with anti-Semitism in his childhood, does Morris say that “we could not have forecast or even imagined the destruction that would be visited upon us”?
9. How are Morris’s experiences similar to the problem of school bullying today? How do schools and communities work to counter the problem?
10. How can childhood bullying escalate to acts further up the Pyramid of Hate? How can communities work to stop the escalation?



ANTI-SEMITISM ■ MORRIS REMEMBERS THE THREAT

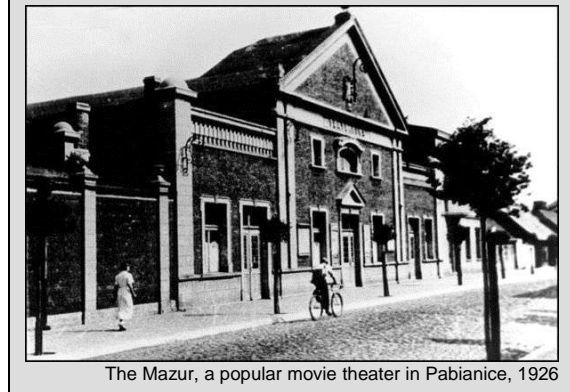
Born in 1928 in Pabianice, Poland, Morris Glass was the youngest of four children in a close-knit Jewish family. While he fondly remembers his growing-up years, they were clouded by the rampant anti-Semitism that had prevailed in Europe for centuries. Everyday activities like playing soccer and going to movies carried the threat of anti-Semitic bullying and attacks.

The happy times, and there were many, occurred within the context of my family and the Jewish community. My experiences in the larger Gentile [non-Jewish] world were quite different—it is difficult to describe the heartaches that I experienced as a child. Anti-Semitism was in the air, and I encountered it in many forms. Verbal taunts like “Dirty Jew,” “Christ Killer,” and “Go back to Palestine” were the most common expressions of anti-Semitism. But violence was also routine, and little children were not exempt from it.

One of my favorite pastimes, going to the movies, was often spoiled by anti-Semitic acts—names, threats, and beatings were common. Nevertheless, my friends and I looked forward to going to the movies every week even though our excitement was tempered by fear. Often as we approached the theater we would see groups of older Gentile boys waiting to bait us. We would try to hide our identity by taking off our hats with our school number emblazoned on them, and we would call each other by Gentile names like Valdi or Steffan. Despite our efforts, the Polish boys would still recognize us, and they would force us to pay them a bribe to enter the theater.



Morris's home town, Pabianice, Poland, in 1926



The Mazur, a popular movie theater in Pabianice, 1926

But the worst treatment would come after the film was over. Because of this we learned to sense when a movie was ending, and then to move quietly toward the exit in hope of escaping before the Gentile boys left. Once outside, we would run away as fast as we could. Sometimes this strategy worked but often it didn't. I could run fast, but others, like my friend Abraham, who was quite heavy and very slow, were not so fortunate.

One time after a movie, when I was about nine or ten, some Gentile boys caught Abraham and beat him badly. He had blood all over him. We hurriedly wiped away the blood and ran from the side street where the theater was located to the main street. Here we saw a policeman. Since the Polish boys were still following us, we went to the policeman and told him what had happened.

“Why did you beat him up?”

“Well, he is a Jew boy.”

“Oh, well, that’s okay.”

“Who did this to you?” he asked, and we pointed to the group of boys. The officer then asked them, “Why did you beat him up?” They said, “Well, he is a Jew boy.” “Oh, well, that’s okay,” shrugged the officer. This was a response we heard or intuited many times; it was just the way it was growing up a Jew in Poland.

In her kind way my mother would try to comfort me. She would tell me that only a few individuals were so cruel. I wasn't so sure that she was right.

pain. In her kind way she would try to comfort me. She would tell me that only a few individuals were so cruel. I wasn't so sure that she was right. I do know that even at a very young age, I felt fear. It was a feeling that was reinforced many, many times.

Running when provoked was a response which my friends and I learned from experience; it was also drummed into us by every adult. My dad explained that not responding was a way of protecting myself against greater violence. He said that if I fought back, I might be killed. We wanted to fight. We weren't cowards. But we were told not to, and furthermore, we knew that no one would come to our rescue. So we ran away—at the first sign of trouble, we ran as fast as we could. That's the way I remember it, and it is something that has stayed with me the rest of my life.

There were many more anti-Semitic episodes in my early life, but two in particular illuminate the pain and humiliation that I experienced. When I was nine, I wanted a real soccer ball, one made of leather. A ball like that cost a lot of money, so I saved and saved until finally I could buy the ball of my dreams. I was so happy and so proud of my beautiful new soccer ball. Unfortunately my happiness was short lived. One afternoon, not long after I had bought the ball, Abraham and I were tossing it back and forth as we walked home from school. Suddenly, one of us dropped it, and my precious ball rolled into the street. Before I could retrieve it, a wagon with two horses drove by, and I saw the driver deliberately take his whip and move the ball so that the wagon would run over it. My beautiful ball was crushed beneath the wagon's wheels! The driver laughed and laughed; he thought it was very funny. He knew that I was Jewish. I was broken-hearted; I cried and cried and cried. It was a small act, but it broke my young heart.

While the destruction of my soccer ball hurt me, another incident which I cannot forget is one that humiliated all of the Jewish children of Pabianice. This incident was connected with a celebration of the 1936 Olympics, and it illustrates how widespread and deeply embedded anti-Semitism was. After the Olympics were over, some of the outstanding Polish athletes toured the country. Several were scheduled to come to Pabianice, and a huge festival was organized to honor them. All of the elementary students were asked to march and perform gymnastics during the celebration. We were all required to wear the same outfit—black shorts, white shirts, and white hats.

I was so excited to be part of such a big event, and, since our school was Jewish, we were very anxious to do ourselves proud. We practiced and practiced so as not to make even the smallest mistake; we wanted to be perfect. We took our performance very seriously because we knew

Much like going to the movies, playing soccer also had its dangers. Whenever we played soccer, we would have one eye on the ball and with the other watch for Polish boys. When even two or three approached us, we would grab everything and run for our lives. We wanted to stand up to them, but we realized that it was hopeless; we knew that no one would protect us or come to our rescue. Usually, I ran fast enough to get away, but occasionally I was caught and beaten. When this happened, my mom would calmly take cold towels and lay them on the hurt places to lessen the



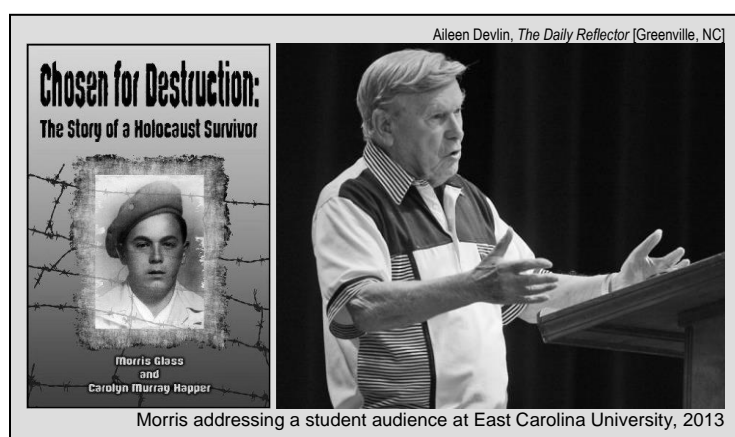
that the Jewish community as a whole would be judged by what we did. During the rehearsals with the other schools, the Gentile students jeered, called us names, and spit on us when we marched onto the field. Practices were excruciating, but I was certain that on the day of the ceremony it would be different. Yet even on that day, a day when we were so proud to be Polish and when we were all dressed alike, the taunts and spitting persisted. Thankfully we performed perfectly, but our pride was mingled with humiliation. Despite being treated in this manner, we loved our country and were proud to be citizens of Poland.

The anti-Semitic episodes from my childhood, painful though they were, were just the prelude to the horror that was to follow. The Nazi conquest of western Poland in 1939 and of eastern Poland in the summer of 1941 was accompanied by terror and murder on a scale unprecedented in history. Nothing in the experience of the European Jews prepared us for the destruction that was to come. We could not have forecast or even imagined the destruction that would be visited upon us.

Morris was 11 when Germany invaded Poland in 1939, beginning World War II. He and his family endured four and a half years in the Pabianice and Lodz ghettos. In August 1944 the residents of the Lodz ghetto were sent to Auschwitz, where Morris, his father, and his brother were separated from his mother and two sisters, whom he never saw again.

*Of 42 members of his family, only Morris, his brother, and a cousin survived. While in a Displaced Persons (DP) camp in Italy, Morris learned that his brother had survived and was in a DP camp in Germany. Through an uncle's sponsorship, they came to the U.S., arriving in New York City in June 1949. Morris settled in New Jersey where he bought and expanded a coat manufacturing company. There he met his wife Carol; they have seven children, 18 grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren. In 2000 they moved to Raleigh, NC, where three sons lived. For years Morris spoke across the state to school, military, and public groups about his Holocaust experience. In 2011 he published his Holocaust memoir, *Chosen for Destruction: The Story of a Holocaust Survivor*, co-written with historian Dr. Carolyn Murray Happer.*

[Read the continuation of Morris's narrative in Ch. 4 (The Holocaust: Ghetto) and Ch. 7 (Liberation).]



ONLINE RESOURCES

- Video: Morris Glass's presentation with Carolyn Happer (co-author of Mr. Glass's memoir, *Chosen for Destruction: The Story of a Holocaust Survivor*, 2011), Raleigh Weekend C-Span, 16 May 2013, 28:56
www.c-span.org/video/?313006-1/chosen-destruction
- Video: Morris Glass's presentation to the Naval Hospital Camp Lejeune, April 2013, video possibly taken by the U.S. Dept. of Defense, uploaded on YouTube by the *Jacksonville Daily News*, NC
www.youtube.com/watch?v=XSqk-kYI__o
- Jewish Life in Poland before the Holocaust (Facing History and Ourselves)
www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/resistance-during-holocaust/jewish-life-poland-holocaust

Excerpts from Ch. 4 of *Chosen for Destruction: The Story of a Holocaust Survivor*, by Morris Glass and Carolyn Murray Happer, 2011. Reprinted by permission of Morris Glass and Carolyn Murray Happer. Photograph by Aileen Devlin from the *Daily Reflector* [Greenville, NC] reproduced by permission.

II ■ HITLER'S RISE ■

OVERVIEW

■ *"This is going to end up being something quite awful and everybody better pay attention."*
—Barbara Ledermann Rodbell

In the century and a half before 1933, the people of Germany created enduring literature and music, profound theology and philosophy, and advanced science and scholarship. Germans were highly cultured and literate. Their universities were the most respected in Europe. And yet it was in this country that Nazism developed.

Many factors played a part in Adolf Hitler's rise to power. Hitler's arresting personality and his skills as a public speaker and propagandist contributed to his political success. His ability to attract followers can also be attributed to the bitterness many Germans felt following their country's defeat in World War I, resentment of the Versailles Treaty, weaknesses of the Weimar Republic, the Depression, and the growth of extreme nationalism in Germany.



Adolf Hitler poses with a group of SS members soon after his appointment as chancellor, February 1933.

WEIMAR REPUBLIC BLAMED FOR GERMANY'S DEFEAT In 1919 after defeat in World War I, Germany set up a republic. The Weimar Republic was created during the period of general exhaustion and shock that followed the war. The Kaiser, Germany's ruler, fled to Holland and although the military had lost the war, the new government was blamed for the defeat.

Germans were not prepared for a democratic government. The country had always known authoritarian leaders and had been ruled by an emperor since 1871. Many Germans saw the Weimar Republic as an interim government. When Germany held elections, it became a "Republic without Republicans" (i.e., citizens who supported a republic as their form of government). It did not have an elected majority and was disliked by many sides.

RESENTMENT OF VERSAILLES TREATY At the end of World War I, the Weimar government signed the Treaty of Versailles. The treaty fostered feelings of injustice and made many Germans want revenge. Article 231, known to many Germans as the "war guilt" clause, declared that the Central Powers had begun the war and were, therefore, responsible for the destruction it caused in the Allied nations. Germany was forced to give up land and pay reparations which Germans considered excessive and unfair.

HIGH INFLATION IN GERMANY Following Germany's defeat, the German mark became almost worthless. In 1914 \$1 was equal to 4 marks; in 1921 \$1 was equal to 191 marks; by 1923, 17,792 marks; and by 1923, 4,200,000,000 marks. Hitler benefited from the country's economic problems. Economic uncertainty and the fear of communism after the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia offered a rich soil for the seeds of fascism.

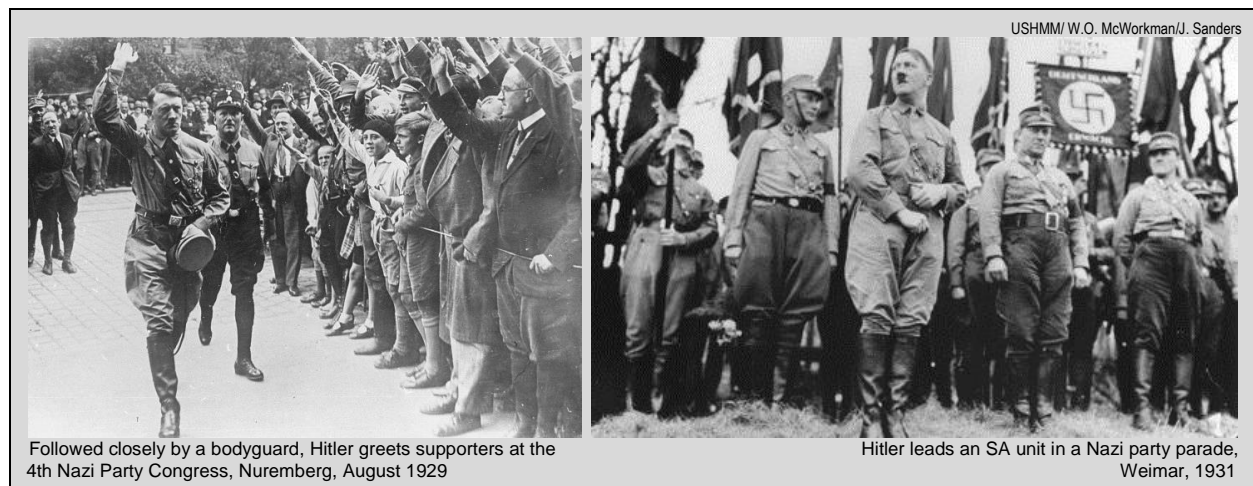
HITLER'S EARLY YEARS The fourth of six children, Adolf Hitler was born on April 20, 1889, in Austria. His stepfather, a customs official, died when Hitler was 14. His first years at school were successful until he entered a technical school at age 11, where his grades became so poor that he left school at 16. In 1907 Hitler's mother died, and he moved to Vienna. While there he applied for admission to the Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna, but was rejected for lack of talent. In 1913 he moved to Munich, Germany, and in 1914 joined the Bavarian army as a dispatch runner. In World War I, he took part in heavy fighting; he was wounded in 1916 and injured with mustard gas in 1918. He was recovering in a hospital when the armistice was signed on November 11, 1918. Hitler's wartime experiences reinforced central ideas he pursued later—his belief in the heroic virtues of war, his insistence that the German army had never been defeated, and his belief in the inequality of races and individuals.

NAZI PARTY FORMED In 1919, at age 30, Hitler returned to Munich, where former soldiers, embittered by their experiences, had formed political associations. Many groups blamed Germany's defeat on Jews who, they said, had "stabbed the army in the back." Hitler joined the German Socialist Workers' Party and within a year had transformed it into the National Socialist German Workers' Party, or Nazi Party. By 1922, he was well known in Munich. He rented beer halls for meetings and gave speeches repeating his basic themes—hatred of communists and Jews, the injustice of the Treaty of Versailles, the betrayal of the German army by Jews and pacifists, and the need to acquire enormous amounts of land for German settlement.

HITLER WRITES *MEIN KAMPF* On November 8, 1923, Hitler and his followers attempted a takeover of the government in Munich. The failure of this attempt resulted in a five-year jail sentence for Hitler. He served only nine months due to a sympathetic judge. During this time he wrote the first of the two volumes of *Mein Kampf* (*My Struggle*). This book became the bible of the Nazi movement. It clearly spelled out Hitler's program. In it, Hitler announces his intention to manipulate the masses by means of propaganda, forecasts a worldwide battle for racial superiority, and promises to free Germany from the limitations imposed by the Treaty of Versailles.

Released from prison in 1924, Hitler realized the Nazis must come to power legally. "Democracy must be defeated with the weapons of democracy," he said. His task was to reorganize his outlawed party and work toward his goals. The popularity of Hitler's racist ideas coupled with his remarkable gift of oratory united the disillusioned of every class—the bankrupt businessman, the army officer who couldn't adjust to civilian life, the unemployed worker or clerk, and the university student who had failed his exams.

PROFESSIONALS AND WORKERS ATTRACTED TO NAZI PARTY Hitler's ideas found support among all classes from lawyers, doctors, and scientists to factory workers. Among his



Followed closely by a bodyguard, Hitler greets supporters at the 4th Nazi Party Congress, Nuremberg, August 1929

Hitler leads an SA unit in a Nazi party parade, Weimar, 1931

earliest supporters were members of the lower middle class—small shopkeepers, farmers, clerks, and tradesmen. Generally, young Protestant men favored the party, while women, Catholics, and older socialists and democrats (i.e., supporters of democratic government) opposed it. Hitler offered something for everyone—the return of the glories of Germany, racial war as a normal state of life, the Jew as the common enemy of the German people, the German race as the saviors of the world. Hitler's racist appeals attracted anti-Semites, but most Germans were more attracted by other aspects of his program.

DEPRESSION BRINGS NEW SUPPORTERS Hitler's chance came during the Depression years. After 1929, many people blamed the Weimar government for the country's economic problems. By the early 1930s, Germany was in a desperate state. Six million people—one third of the work force—was out of work. Hitler's program appealed to a cross-section of the German public who perceived the Great Depression as a unique German phenomenon rather than as a worldwide disaster.



Hitler's automobile is swamped by supporters as it leaves the Chancellery after Hitler's meeting with President von Hindenburg, November 19, 1932.

USHMM

Hitler salutes a crowd lining the streets of Hamburg, August 17, 1934.

HITLER APPOINTED CHANCELLOR

The Nazi party surprised observers with its success in the parliamentary elections of 1930, winning 107 seats in the Reichstag, or parliament. By July 1932 the Nazis had gained control of 230 seats to become the strongest single party. In January 1933, an aging President Paul von Hindenburg was persuaded to appoint Hitler Chancellor of the Reich. Hindenburg believed Hitler could lead Germany out of its political and economic crisis. Hindenburg also believed Hitler could be controlled. Once in power, Hitler immediately took steps to end democracy and turn the nation into a dictatorship. He began by calling a new election for March 1933. The Nazi-controlled Reichstag then passed the Emergency Decree. All civil rights—free speech, freedom of the press, the right to assemble, the privacy of the mails—were suspended.

Until the election, Hitler used the power of emergency decrees to rule. All open opposition came to an end. Newspaper offices and radio stations were wrecked. He created special security forces that murdered or arrested leaders of the communist, socialist, and other opposition political parties.

CIVIL RIGHTS SUSPENDED BY ENABLING ACT On the first day the new Reichstag met, the Nazis helped push through the Enabling Act. This act provided legal backing for the Nazi dictatorship. No charges had to be filed to lock people up. Warrants did not have to be issued for arrests. "Enemies of the people and the state" were sent to concentration camps. The first

camps opened soon after Hitler took power. The Reichstag adjourned, never again to have an effective voice in the affairs of Germany during Hitler's rule.

THIRD REICH COMES TO POWER When Hindenburg died in August 1934, Hitler saw his chance to consolidate his power. He united the offices of President and Chancellor to become the Supreme Head of State and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. The democratic state was dead. Hitler's Third Reich had come to power.



ONLINE RESOURCES

- Resources from the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum
 - ♦ Adolf Hitler (five-part overview) encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/adolf-hitler?series=18006
 - ♦ Video: Aftermath of World War One and the Rise of Nazism, 1918-1933
www.ushmm.org/learn/introduction-to-the-holocaust/path-to-nazi-genocide/chapter-1/aftermath-of-world-war-i-and-the-rise-of-nazism-1918-1933
- Resources from Facing History and Ourselves
 - ♦ The Rise of the Nazi Party (lesson)
www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/teaching-holocaust-and-human-behavior/rise-nazi-party
 - ♦ Video: Hitler's Rise to Power, 1918-1933 (9:14)
www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/video/hitlers-rise-power-1918-1933
- Resources from Yad Vashem (World Holocaust Remembrance Center, Israel)
 - ♦ Timeline: Germany, 1914-1933 www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/holocaust/timeline/timeline.asp
 - ♦ Rise of the Nazis and Beginning of Persecution www.yadvashem.org/holocaust/about/nazi-germany-1933-39/beginning-of-persecution.html
- SEE the online Holocaust teaching resources recommended by North Carolina Holocaust educators. ■
www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/holocaust-council/resources/teachingresources.pdf



Access the valuable teaching resources of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum at www.ushmm.org/educators/teaching-about-the-holocaust. The museum's offerings include lesson plans, teaching guidelines, online activities, interactive maps, audio and video collections, the *Holocaust Encyclopedia*, and other exemplary classroom resources.

LESSON ■ HITLER'S RISE

Narrative: Young Jews Become Aware

Those who witness momentous events that change the nation in a day—the 9/11 attacks, the assassination of President Kennedy, the attack on Pearl Harbor—remember exactly how they learned of the event and how it changed their lives. But life-changing *processes* that take a while to emerge—those may be more apparent to some people than to others. When emerging changes occur in childhood, one's coming-to-awareness is more complicated.

Here we read memories from five North Carolina survivors about how they learned of Hitler's rise and threat. In parentheses are each survivor's age and country of residence when Hitler came to power in 1933.

- ♦ **Morris Glass** (Poland, 5). Morris's family remained in their town and took in relatives who were forced to leave Germany because they were Polish-born Jews.
- ♦ **Barbara Ledermann Rodbell** (Germany, 8). Barbara's family moved to the Netherlands after the Nazis gained control in Germany.
- ♦ **Simone Weil Lipman** (France, 13). Simone's family stayed in northeast France near the border with Germany until the Nazis conquered France.
- ♦ **Jack Hoffmann** (Austria, 9). Jack's family registered to get visas to leave Austria after the Nazis took control in 1938.
- ♦ **Susan Cernyak-Spatz** (Germany, 11). Susan's family moved to Austria when Hitler came to power, then to Czechoslovakia when Austria came under Nazi control. Her father was planning their secret emigration when the war began.

Have students consider these questions as they read the survivors' memories. Remind them to consider the survivor's age at the time.

1. How did each young person become aware of Hitler's rise to power? Who learned from family members? Who witnessed major changes before the war began in 1939?
2. How did their parents respond? Did the parents decide to emigrate? Why or why not?
3. Why did Morris's German relatives have to come live with them in Poland in 1938?
4. What event did Barbara's uncle witness in 1929 that led to his warning that "everybody better pay attention" to Hitler?
5. Why did Barbara's father resist leaving Germany? What convinced him to leave?
6. Why was Simone aware of Hitler's growing threat? Why did her father feel secure despite the threat?
7. What did Simone and Jack witness, in France and Austria, that made the threat visible to them before the war?
8. Why has Susan wondered why her two girlfriends' parents accepted her (after Hitler's takeover) even though she was Jewish?
9. Did Susan understand the threat posed by the Hitler Youth in 1933? Why does she think her parents may have purposely kept her unaware of the Nazi threat?
10. Susan's parents left Germany after Hitler came to power, but stayed in Europe. Why does that puzzle Susan?
11. Which of these survivors would you want to interview about becoming aware of the Nazi threat? What questions would you ask? What guidance would you ask for?

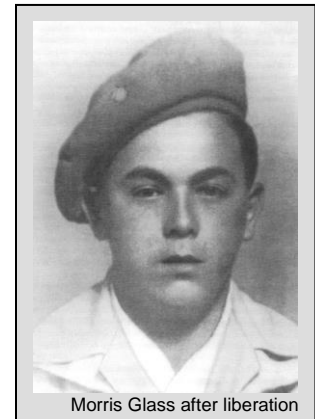


■ HITLER'S RISE ■

YOUNG JEWS BECOME AWARE

When did young Jews in Europe become aware of the rising threat from Hitler and his Nazi Party? From the Nazis' growing presence in the 1920s to Hitler's takeover in 1933, how did young people learn "what was going on"? These five survivors were 5 to 13 years old when Hitler came to power in January 1933. At the time they lived in Germany, Poland, France, and Austria (the latter three would be taken over by Germany). Here they recall the early warnings that they and their families faced deep danger.

MORRIS GLASS (born 1928, Poland; five years old when Hitler came to power). My father had an uncle, Bernard, who moved to Germany in the 1920s. At that time, Germany had a democratic government and a tolerant society, and Uncle Bernard settled down, established a medical practice, and raised his family there. Bernard thought highly of Germany; in fact, he considered himself to be German. But his life there began to change in 1933 when Hitler gained power and the Nazis began to exclude the Jews from German life and to persecute them. Finally, in 1938, the Nazis expelled all Polish-born Jews and forced them to return to Poland; among those exiled were Bernard and his son Max. My father met them at the border and brought them to live with us. Neither survived the Holocaust. Despite his suffering at the hands of the Nazis, Uncle Bernard proudly admitted to being a German.



Morris Glass after liberation

— Morris Glass and Carolyn Murray Happer, *Chosen for Destruction: The Story of a Holocaust Survivor*, 2011

BARBARA LEDERMANN RODBELL (born 1925, Germany; eight years old when Hitler came to power). I remember my childhood in Berlin as being wonderful. My father loved Berlin, and we went all over Berlin as soon as I could walk. He showed me absolutely everything, every little corner. He liked history and music and we went to museums. We always went to Holland on vacation. In 1933 when we went to Holland on vacation, one of my father's cousins, Uncle Biet Pierson, who was a journalist, an editor of a newspaper in The Hague, told my mother that he felt we should not go back home. When Uncle Biet was 19 and just learning to be a journalist, he had been sent to Munich [Germany] to cover a trial. Nobody in Holland had paid any attention to

"You pay attention to this trial. This is going to end up being something quite awful and everybody better pay attention." It was Hitler's trial in 1924.

this trial. When he came back and wrote up his report, they said to him, "Why are you making such a fuss?" And he said, "You pay attention to this trial. This is going to end up being something quite awful and everybody better pay attention." It was Hitler's trial in 1924.*



USHMM/Barbara Ledermann Rodbell
Barbara Ledermann in Amsterdam, ca. 1936

* Hitler was tried and convicted of treason in 1924 after the failed Beer Hall Putsch in Munich in November 1923, in which he and his Nazi followers attempted to take over the government of Bavaria, a region of Germany. He was sentenced to five years in prison but was released after nine months. While in prison he wrote his infamous *Mein Kampf* (*My Struggle*).

He was the only one of them who paid any attention to it. It took ten years until things really heated up. So my mother said to my father, “I think we shouldn’t go back.” And my father said, “What does a lawyer do in a foreign country? What am I going to do?” And she said, “You’ll find something to do. I really think we should not go back.” And so my father said, “Well, I’m going to go back and see what I can do.” He’d already been a lawyer for 25 years. It was practically impossible for him to start over. So he returned to Berlin and went to his office, and there were his secretaries and assistants. There was also a big letter from the government, which said that from then on he could have only Jewish clients. My father had very few Jewish clients. He had big companies that were his clients, and now he could not represent them anymore. He packed up.

So then my father came back to Holland and worked for a Dutch lawyer, but he had to learn Dutch, of course. He handled the clients who were very much like him, who had come to Holland and couldn’t practice because they didn’t have the Dutch degree. So he went to the university and graduated in three years in a foreign language. It was very hard. He also worked at the same time. We were very proud of him. There was a big party and everybody came. Then a few years later the Germans invaded, and it was all over.

____Barbara Ledermann Rodbell, oral testimony, 1990, U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum
collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn504687

SIMONE WEIL LIPMAN (*born 1920, France; 13 years old when Hitler came to power*). I lived in Strasbourg, on the border with Germany. You just had to cross the Rhine River and you were in Germany. So what was happening in Germany from the late 1920s on, from the rise of Hitler—it was part of my growing-up years. I remember April 1, 1933, when we had a solemn service in our synagogue in Strasbourg because of the restrictions on Jews, and Hitler being installed.* We began to have lot of Jewish refugees come into the city. It was not happening overnight. Although I thought it would never happen in France—French people don’t do things like that—my parents probably thought differently, although they took no measures to protect themselves from anything. My father, confident in his status of a loyal French citizen, continued his business to the last day, never put a penny aside, never did anything. But I



***It came gradually.
And then after that,
it was just fighting
for your survival.***

grew up with the awareness that, indeed, it can happen to the Jews. And I know the history of the Jews. So '33—this is '39 [when the war begins], six years: it came gradually. And then after that, it was just fighting for your survival, you know, and fighting for the survival of others, for those of us who got involved in that [the Resistance].

____Simone Marguerite (Weil) Lipman, oral testimony, 1998, U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum
collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn506653

JACK HOFFMANN (*born 1924, Poland; family moved to Austria in 1926; nine years old when Hitler came to power*). In 1933 I was nine years old; we were living in Vienna. When Hitler came to power, at first you sort of took note of it. But shortly into the '30s, from 1933 onward, we had a lot of German Jews coming to Vienna, particularly entertainers who could no longer practice their profession. We had all sorts of collections for them; the Jewish community was quite active in Vienna.

* On April 1, 1933, several months after Hitler became chancellor of Germany, he ordered a boycott of all Jewish businesses. In the following weeks and months, harsh restrictions were imposed on the rights and freedoms of Jews in Germany.

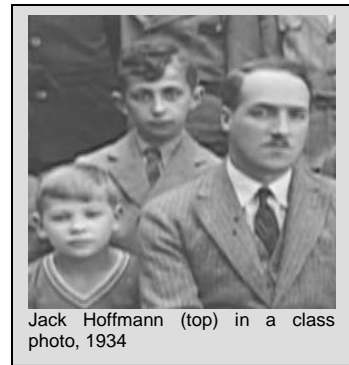
In 1934, the Austrian Nazis assassinated the Austrian chancellor, Engelbert Dollfuss, and this is when we became more aware of what was going on. The Nazis were quite active, more in the country than in Vienna, but there were all sorts of marches and flag-waving and yelling anti-Semitic slogans going on; but where we were, it was not too prevalent.

That summer when Dollfuss was assassinated, we were in lower Austria where we rented a very small cottage from a farmer, and we heard about the assassination. My father called [from Vienna] and

There were all sorts of marches and flag-waving and yelling anti-Semitic slogans going on . . .

told us not to worry about it and that in our neighborhood everything was quiet. We were asked to put lighted candles in our windows [for mourning], and shortly after that we went back into the city, and we were taught a hymn for Dollfuss. This made us more aware of what was going on next door in Germany, and what was happening to a greater extent in Austria itself.

____Jack Hoffmann, oral testimony, 2006, U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn126354



Jack Hoffmann (top) in a class photo, 1934

SUSAN ECKSTEIN CERNYAK-SPATZ (born 1922, Austria; seven years old when she joined her parents in Berlin, Germany; 11 years old when Hitler came to power). I found two good friends in the lyceum [school] very shortly after I entered [1932], Herta Dunsig and Dita Raetz-Waldenburg. If I remember correctly, the fathers of both girls were either in the SA or the SS, but it seems no one was bothered by that. Later on, I have often wondered why I was so completely accepted by Herta's as well as Dita's parents. This might have something to do with Dr. Goebbel's* dictum: "Every German knows some very nice and decent Jews. If we take all of them into consideration, we will never solve the Jewish problem."



Susan Cernyak-Spatz after liberation

In the summer of 1933, I encountered the first Nazi youth groups I'd ever seen. We were in Kolberg on the Baltic Sea, a well-known summer resort. I remember walking with our maid and a marching band of either Hitler Youth or Pimpfe—that was the younger group, something on the order of Cub Scouts—came down the street. I remember being envious that I could not belong to and cheer the group.

I wonder whether or not my parents protected me from any knowledge of what was going on, or whether the district we lived in simply was not populated by rabid fanatics.

Many times, when I hear survivors from Berlin talk about how they were persecuted and discriminated against during the early years of the Hitler regime, I wonder whether or not my parents protected me from any knowledge of what was going on, or whether the district we lived in simply was not populated by rabid fanatics. To this day I cannot understand why my father, such an ardent Zionist,[†] did not immigrate to Palestine when Hitler came to power. I suspect Mother was not particularly attracted to sand and heat and a pioneering lifestyle, and Father, of course, deferred to her wishes.

* Joseph Goebbels was Hitler's Minister of Propaganda in the Third Reich.

[†] A Zionist was a person supporting the creation of a Jewish nation in the Middle East. The nation of Israel was created in 1948.

The whole world was holding its collective breath about the madman's next move.

I suppose we knew about political events, but simply refused to be affected by them. I am sure the parents of our group were making arrangements to leave for overseas; at least I hope they had more sense than my parents.

I will never know what prompted my parents to make this decision at that particular time [to move to Austria in 1936] rather than emigrate from Europe entirely. Hitler had made numerous remarks in his speeches about Austria actually belonging to the greater German Reich, if not immediately, then soon. The whole world was holding its collective breath about the madman's next move.

____ Susan Cernyak-Spatz, *Protective Custody Prisoner 34042*, 2005



- **MORRIS GLASS** survived the Lodz Ghetto and the Auschwitz and Dachau concentration camps. He was 17 when liberated.
- **BARBARA RODBELL** worked with the Dutch Resistance in Amsterdam until liberation. She was 20 when the Allies freed the Netherlands.
- **SIMONE LIPMAN** helped smuggle Jewish children to safe havens in France and Switzerland. She was 24 when the Allies freed France.
- **JACK HOFFMANN** was saved through the Kindertransport program. He was 15 when he arrived in England and 16 when he arrived in the U.S.
- **SUSAN CERNYAK-SPATZ** was deported to Auschwitz without her parents. She was 23 when liberated.

ONLINE RESOURCES

- The Rise of the Nazi Party, 1919-1933 (lesson, Facing History and Ourselves)
www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/teaching-holocaust-and-human-behavior/rise-nazi-party
- "Hitler: New Power in Germany," *The New York Times*, December 24, 1924 (as presented in "1922: Hitler in Bavaria," *NYT*, 2-10-2015) www.nytimes.com/times-insider/2015/02/10/1922-hitler-in-bavaria/
- German Jewish Refugees, 1933-1939 (U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum)
encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/german-jewish-refugees-1933-1939
- Maps: European Jewish Population (USHMM)
 - ♦ ca. 1933 encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/map/european-jewish-population-distribution-ca-1933
 - ♦ ca. 1950 encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/map/european-jewish-population-distribution-ca-1950
 - ♦ To compare maps: Remaining Jewish Population in Europe, 1945
encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/remaining-jewish-population-of-europe-in-1945

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