



THE HOLOCAUST ART AND WRITING CONTEST
A RETROSPECTIVE: 1999–2009

A PARTNERSHIP OF CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY AND THE “1939” CLUB

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*With deep gratitude to
Hilda and Harry Eisen,
Holocaust Survivors,
for sponsoring the publication of this book*

The "1939" Club

An Organization of Holocaust Survivors and Descendants

8950 W. Olympic Blvd. #437

Beverly Hills, CA 90211

www.1939club.org

Ten Years. That's how long it has been since we first began the annual Holocaust Art and Writing Contest with Chapman University.

Starting out as a modest endeavor, it has evolved into one of the largest such contests in the country—and certainly the largest co-sponsored by a university and a survivors' organization. Initially, we had a hundred or so middle and high school students participate in an essay contest. Over the years, we added poetry and art. One hundred grew exponentially. This past year nearly 5,500, yes, five thousand five hundred, students participated in the contest. But this large number doesn't tell the whole story. Many more were affected as the students shared their project with their parents, siblings, classmates, and friends. The real effect is probably on ten times as many as those who entered the contest.

The contest presents students the unique opportunity to learn the lessons of the Holocaust in today's world and reflect on those lessons in a medium of which they are most comfortable. It also gives them the opportunity to meet with Holocaust survivors, probably the last generation of students to do so.

Everyone is a winner. Students, teachers, parents and our society are all beneficiaries. As are Holocaust survivors. Survivors benefit because their stories are absorbed by young minds who will be witnesses to the future.

As we complete our first ten years, we look forward to our next ten and beyond. We will increase participation and may even expand the medium. Our work is not over; we still have important lessons to teach. We hope you all join us in our efforts. And celebrate with us a decade of extraordinary accomplishment.



William Elperin
President

Since 2000, Publications International, Ltd. has partnered with Chapman University to help perpetuate the university's annual Holocaust Writing & Art Competition. A copy of our book, *The Holocaust Chronicle* — an illustrated account of the enormous crime, its root causes, and its aftermath — is given to every middle- and high-school student who enters the competition.

At receptions following each year's awards ceremony, students enjoy unique opportunities to meet and speak with Holocaust survivors — living eyewitnesses to the sorry consequences of institutionalized hatred and violence. Survivors sign students' copies of *The Holocaust Chronicle*, bringing a critical element of "today" to the Holocaust story.

The book has been published in numerous languages around the world. Although the interest of foreign publishers has been immensely gratifying, we must note that one of the book's earliest champions was Chapman, particularly Dr. Marilyn Harran, who holds the university's Stern Chair in Holocaust Education, and who is a tireless advocate for Holocaust awareness in schools and in communities.

Because of dedicated efforts by Chapman University, Dr. Harran, The "1939" Club, and many other enthusiastic people and organizations, Holocaust education flourishes in Orange County, and wherever competition participants and Chapman students find themselves later in life.

Publications International, Ltd. is proud to be part of this invaluable, ongoing program.

Best wishes for the future,

Louis Weber
President & CEO, Publications International, Ltd.
Lincolnwood, Illinois

In 1999, Chapman University began an exciting new partnership with The “1939” Club, an Organization of Holocaust Survivors and Descendants. The first year of the Holocaust Writing Contest coincided with the publication of *The Holocaust Chronicle: A History in Words and Pictures*, a ground-breaking, 750-page history of the Holocaust. We were thrilled when Louis Weber and Publications International generously donated copies to each teacher and student participating in the contest. We knew it would be a valued resource, but we had no idea that it would become so much more. At the reception following the first awards ceremony, students seized the opportunity to have their books signed by the dozens of Holocaust survivors/witnesses who were present. And they have done so each year thereafter. As a result, each student’s book becomes uniquely his or her own, the tangible evidence of an unforgettable day and a physical link between the witnesses to the Holocaust and their witnesses to the future.

We were proud that 48 schools chose to participate in that first contest. Little did we know that a decade later the number of schools would nearly double, to 92, and the that the number of students participating would grow from the hundreds into the thousands. In the 10th annual contest, some 5,500 students from private, public, and parochial schools participated. Several schools now host their own contests to honor not only the work of their three school representatives, but of all the students in their school who engage the contest prompt.

Over the 10 years, the contest has come to include art, as well as poetry and prose. Much has changed, but what has remained the same is the personal connection between survivors and students. Thanks to The “1939” Club and the USC Shoah Foundation Institute, students have the opportunity to view a full-length oral testimony. Historical events that once seemed distant become vividly real and deeply personal. History becomes shared story, the threads that connect us as human beings from generation to generation.

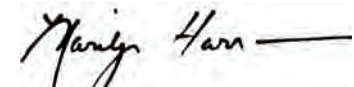
The extraordinary success of the contest is a tribute to our partner The “1939” Club, to Louis Weber who has donated more than 3,000 copies of *The Holocaust Chronicle* over the life of the contest, and to the several generous individuals and organizations that support the contest each year and without whom we would not be able to recognize and honor every school representative and participating teacher.

Above all, the contest is a tribute to the dedicated teachers who often overcome significant obstacles to involve their students in the contest. Their commitment and hard work have brought this extraordinary learning opportunity to literally tens of thousands of students.

Jessica MyLymuk, now assistant director of the Rodgers Center for Holocaust Education at Chapman University, is the engine of dedication and energy that powers the contest each year. I am also deeply grateful to my faculty colleague Dr. Jan Osborn who has been a valued advisor and collaborator since the inception of the contest, and to our Rodgers Center assistant for the last several years, Ashley Bloomfield.

And lastly, the contest is a tribute to two visionary presidents, William Elperin of The “1939” Club, and Dr. James L. Doti, President of Chapman University, who saw the enormous potential in this very special partnership between a Holocaust survivors’ organization and a private university. This 10-year retrospective book records and celebrates one aspect of what continues to be a multi-faceted partnership and friendship.

The publication of this book has been made possible by Hilda and Harry Eisen, both survivors of the Holocaust, whose generosity is equaled only by their courage and humanity. We are deeply grateful to them.


Marilyn J. Harran, Ph.D.

Participating Schools 1999-2009

Abiding Savior Lutheran School
 Acaciawood College Preparatory Academy
 Alamitos Intermediate School
 Aliso Viejo Middle School
 Anaheim High School
 Annunciation Catholic School
 Archer School for Girls
 Bancroft Middle School
 Bella Vista High School
 Bella Vista Middle School
 Bell Gardens Intermediate School
 Belvedere Middle School
 Bernardo Yorba Middle School
 Bernice Ayer Middle School
 Beverly Hills High School
 Brea Junior High School
 Brea Olinda High School
 Brentwood School
 Brookhurst Junior High School
 Buena Vista High School
 C. E. Utt Middle School
 Canyon High School
 Canyon Springs High School
 Capistrano Valley High School
 Carden Conservatory
 Carden of the Foothills School
 Carr Intermediate School
 Carson High School
 Century High School
 Cerro Villa Middle School
 Charles Evans Hughes Middle School
 Corona del Mar High School
 Corona del Mar Junior High School
 Coronado Middle School
 Costa Mesa Middle School
 Costa Mesa High School
 The Country School

Crescent Intermediate School
 Cubberly School
 Don Juan Avila Middle School
 Downey High School
 D. Russell Parks Junior High School
 Dr. Albert Schweitzer School
 Dwyer Middle School
 Eagle Rock High School
 Eagles Peak Charter School
 Edison High School
 El Camino Real High School
 Elizabeth Hudson School
 El Rancho Charter School
 El Rancho High School
 El Toro High School
 Emmaus Lutheran School
 Esperanza High School
 Fairmont Private School
 Faylane Elementary School
 Foothill High School
 Franklin High School
 Fred Moiola Elementary School
 Fulton Middle School
 Garden Grove High School
 Glendale High School
 Granite Hills High School
 Grover Cleveland High School
 Harbor Day School
 Harkham Hillel Hebrew Academy
 Harvard-Westlake School
 Hebrew Academy
 Herbert Hoover High School
 High Tech High School
 Hill Classical Middle School
 Hillview High School
 Holy Family Cathedral School
 Hoover Middle School

Hughes Middle School
 Huntington Park Baptist School
 Huntington Park High School
 Imperial Middle School
 J. Serra Catholic High School
 James A. Garfield High School
 Jefferson Leadership Academy
 John F. Kennedy High School
 Kadima Hebrew Academy
 Kadima Heschel West Middle School
 Katella High School
 Kraemer Middle School
 L.R. Green Elementary School
 La Colina Junior High School
 Ladera Vista Junior High School
 La Escuela Nueva
 Laguna Blanca School
 Laguna Hills High School
 Lakeside Middle School
 Lakewood High School
 La Purisima School
 La Quinta High School
 La Serna High School
 Lathrop Intermediate School
 Lathrop Technology Magnet
 Lexington Junior High School
 Loara High School
 Loma Learning Center
 Los Angeles Hebrew High School
 Louis Lake High School
 MacArthur Fundamental
 Intermediate School
 Marco Forster Middle School
 Margarita Middle School
 Margarita High School
 Mater Dei High School
 McFadden Intermediate

McPherson Magnet School
Mesa View Middle School
Millikan High School
Mission Viejo High School
Monrovia High School
Montclair High School
Mount Miguel High School
Newcomb Academy
Niguel Hills Middle School
Northwood High School
Oak Middle School
Oakridge Private School
Oasis High School
Ocean View High School
Orange County Charter School
Orange County Christian School
Orange County High School of the Arts
Orange High School
Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School
Our Lady of Guadalupe School
Our Lady Queen of Angels School
Oxford Academy
Palm Desert Middle School
Paramount High School West Campus
Perry Lindsey
 International Studies Magnet
Polaris High School
Portola Middle School
Prince of Peace Lutheran School
Ralston Intermediate School
Rancho Verde High School
Red Hill Lutheran School
Rosary High School
Saddleback Valley Christian School
Santa Ana High School
Santa Ana Middle College High School
Santa Ana Nativity School

Santa Margarita Catholic High School
Santa Monica High School
Santiago High School
Santiago Middle School
Serra Catholic School
Serrano Intermediate School
Servite High School
Shorecliffs Middle School
Sierra Vista Middle School
Sonora High School
South Junior High School
South Lake Middle School
Spurgeon Intermediate
St. Angela Merici School
St. Anne School
St. Anthony Claret Catholic School
St. Barbara School
St. Boniface Parish School
St. Cecilia School
St. Columban School
St. Edward the Confessor School
St. Francis of Assisi
 Parish School (Yorba Linda)
St. Francis of Assisi School (Vista)
St. Joachim School
St. John the Baptist School
St. John's Episcopal School
St. Joseph Catholic School
St. Juliana School
St. Margaret's Episcopal School
St. Mary's School
St. Mel Elementary School
St. Michael's College Prep High School
St. Norbert Parish School
St. Paul's Lutheran School
St. Pius V School
Stacey Middle School

Stanford Middle School
Stephen R. Fitz Intermediate School
Sunny Hills High School
Talbert Middle School
Tarbut V'Torah Community Day School
Terra Cotta Middle School
Tesoro High School
TeWinkle Middle School
Thurston Middle School
Trabuco Hills High School
Travis Ranch Middle School
Trinity Lutheran Christian School
Troy High School
Tuffree Middle School
University High School
Upland High School
Vail High School
Valencia High School
Valley High School
Valley Middle School
Villa Park High School
Vista View Middle School
Walter Reed Middle School
Walton Intermediate School
Warren High School
Washington Middle School
Western High School
Westminster High School
Whittier Christian High School
Wildwood School
Willard Intermediate School
Will Rogers Middle School
Woodbridge High School
Woodrow Wilson Middle School
Yorba Linda Middle School

Judges 1999-2009

Krista Ackerman

Joenathann Alandy

Dan Alba

David Aretha

Jeremy Bernstein

Gabriel Bonfanti

Judy Brostoff

James Brown

Penny Bryan

Nancy Chase

Shannon David

William Elperin

Marissa Garcia

Dolores Gaunty-Porter

Elane Norych Geller

Sam Goetz

Deborah Granger

Joyce Greenspan

Felicia Habersfeld

Marilyn Harran

Teresa Hill

Steve Hitter

David Hogan

Dana Hollander

Kanani Hoopai

Fr. Jerry Horan

Eileen Jankowski

Marie Kaufman

Heather Kauten

Jamie Kough

Justin Landis

Laura Lascoe

Scott Law

Leon Leyson

Fr. Rafael Luévano

Jason Lupei

Krista Lupica

Mary Mahoney

Reverend John McAndrew

Michael Nutkiewicz

Kevin O'Brien

Kevin O'Grady

Jan Osborn

Mila Page

Karin Polacheck

John Rocco

Sally Roisman

Wendy Salmond

Bonnie Samotin

Susan Samuelli

Sally Schwartz

Emily Scott

Amy Sydoruk

Thomas Woessner

National Honorary Judge

Elie Wiesel



HOLOCAUST

ART AND WRITING CONTEST

RETROSPECTIVE

One Child's Voice

Elane Norych Geller

Child survivor of
Bergen-Belsen concentration camp

Prompt

History is our story, how we treat one another, how we live, and how we die. Consider the girl in the picture above. Consider the emotions reflected in her eyes, possibly sadness, or is it defiance? Possibly strength, or is it pride? Who is she? What is her story? What is her message to us? Give her a voice.

Chapman University

THE HOLOCAUST CHRONICLE



A HISTORY IN WORDS
AND PICTURES

HOLOCAUST ESSAY CONTEST

Holocaust Essay Contest

March 13, 2000

First Place, Middle School Essay

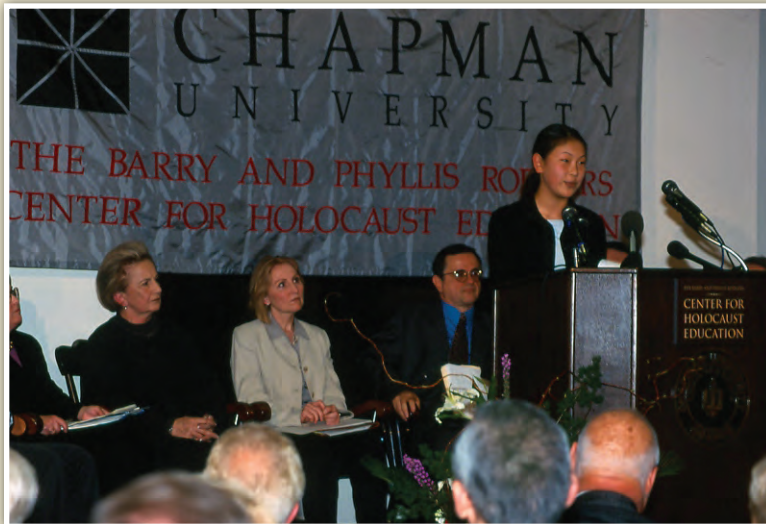
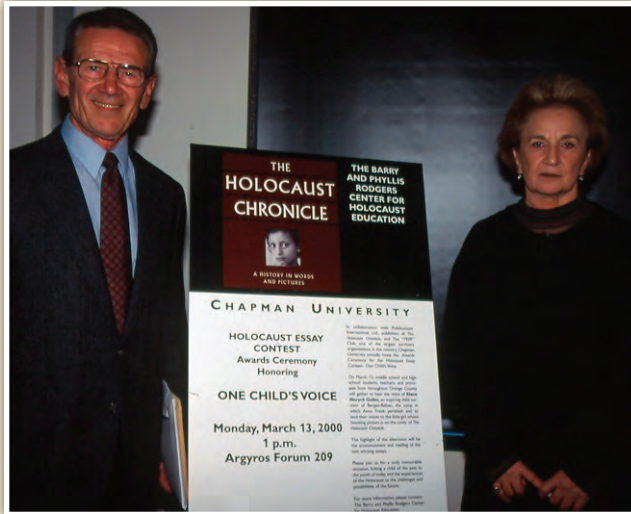
Ann Shin

Imperial Middle School, La Habra

First Place, High School Essay

Alexandra Toumanoff

University High School, Los Angeles





Ann Shin

8th Grade

Imperial Middle School

Robert Caplinger, Teacher

First Place, Middle School Essay

Because She Had Hope

Her only crime was being Jewish. She was escorted into a new world with a blindfold of hate covering her eyes and ropes of oppression binding her small hands. The young girl had nowhere to run except into the arms of death. Nazi soldiers in a line, with their guns pointed toward her, awaited the signal to fire.

This child knew nothing of the splendors and joys outside the microcosmic hell in which she was determined to survive. Her very innocence of being a youth had been stripped from her. Her memories of childhood lacked the carefree happiness of being young. She was blinded by the Nazis' act of cruel, inhuman torture. Everyday the innocent child wondered when it would be her own body next to the rotting carcasses of her comrades.

She had hope.

Through all the death and destruction of her people, she fought to remain a burning candle of optimism. This little girl refused to give in to the idea that she was nothing more than a vehicle for manual labor. Her candle, her heart, had a force field of perseverance and pride. With each beat, her determination to survive strengthened. This child would show the world that her candle, her single flame, was all that was needed to give others warmth, grace, and a spark, to rekindle their own.

She had hope.

Being defeated was not an option. She would not die like the others. This little girl, a child of only six or seven, would live to tell this denial of human rights abroad.

She had hope.

In her quiet desperation to survive, this child touched the hearts of yesterday and today, and will inspire tomorrow. Her very essence of Holocaust survival is what humanity needs today, to live on for a better future. Without such hope, one's life is but a feeble candle in the wind, squelched by the slightest gust; a candle whose light will no longer be visible to those groping about in the darkness of life's storms.

Society must realize that to save itself from the dark realms of hatred and despair, it must be in accordance with this child, with a defense of determination and hope to preserve the very essence, the purpose of life, a significant blissful existence that is forever sought after.

Like her, earthly treasures mustn't be sought after to achieve this dream, the answer is solely within the earth of mankind.

Because she had hope.

Alexandra Toumanoff

10th Grade
University High School
Ilene Thaler, Teacher

First Place, High School Essay

A Child's Story

I don't take anything for granted anymore. There was a time when I thought adults knew everything and would take care of me. I thought the grown-up world was a place that made sense. Now I know better.

I was one of the lucky ones. World War II began when I was eight, and I was Jewish. Hide and Seek was my favorite game. The day they came to take my family away I was hiding inside the spooky tree, waiting for my sister Brigitte to give up and holler for me to show myself. I was trying to keep a daddy long legs from getting any closer when I heard Brigitte scream. Peeking, I saw my family violently herded into a windowless van. Brigitte had screamed because the van door was slammed on her fingers. Terrified, my parents bade her shush. Her agony did not matter. She was a Jew. She was nothing.

Night's chilly fingers crept into my oak. Numb, I stumbled out of my sanctuary. Normally, Mother would be fussing over me and Brigitte, pulling leaves from our hair, scolding us for running in the dirt before dinner. The kitchen would be filled with savory smells. I was so hungry, I made for our garbage can and bolted down stew-soaked bread pieces I'd abandoned at lunch.

For two days I huddled in my tree, listening to neighbors chatter about their son Stephan. He was so patriotic, so wholesome, so handsome in his Hitler Youth uniform. Did they know what had happened to my family?

On the third night, I sneaked behind nearby restaurants and went through their garbage. As I scavenged, I heard a noise behind me. I froze, terrified. Then I heard the commanding voice of a child, his belligerent tone masking fear.

"That trash is ours! Have you been sent to find us? Who are you?" Three more ghostly figures, wisps of children, crept out from behind the first. They were shivering, like me.

I was so happy to see other children, I cried. I saw weakly, "My family was taken away. Please, I am hungry." The child who had addressed me nodded to the rest and came over and put his arm around me. He stank. He said, "The same happened to us. If you want to, come with us."

And so I did. We hid during the day, and foraged like rats at night.

The adults we glimpsed seemed indifferent to closing shops and disappearing people. Later on, when the world asked how it could have happened, those same adults pleaded ignorance and decried the atrocities.

Years have passed. Many still choose to be unaware. People discuss Nazi Germany and are glad they live in modern times, where such monstrosities are dated — we are too advanced as a civilization now. Yet individuals always exist who hate people they have never met. That is where the danger lies.



Creating Legacy

*Voices Across Time from the
Children of the Holocaust to Us*

Gerda Weissmann Klein

Holocaust survivor, author and
national spokesperson for The Heart of
Columbine

Kurt Klein

Poet and writer

Gerda Weissmann Klein and Kurt Klein
were jointly awarded the degree of Doctor of
Humane Letters *honoris causa* by Chapman
University in May 2001.

Prompt

Write an essay or poem in which you explore
how you can create through your life a positive
legacy that honors the survivors of the Holocaust
and the memory of other innocent victims
of violence, such as those who perished at
Columbine High School.

HOLOCAUST WRITING CONTEST

Thursday,
March 15, 2001

1 p.m.

Memorial Auditorium
Chapman University

Admission free.

For further information,
please contact

The Rodgers Center for
Holocaust Education,
Chapman University

(714) 628-7377 or

www.chapman.edu/holocaust



THE SECOND ANNUAL HOLOCAUST WRITING CONTEST

AWARDS CEREMONY

Guest Speaker
Gerda Weissmann Klein

Holocaust Survivor and Author of
The Hours After

National Spokesperson for
The Heart Of Columbine,
Columbine High School

With Special Appearance by
Kurt Klein

Co-Author with Gerda Weissmann Klein of
The Hours After

Reading of Winning Essays and Poems
Middle and High School Divisions

Sponsored by:
The Rodgers Center for Holocaust Education,
Chapman University

The "1939" Club,
A Holocaust Survivor Organization

With generous support from:
Publications International, Ltd.
Facing History and Ourselves National Foundation, Inc.
Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation

Second Annual Holocaust Writing Contest

March 15, 2001



First Place, Middle School Essay

Irene Padilla

Imperial Middle School, La Habra

First Place, Middle School Poetry

Erin Poole

Terra Cotta Middle School, Lake Elsinore

First Place, High School Essay

Kate Kestenboym

Tarbut V'Torah Community Day School, Irvine

First Place, High School Poetry

Miriam Scatterday

Acaciawood College Preparatory Academy, Anaheim





Irene Padilla

8th Grade

Imperial Middle School

Robert Caplinger, Teacher

First Place, Middle School Essay

Dreams

As innocent victims are caught in the crossfire between racists and their beliefs, the world continues to see horrid examples of how hatred can destroy the beauty of humanity. As a result of such ignorance and blind faith, many have been discouraged from seeing the truth. Examples such as the Holocaust, Columbine High School, and cruelty on our own playgrounds, perpetuate the belief that mankind needs a lesson in empathy. If there were any hope left after the horror of such events, it would be the beauty of the belief that our own hopes and dreams are more powerful than hatred itself.

We can never lose sight of our dreams.

I remember when my dad would tell me stories about the hardships of his family when they left Mexico. One story in particular left a strong impression. The day he came to La Habra, California would forever change his life and mold mine. Upon arrival, he enrolled in high school, but had to drop out to help support his family. Life would be different in America. His carefree days of youth were gone. He found himself secluded from other teenagers, and withstood ridicule for being “poor” and “different.” Soon after, he married and was met with even more responsibilities. He worked harder than most his age to create a better life for his family.

He never lost sight of his dreams.

I have always been proud of who I am. Although I was born in the U.S., the blood that courses through my veins belongs to a true Mexicana. But sadly, I have also endured ridicule and doubt for who I am. As a product of bilingual education, I can recall an incident in the third grade that will never leave me. A young girl approached me, pointed, and called me “retarded.” She said I couldn’t speak English. This incident alone fueled a yearning for success that still empowers me today. Even as a young girl, standing alone in the playground, I knew that this teasing and cruelty would not hold me back. Today, I still strive to survive in a world that sometimes seems to have no compassion for difference.

I have never lost sight of my dreams.

It is sad to know that there is still racism in this world. One would think it would be gone and over with by now. Everyone should put aside their pride and try to make the world a better place. The Holocaust survivors never gave up on their fight for survival. My father struggled in the light of adversity for his own family. Devastating words did no taint my own experience.

People of diverse beliefs should not be viewed without empathy. Fathers should never give up on a dream of peace and acceptance for their family. Children should not be silenced by hatred.

No one should lose sight of their dreams.

Erin Poole

8th Grade
Terra Cotta Middle School
Michael Roe, Teacher

First Place, Middle School Poetry



I Will Stand

1. When it seems everyone is sitting still for cruelty and hatred,
2. I will stand.
3. Against violence such as Columbine, and tyranny such as Hitler,
4. I will stand.
5. When it seems that ignorance and prejudice are holding us down,
6. I will stand.
7. When we ignore each other's basic needs for compassion,
8. I will stand.
9. When I walk into school,
10. I tell violence it has not won.
11. When I learn and share the knowledge,
12. I tell ignorance to go away.
13. When I celebrate the differences between human beings,
14. I tell prejudice to fade.
15. For our world, our lives, and our future,
16. We must all stand.



Kate Kestenboym

10th Grade

Tarbut V'Torah Community Day School

Barbara Schultz, Counselor

First Place, High School Essay

Day of Sorrow and Hope

When I was ten years old, I read a story which had a great impact on me. This story was about a Jewish family—a father, a mother, and their little daughter. During World War II, righteous gentiles hid this family in a tiny underground hole. The hot summer turned into a rainy autumn; then the cold and snowy winter began; then once again the rainy spring started. ... This did not last for a day, a week, nor a month, but a couple of years. Sometimes the family thought that death was better than this type of life.

All children dream of something and this little girl had a dream too. She dreamed ... of crying. However, she could not start to cry because every time she began to do so, her parents begged her to stop and told her that the Nazis would hear her and kill them and the people who were hiding them. I often thought about this girl, and every time I did so, I wanted to cry with her. However, I always calmed myself by telling myself that this story was fictional.

When I moved to the United States six years ago, I began attending Tarbut V'Torah Community Day School, which I am still attending. There, I saw a real person who lived through the same situation as the little girl and her family. The founder of this school, Irving Gelman, his family, and a girl whose mother and father were murdered by the Nazis and who later became his wife were hidden underground by a Polish family. I think that they also often wanted to cry.

In Israel, there is a day when for one minute everything pauses. Everyone, wherever they may be, stops and remembers the millions of innocents who perished because of someone's madness, hate and anger, and because of someone else's indifference. I think that there should be a day like this in the United States and in every other country, a day when for a least one minute people will stop, remember the perished innocents, and think about what should be done so that this will never happen again. When the war ended and the almost blind mother, father and daughter came out of the hole, the first thing the girl asked was "Can I cry now?"

I would name this day — DAY OF SORROW AND HOPE, sorrow for those whose life was taken and hope that this will never happen again. I would make the little girl whose dream was to cry the symbol of this day.

Miriam Scatterday

11th Grade

Acaciawood College Preparatory Academy

Hallie Williamson, Teacher

First Place, High School Poetry

To Answer Their Call

I was awakened suddenly out of my indifferent sleep
 Jolted to stunned awareness by stories of injustice.
 Prejudice, blared the Holocaust, extinguishes lives.
 Hatred, screamed back oppression, steals humanity from man.
 Ignorance, reminded Columbine, breeds intolerance ...
 And while my young mind meanders in the harmful halls of hate
 My soul stops to gather many bouquets of withered black weeds.
 I guard them with my consciousness. My goal: to hate those who hate.
 How odd, that I should copy the offense of the offenders.
 Then, I return to reread the moral of their stories;
 In a world of hate, surrounded by hate, their goal was to love.
 They cast aside the black weeds and called across time to wake me.
 I too can wake men to prejudice, hatred, and ignorance.
 "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."
 I will not forget the evil that lurks in the shadows of the past.
 I will answer their call, the call of the victims to share the truth.
 Never may there be an evil like Hitler and a curse like hate.
 Their courageous deeds are those from which humanity rises.
 In their shining legacy, my proud heart and soul are humbled.
 But, I see my small heart can love many and fight for human rights.
 And my small hands can reach out to soothe many great troubles.
 Perhaps I will not be faced with blatant hatred, as they were.
 Perhaps I will not be killed because of my race, as they were.
 Perhaps I will not say my last words at the point of a gun,
 But, as they did, I will leave a legacy through love for all.



Witness to Humanity

Choices of Courage

Irene Gut Opdyke

Holocaust rescuer and
“Righteous Among the Nations”

Leon Leyson

Holocaust survivor and
youngest member of Schindler’s “List”

Prompt

Choose a persecuted or non-persecuted person from the time of the Holocaust, whether or not in the examples above, who made a choice of courage. After appropriate research, write an essay or poem about the person, his or her choice, and the circumstances surrounding it. How will this person’s courageous choice guide you as a responsible citizen in making your own witness to humanity, choices of courage?

THE THIRD ANNUAL HOLOCAUST WRITING CONTEST

**Awards Ceremony
Friday, March 1
1 P.M.
Memorial Auditorium**

Guest Speaker
Leon Leyson
Youngest Schindler's List Survivor

Guest of Honor
Irene Gut Opdyke
Holocaust Rescuer

Reading of Winning Essays and Poems
Middle School and High School Divisions

Sponsored by:
The Rodgers Center for Holocaust Education and
The Stern Chair in Holocaust Education, Chapman University

The “1939” Club, including Shoah Survivors of Orange County
and Long Beach

With generous support from:
Publications International, Ltd.
Facing History and Ourselves National Foundation, Inc.
Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation

With the cooperation of:
Varian Fry Foundation Project/IRC



**Witnesses to Humanity:
Choices of Courage**

Admission free. For further information, please contact
The Rodgers Center for Holocaust Education, Chapman University.
(714) 628-7377 or www.chapman.edu/holocaust

Third Annual Holocaust Writing Contest

March 1, 2002



First Place, Middle School Essay

Sarah Kalen

Tuffree Middle School, Placentia

First Place, Middle School Poetry

Aletheia Miyake

Acaciawood College Preparatory Academy, Anaheim

First Place, High School Essay

Tan Michael Nguyen

Mater Dei High School, Santa Ana

First Place, High School Poetry

Miriam Scatterday

Acaciawood College Preparatory Academy, Anaheim





Sarah Kalen

8th Grade

Tuffree Middle School

William Melvin, Teacher

First Place, Middle School Essay

Life is a Tapestry

Life is a tapestry. Each of us hold the threads to weave the story of our lives. We choose the pattern according to our beliefs and how we wish to be remembered. This is the story of one samurai and how his decision changed the world.

The year is 1939. A red thread, the color of the Japanese sun, is woven into the tapestry of Japanese Consul-General Sugihara. His government sends him to the capital of Lithuania. Soon after, Poland is invaded by the German Army. Jewish refugees flood into Lithuania with tales of unbelievable atrocities. Lithuania has always been a safe haven for Jews so they do not believe this fate could happen to them. Then, on June 15th, 1940 the Soviets invade Lithuania leaving the refugees no way out.

A thread of black is descending upon Europe. Most of Western Europe has been conquered by the dark evil represented by the Nazi regime. All foreign embassies are requested to leave Lithuania. Consul Sugihara asks for a 20-day extension. He and the Dutch Consul are the only ones remaining. Jewish refugees come up with a plan for freedom to escape to Dutch colonial islands in the Caribbean. To do this they must first obtain transit visas from the Japanese.

Consul Sugihara looked to his strict Japanese code of ethics and searches for *gambate* (the Japanese term for internal strength and resourcefulness) to guide his decision. In July 1940, he asks permission for visas for the Jewish refugees. He is looking for a green light to weave a thread of compassion from his government. Three times he asks. Three times he is denied.

With a thread of white, pure as a heart of a samurai, he follows his conscience. He is quoted as saying, "I may have to disobey my government, but if I don't I would be disobeying God."

The visas are as precious as threads of gold to the waiting thousands. For 29 days, from July 31 to August 28, 1940, he and his wife write and sign visas hour after hour, day

after day. Over 300 visas are issued each day, which would normally have been a month's work. Even as he leaves on the train for Berlin on September 1st, he hands the consul's visa stamp to a refugee from the train window so his work can continue.

Six thousand Polish Jews with Sugihara visas go by trans-Siberian railroad to Vladivostok then on to Kobe, Japan. They later resettle in Shanghai, China. These Sugihara Survivors and their forty thousand descendants owe their lives to this man and his family. A blue thread of freedom has been woven back into their lives.

In 1945, the Japanese government dismisses Mr. Sugihara from his post as a diplomat. His career is shattered. He can never again work for the Japanese Foreign Service. Forty years later, Mr. Sugihara receives Israel's highest honor as one of the "Righteous Among the Nations" by Yad Vashem Martyrs Remembrance in Jerusalem. He dies a year later.

I have just begun my own life's tapestry. In my hand I hold the multicolored threads to weave the story of my life. Mr. Sugihara followed his dreams to live abroad, explore other cultures and follow his own religious path. I hope I will have the courage to follow my conscience as Consul Sugihara has done and choose my own path towards building an understanding between people. A sense of honor or duty drove Mr. Sugihara. As a Jew, I too have a duty to retell the stories of the Holocaust, its survivors and its martyrs so that it will not be erased from the tapestry of human remembrance. When Mr. Sugihara was asked why he signed the visas he gave two reasons: "They were human beings and they needed help. I am glad I found the strength to make the decision to give it to them."

I hope throughout my life to see clearly as Mr. Sugihara did and choose the path of righteousness. In this way, my own tapestry will be a legacy for future generations.

Aletheia Miyake

8th Grade

Acaciawood College Preparatory Academy
Hallie Williamson, Teacher

First Place, Middle School Poetry



They Would Do it Again

We remember Marion Pritchard
Who sacrificed her welfare for 150 Jews,
Arranging hiding places for them,
And says she would do it again.
We remember Oskar Schindler,
Both a Nazi and a rescuer of 1000 Jews.
He went against his own people, his country, risking the loss of his high rank and job,
Stood up for what was right, humanity.
And he would do it again.
We remember Marie Rose Gineste,
Dedicated and devoted, to rescue her countrymen, her neighbors, her friends.
She forged legal documents, baptismal papers,
And she would do it again.
We remember the boy who sacrificed freedom to be with his father in Auschwitz,
We remember the old woman, who gave up her piece of bread for a starving Jew,
We remember them, the nameless,
Who in a world of hate and darkness, stood up for love and humanity.
Risking, sacrificing
A tribute to them,
For they would do it again.
My group of friends laughs over a racial joke,
A choice of courage
I walk away, refusing to take part.
They do not talk to her, that different girl,
A choice of courage,
I do what is right, and befriend her, seeking the good inside.
Today, there is still hate and prejudice,
A choice of courage.
I stand up for what I believe in, and in return hear insults for what I do.
But I stand firm, and I swear I will do it again.



Tan Michael Nguyen

11th Grade

Mater Dei High School

Charisse Kitsinis, Teacher

First Place, High School Essay

The Ultimate Sacrifice

Aristides de Sousa Mendes (1895-1954) was a man who had it all. He was born into an aristocratic Portuguese family. He lived in a lavish estate. He fathered thirteen beautiful children. He held a prominent government position. Most importantly, he possessed a strong will and a compassionate heart, for he would risk all of this for the lives of those Jews threatened with the ghastly reality of the Holocaust.

Mendes served as the Portuguese consul-general in Bordeaux, France at the outbreak of the Second World War. As the relentless German army inched closer and closer to Bordeaux in June 1940, Mendes experienced firsthand the tragic and pathetic state of the Jewish refugees. Although Portugal's dictator, Antonio Salazar, decreed that no visas were to be issued to any refugees, Mendes' honor still demanded that he should at least offer one to Rabbi Haim Kruger and each member of his family.

Soon, a tremendous revelation transformed and enlightened Mendes' thinking. After deep reflection, he realized that he could never live without regret if he only saved Rabbi Kruger and his family. His conscience would never allow the deep guilt inside of him to subside. From this point on, his upbringing as a Christian would guide him, not the petty words of his dictator, who obviously was trying to please Hitler. Mendes himself stated, "My desire is to be with God against man, rather than man against God." Even the Portuguese constitution forbade him from denying refuge in Portugal on the basis of religion or politics.

With the help of Rabbi Kruger, Consul-General Mendes quickly issued Portuguese visas to thousands of Jews. His bravery never seemed to waver or slacken, for the Rabbi later recalls how Mendes did not even stop to eat or to sleep in the hopes of saving as many Jewish refugees as he could before the Portuguese government reacted to his insubordinate actions.

The response that Mendes expected from Lisbon came quickly. The government soon dispatched two emissaries to escort the man to his country in shame. This did not deter Mendes from issuing visas to more desperate Jews as the entourage traveled closer to the Spanish border. Mendes cleverly knew that his position as the official representative of Portugal was not relinquished until he actually left France.

Once in his homeland, a disciplinary board kicked Mendes out of the diplomatic corps and stripped him of all retirement and severance benefits. With thirteen children to feed and no income, Mendes promptly used up all of his savings and property in an attempt to survive. Aristides de Sousa Mendes died in poverty, but he never regretted his sacrifice of worldly comfort for the lives of thousands of Jews. He himself reportedly said, "If thousands of Jews can suffer because of one Catholic [Hitler], then surely it is permitted for one Catholic to suffer for so many Jews. I could not have acted otherwise, and I therefore accept all that has befallen me with love."

The example of Aristides de Sousa Mendes proves that the path of a virtuous and moral life is riddled with frequent trials and hard sacrifices. He actually lost everything dear to his heart, but he retained his honor, conscience, and fortitude. If one lesson needs to be learned from Mendes' life, it must be that these intangible attributes yield more happiness and satisfaction than all of the diamonds in the world do.

The pivotal transition in Mendes' life from diplomat to hero also sparks an extraordinary revelation: one small step truly does lead to a giant leap in progress. Mendes originally planned to contribute by issuing several visas only to Rabbi Kruger. This noble act soon swept the man into the whirlwind of saving the believers of Judaism from a ghastly death. From this fact we can rest assured that courage does not come in large packages from larger-than-life superheroes. Instead, it grows from humble beginnings and a constant willingness to nourish and support it. We too can rise up against injustice, if only to correct a tiny grievance. Trust in the fact that one small act can lead to bigger results. As Jesus said, we only need faith and courage the size of a mustard seed for it to mature into a formidable tree of honor, glory, and love, ripe for the use of a society vulnerable to many injustices. The life of Aristides de Sousa Mendes himself completely supports this observation. He is valor's child. He is honor's pride. He is a man worth imitating.

Miriam Scatterday

12th Grade

Acaciawood College Preparatory Academy

Hallie Williamson, Teacher

First Place, High School Poetry

A Lot of Light Where There was Darkness

She held a candle up
 In the blackness so thick that the children could not see the sky
 Hitler held his hands up
 And created the dark that killed hope, murdered love and ended innocent lives.
 She was given a choice: face death or flee to Palestine
 And she courageously remained in Hitler's grasp.
 Her choice was not vain or thoughtless,
 Her purpose was clear
 She was the candle to guide the lives of the suffering children.
 Her life as an artist had been a success,
 But her greatest was to come.
 Friedl Dicker-Brandeis was sent to Terezin in 1942.
 Armed with heart and paint supplies, Friedl entered.
 She collected cardboard, paper and tissue for the children to draw on.
 And in the hidden recesses of the ghetto,
 Friedl taught the children to draw, to imagine, to create.
 A world that had been so suddenly stripped away
 Was found by the light of a candle.
 For children who would never see another butterfly,
 She taught how to paint one.
 For children who lost their mothers,
 She became one.
 Friedl did not rescue others out of the jaws of death,
 She chose to put herself there with them.
 And, in the darkest hour of human history,
 She took the hands of thousands of children and saved their souls.
 They were her greatest masterpiece.
 Through her story, she took my hand and whispered to me
 The secret of happiness is seeing light where there is none.
 This way I can choose to conquer the enemy of hate.



Conscience and Community

Choices of Courage

Pierre Sauvage

Child survivor of the Holocaust and
award-winning documentary filmmaker

Prompt

Choose a community of conscience from the time of the Holocaust, whether or not in the examples included. After appropriate research, discuss and reflect upon the choices made by individuals and/or groups that created and sustained this community of conscience. Drawing on the lessons of this community during the time of the Holocaust, discuss the choices you, as an individual, and your community, as a group, can make to create and sustain a community of conscience. Reflect upon what actions you can take to assure that your community will never be shattered by intolerance.

THE FOURTH ANNUAL HOLOCAUST WRITING CONTEST

Chapman University and The "1939" Club

Sponsored by:
The Rodgers Center for Holocaust Education,
Chapman University

The "1939" Club, including Shoah Survivors of
Orange County and Long Beach,
A Holocaust Survivors Organization

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Conscience and Community Choices of Courage

Fourth Annual Holocaust Writing Contest

March 14, 2003



First Place, Middle School Essay

Brittany Horth

Lakeside Middle School, Irvine

First Place, Middle School Poetry

Jennifer Thompson

St. Columban School, Garden Grove

First Place, High School Essay

Andrey Finegersh

Mission Viejo High School, Mission Viejo



First Place, High School Poetry

Elaine Inoue

Acaciawood College Preparatory Academy, Anaheim





Brittany Horth

7th Grade

Lakeside Middle School

Stephanie Colby, Teacher

First Place, Middle School Essay

I am Janusz Korczak

I am Janusz Korczak. I am a physician, a writer, an educator. I established my first Jewish orphanage in 1912, and from then on began to teach and love children. After many attempts to save the lives of the two hundred children from my orphanage, they are on their way to the gas chambers of the death camp of Treblinka; I along with them. I chose my death, and therefore, I have no fear of it. I am not alone. I will die with my children; my children will die with me. If we do not have the choice to go on living, then that is all I could have ever wished for.

I am Brittany Horth. I am a daughter, a student, a friend. Janusz Korczak's bravery amazes me. His story leaves me with a feeling so strong, an emotion so foreign. For the pain and suffering he went through at that time, his courageous attitude leaves me breathless. Janusz Korczak may have thought that he was unsuccessful in saving the lives of the two hundred children from his Jewish orphanage, but he was successful in showing bravery, an amazing bravery that could only grow from the seed of love and the soil of pride. The fact that it took two hundred lives, two hundred and one including Janusz Korczak's, to teach one person, one twelve-year-old girl the bravery that comes from love saddens me. I appreciate being blessed with this wonderful lesson. If Janusz Korczak's story does not teach the people of today to be brave, to be kind, to be caring, then I don't know what will.

Millions of people died in the Holocaust. Millions and yet there were those few who were brave enough to give up their own lives for others. The choices for the Jews were to die or to survive, to have courage or to have fear, to have pride or to run away from who you were. There were only so many options during the Holocaust.

Violence was the new air that the people breathed. Never knowing if it would ever end, Jews either ran or hid. Janusz Korczak's love kept him back, back with his children, back with the love of his life. As I read Korczak's story, I asked myself, and now I ask you, would you run, hide, or stay right where you were?

Faith, hope, pride, love. These emotions motivated the courage that some heroic people showed during the Holocaust.

Are these emotions still within the people of today? Over and over again I listen to adults say that it only takes one person to hurt the feelings of many others. I agree with this statement. It only takes one person to ruin everything, but it takes everybody to fix it. I say that the human race should not dwell on our mistakes from the past, but instead keep them in our minds and in our hearts and use those memories to prevent horrible events like the Holocaust from happening again.

Everyone in my state, in my city, in my household, should work together to improve our efforts towards our community and to remind each other of what love and pride can accomplish.

A young girl once said:

"How noble and good everyone could be if, every evening before falling asleep, they were to recall to their minds the events of the whole day and consider exactly what has been good or bad. Then, without realizing it, you try to improve yourself at the start of each new day; of course, you achieve quite a lot in the course of time. Anyone could do this, it costs nothing and is certainly very helpful."

(The Diary of a Young Girl, p. 256)

Anne Frank lived and died during the Holocaust, but she thought and wrote as if she were alive today.

I now come to the conclusion that every night, I will think about the qualities of the day and try to apply and improve them the next day. I hope others will do the same. If we all work on the same task of improving ourselves and helping others to do so also, the human race will never have to live through another hell like the Holocaust.

Jennifer Thompson

8th Grade
St. Columban School
Thelma Anselmi, Teacher

First Place, Middle School Poetry



Walls of Wood and Wire

Lucille Eichengreen, a child of Lodz
Surrounded by wood and wire
When night falls all is dark,
The darkness covers all, a heavy blanket of black

She packs and prepares for a long day of labor
Imposed by King Chaim
Not one light goes on, even as a child screams
Nightmares terrorize all

King Chaim, a man who believes
He is saving lives,
The terrors of this life seem unbearable,
But this child bears it

But so many died from the
Tension and hardship of work
She prepares to speak of all the horrors,
She prays that the new generations will listen carefully

Many this child has seen
Have also lost the will to live
Generations that need to protect those
Criticized for their religion or race.

They choose to give up,
To take the dark path of death
And I, a child of the newest generation
Promise to protect and listen

This child has seen many
Die at the hands of soldiers
Listen to she who bore the weight,
Lucille Eichengreen, a child of Lodz, surrounded by walls of wood and wire.

Those that have died say,
“Going to the wire,” is better than this life



Andrey Finegersh

11th Grade

Mission Viejo High School

Jan Jurgemeyer, Counselor

First Place, High School Essay

The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising

Bravery and courage are measured by their merits and implications, and not by their successes. The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising had all of these merits and implications, all of those occurrences that turn events into history and men into heroes. The Jews of Warsaw held out longer than the French against the Nazi attack and proved for the first time that the Third Reich was not invincible, but fallible. With the patience of Masada and the will of Jericho, the Jewish Fighting Organization resisted one of the world's most superior armies, fighting Panzers and machine guns with smuggled pistols and homemade bombs.

The horrors experienced by the Jews of Warsaw in their more than two years of confinement are almost too vile and inhuman to have been committed by the hands of men. Stories of Nazi guards shooting children as if they were pigeons, six-year-old boys crawling through barbed wire to steal a morsel of food from the “free” side, and the growing number of bodies piling up in funeral homes made the Warsaw ghetto a community of fear, rather than conscience. It is in this misery that resistance was fostered and grown. All things taken for granted now became sustenance and survival. In this atmosphere of constant threat, dignity and freedom became just as important as food and water. Mordechai Anielewicz, the leader of a group of some 750 loosely organized combatants known as the Jewish Fighting Organization (ZOB), became one of the first to strike out for a sense of retribution and honor. These men and women were not the first to resist, or even the first to drive the Nazis back, however, they are remembered as the ultimate warriors of liberation and pride. Of the 750 only a scant few survived, but during a few months in early 1943, they reigned as kings over the Third Reich, not only fighting back against the Nazi forces, but demoralizing them, destroying all of their notions of the superior race.

The feelings of those 750 people of the Jewish Fighting Organization in January must have been overwhelming. They had seen the ghetto reduced from 450,000 inhabitants to about 50,000 and had been informed by the Polish underground that German soldiers were moving in to take the rest of the inhabitants to Auschwitz, Treblinka,

and other death camps. Rather than submit to the Nazis, Mordechai organized his ZOB into battle divisions, each poised for street combat and equipped with Molotov cocktails, pistols, and a few hand grenades. When the Nazi soldiers entered the ghetto on January 18, 1943, for a “second liquidation,” they met unexpected resistance by the ZOB. The Jewish Fighting Organization was able to drive the Germans out of the ghetto. The statistics did not matter in their encounter with the Nazis, only the fact that for the first time they had seen fear in the soldiers who fought them. For the next three months the ZOB was in charge of the ghetto. They met no opposition, exercising their power and preparing for the return of the Germans, as all of “free” Warsaw became abuzz with the news of Jewish victory.

The Jewish Fighting Organization became a symbol of resistance in Warsaw, a new hope that united they could defeat the Nazis. When the Nazis returned with a larger force, including tanks, on April 19, the Jewish Fighting Organization remarkably held out for nearly a month. The strength of the Jews demoralized the German war machine, suppressing the very nature of racial superiority for which many of them were fighting. Although nearly every member of the Jewish Fighting Organization was killed in combat, they died with honor and courage. It was not senseless violence that led them to their graves, but their humanity. The ability of a few so seemingly weak to hold back a force so much more physically powerful could only come from a great strength within, a sense that the cause for which they were dying was far worthier than that of the Nazis, a sense of moral victory as defeat crawled in around them in May 1943. The Jews of Warsaw became the model for all resistance organizations during the Second World War; they became not only the first community of resistance, but the most successful community of conscience.

We can take lessons from the heroism of the Jewish Fighting Organization. Only with necessity was the ZOB able to win morally. Violence had nothing to do with their success, but their ability to fight for their own ideals and morals was their driving force. The Jewish Fighting Organization fought for freedom in the same way that Gandhi fought for independence or Martin Luther King, Jr., fought for equality. They did it through principles and a sense that what they were doing far outweighed anything their enemies could put up against them.

These same principles apply in our lives. To stand up for what you believe in rather than becoming entrenched in submission and limited by apathy is to have honor and courage. The Jewish Fighting Organization was able to stand up for its beliefs and hold them against everything else. This is the true lesson of their courageous acts, courage and morality will triumph over evil.

The acts of the Jewish Fighting Organization will ring through history, but their lessons will prevail only if we preserve and learn from them. Their acts were some of the bravest in the history of men, their goals among the purest, and their abilities unmatched. They startled an empire with their heroics and found justice in their hearts.

Elaine Inoue

12th Grade

Acaciawood College Preparatory Academy
Hallie Williamson, Teacher

First Place, High School Poetry



Stirring the Conscience to Love

I opened up the book of time and saw a man reach toward me,
Hitler, a man engulfed by rage and terror held his hand in a suffocating grip.
I heard the screams of innocent children and saw mothers' faces marred with anguish and despair
Six million Jewish lives extinguished; their souls cried out, for who could justify their death?
Hate's twisted smile and silenced conscience haunted the world and plagues it still.

But in the midst of a torn and darkened chapter in history, there was light.
Though hatred reigned as dictator, some chose to love mankind.
At a time when communities of people were destroyed, they built up.
When hopes were shattered, they made miracles.
When the conscience was put to rest, they awakened it to life.
Their stories and words reached out to my indifferent soul, and I did hear them.

Imprisoned within the walls of the Warsaw Ghetto, Jews were clutched,
Stripped, stifled and blindly led to a hidden grave
Until a group of young people resisted the iron fist.
A well-trained German army against bare hands and rusted weapons of the Jews
Fighting with their hearts and hands, they impeded deportation
And from the graves, they reminded me of the courage to right wrong.

In Denmark, it was a miracle by midnight.
An entire community rose to save another.
Resistance to German authority, a spirit of courage, and a sense of unity,
They defied the works of evil, and saved the sons of Israel.
Smuggling them into the embracing arms of Sweden.

A tribute to those who honored human life
Bless the town that rescued Jews from the gates of death
Never forget the boy who handed in his life for a chance to resist evil
Nor lessons learned from the ashes of tragedy.
I awoke to consciousness to make a difference for
He who saves one life, saves the world entire
I opened up the book of time, a blank page lay before me
Remembering the destruction of hate, I began my chapter with love.

Conscience and Courage

Heroes of the Holocaust

Thomas “Toivi” Blatt

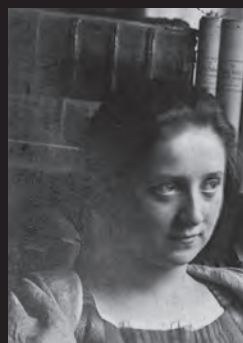
Sobibor death camp survivor and author

Prompt

Each of us chooses our heroes. Sometimes our choices define us as heroes. During the Holocaust, many “ordinary people” became heroes. Choose an individual from the time of the Holocaust, whether or not in the examples included, who embodies heroism. After appropriate research, write an essay or poem or create a work of art that reflects the spirit of this individual. Your work should be based upon specific knowledge of the individual’s choices and actions. As you face ethical dilemmas and complex choices, how will this individual help you to develop into a person of conscience and courage, an “ordinary hero”?

Chapman University and The “1939” Club

The Fifth Annual Holocaust Art and Writing Contest



Conscience and Courage Heroes of the Holocaust

Friday, March 19 • 12 p.m. • Memorial Hall

Guest Speaker Thomas “Toivi” Blatt
Author and Sobibor Death Camp Survivor



Fifth Annual Holocaust Art and Writing Contest

March 19, 2004



First Place Middle School Essay

Christine McNab

Lakeside Middle School, Irvine

First Place Middle School Poetry

Zachary Yates

Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School,
San Clemente

First Place Middle School Art

Paulina Phan

Lakeside Middle School, Irvine

First Place High School Essay

Irina Dykhne

University High School, Los Angeles

First Place High School Poetry

Matthew Adam White

University High School, Los Angeles



First Place High School Art

Sothea Ouch

Millikan High School, Long Beach





Christine McNab

7th Grade

Lakeside Middle School

Stephanie Colby, Teacher

First Place, Middle School Essay

Oskar Schindler and the Key

As I boarded the school bus to Chapman University, I didn't know what to expect. And as I walked through the hall to the Holocaust meeting room, many questions filled my mind. I was there to hear Leon Leyson, the youngest survivor of Schindler's List speak to a group of several hundred people. As I listened to him, his words about Oskar Schindler intrigued me. When the lecture ended, many students dashed for the food table. But my interest got the best of me. I waited in a line of photo takers and curious parents for my time with Leon Leyson. As I shook hands with him and talked with him, he inspired me even more to write my Holocaust essay on Oskar Schindler. But not only my essay, Leon Leyson inspired me, a little twelve-year-old girl, to become more *like* Oskar Schindler. And that would be an extraordinary task, considering what an amazing man Oskar Schindler was.

Oskar Schindler was born into a Catholic family in the Sudetenland. As an adult, he became a German industrialist and joined the Nazi Party to help make his fortune. He moved to Krakow after the German invasion of Poland in 1939 and took responsibility for an enamel kitchenware factory just outside the Krakow ghetto. He hired many Jewish workers from the ghetto. As Oskar Schindler's enamel factory moved from place to place, he was prepared with a list of all of his workers that would be joining him in each. By means of this list and bribery of German officials, he protected his workers.

A person does not have to be like Superman to be a hero. A hero is someone who doesn't think of himself or herself, but thinks of others. A hero shows conscience, knowing what is right from what is wrong. Oskar Schindler knew that the Jews were being mistreated and he knew that the Nazi torture and extermination of the Jews was wrong.

A hero also has courage. Courage is listening to your conscience and doing the right thing, even when it is very hard. Oskar Schindler risked his own life to help protect and save the Jews from the Nazis. He knew that the killing of millions of innocent Jews by the Nazis was wrong. He could have just looked the other way, but no, he didn't just sit there thinking about it, he did something. His bravery helped him save over a thousand Jews. Every life is important, and one person can make a difference.

The tremendous amount of courage that Oskar Schindler had is absolutely amazing to me. In fact, it is so amazing that if every person would take the time to learn about him, they would learn what a difference each person's choice of courage can make. Think about it: one person saved some 1,200 human beings! It might be impossible to eliminate prejudice and hatred in the world, but people of conscience and courage can prevent another Holocaust.

I can understand the idea of conscience and courage that Oskar Schindler had to have. Of course, I can't understand fully how difficult it was for him or the hardships he went through, but I can get the idea of how every person should show conscience and have courage.

Jews weren't the only people that were persecuted during the Holocaust, people with disabilities were too. And this is my personal connection to Oskar Schindler. I have needed to show conscience and have courage in tough times. You see, I have a sister who has disabilities and is a special needs student.

I have conscience when I see people mistreating those with disabilities and I know that it is wrong. I try to have courage when confronting those who mistreat others. I try to stand up to them even though I know that they will thereafter look at me differently. In the end, I am much happier to have courage, even with everyone staring at me than being scared and just watching the people with disabilities being made fun of.

Oskar Schindler is my role model and a hero that I admire and feel I know. You don't have to meet someone in person to know them; you can meet someone through their story, like I met Oskar Schindler through the story that Leon Leyson told. As you get to know them and admire them, you can become more like them. I think that everyone should try to become more like Oskar Schindler. He not only did big things like saving many people, but he did small things too, things that made a big difference in people's lives. As I was listening to Leon Leyson's speech, he said that he remembered that Oskar Schindler would give him extra food because he was so young and small. And Oskar Schindler would take the time to know each of the worker's names. Leon Leyson can still remember these grand acts of kindness. Oskar Schindler didn't treat the Jews like outsiders, but like people.

During the Holocaust, it was as if the Germans locked up the Jews in a cage. Many people had the key, but didn't have the courage to use it. Oskar Schindler knew that he needed to use his key and he did, even though his life was on the line.

We all have the choice to do the right thing or the wrong thing, to be brave or to look the other way. Therefore, I want each of us to think about the following words and place them in our hearts: *I will be a person of conscience and courage. I will know what is right and what is wrong. I will have the bravery to stand up for what is right. And by combining these qualities, I know that I can and will make a difference in the world.*

Zachary Yates

8th Grade
Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School
Kathleen Horak-Butler, Teacher

First Place, Middle School Poetry



The Mystery of Beauty Friedl Dicker-Brandeis

As a woman artist with a gift from above,
She captured emotions, expressions, and love.
Formally taught in art and design,
Her own creativity began to shine.

A knock on the door that quickened her breath,
Spoke of a move to a camp of death.
Torn from a life of canvas and paint,
Her vision of teaching soon became faint.

Puddles of tears and looks of dismay
Longing for escape but forced to stay.
With an eye for beauty, the children she drew
Their youth and compassion changed gray into blue.

Ignoring the sadness, she taught her gift,
To the children whose spirits began to lift.
Her works of art were never shown,
They developed a talent on their own.

No matter what faced with, she always found good
She taught what God gave her, like everyone should.
Focused on what was important in life
She lived to paint in spite of strife.



Paulina Phan

8th Grade

Lakeside Middle School

Stephanie Colby, Teacher

First Place, Middle School Art



Voices of Conscience

Responding to the Call of Duty

Is each of us responsible solely to ourselves or do we hold a deeper responsibility to one another as individual members of a greater society? Do we carry a burden to care, protect, and assist our fellow human beings? Should we hold compassion for strangers we tend to ignore? Should we pause and give the needy the dime we usually keep for ourselves? Does a portion of our earnings belong to starving children we've never met or should all of it feed our personal bank accounts? Sadly, compassion in our world seems to have grown so thin that most would tell you to look away in the face of suffering. The majority hides behind the excuse that an ordinary person has no place playing heroics. However, every once in a while, an average person disrupts the pattern of compliance, ignores personal dangers, and rises up as a warrior for the greater good of man. Throughout history, there have been people proving that the most important element of greatness is finding the initial courage to take a stand. It is beyond our mortal reach to comprehend the power that would not let Raoul Wallenberg stand by with arms meekly crossed as innocent blood poured down like rain all around him. He chose not to shut his eyes hoping for a better tomorrow while Jews were butchered; instead, he made the decision to step up to the responsibility he had toward his fellow man, the responsibility each of us holds yet to which few respond.

Raoul Wallenberg had no particular reason for putting his life on the line for a people on the brink of extermination. There was no family for him to rescue or a dear friend he wished to avenge. In fact, as a wealthy Swedish diplomat, it would have been perfectly natural for him to take a leisurely seat inside his comfortable home basking in the knowledge that the upheaval sweeping much of the world would never lay its mark on him. Yet Wallenberg was driven by a deeper calling. He answered the call that even if all of us could hear, most would be too fearful to answer. In Wallenberg's eyes, mankind was interconnected. Regardless of race, gender or religion, we are all brothers and sisters. Motivated by these principles, Raoul Wallenberg became a savior to thousands of his needy brothers and sisters.

There is no one way to be heroic because true heroism is fueled by one's inner strength. A hero does not try to be so; he does not plan the outcome of his actions or visualize the praise and glory waiting once the mission is complete. A hero has no time to weigh pros and cons of every situation; therefore, a hero relies on instinct diving into the thick of danger with blind temerity. As a member of the wealthiest class of society, Raoul Wallenberg realized that rather than rely on brute force in the military, his charismatic personality, charming smile, and quick wit could be used as much more powerful weapons. Serving as the First Secretary at the Swedish Legation in Budapest, Wallenberg relied on unconventional methods of diplomacy to issue Swedish passes to thousands of Hungarian Jews. These passes protected Jews against the Nazis hoping to send them to the death camps. Wallenberg used whichever method was most available to him at the

Irina Dykhne

9th Grade
University High School
Ilene Thaler, Teacher

First Place, High School Essay



time to achieve his goal. He was as proficient in courteously persuading foreign representatives into helping him set up safe houses to shelter Jews as he was at boldly threatening officials into releasing the Jews who possessed protective passes. His unfaltering conviction, tactful demeanor, and unique ability of sensing whether to proceed with subtle diplomacy or strike with threatening demands led to the issuing of thousands of protective passes, the establishment of many safe houses, and ultimately the rescue of 100,000 Hungarian Jews.

Raoul Wallenberg lived his life fighting for a greater good and most would say he was successful, yet I feel his work brought Wallenberg a sense of weakness. He realized that despite his valiant efforts and desperate risks he could never help every innocent life that would be lost. For every safe pass he issued, two Jews he couldn't reach would be fed to the gas chambers. For a man of nearly divine compassion such realization must have been crippling. Nonetheless, Raoul Wallenberg never lost sight of his greater goal. Unable to save all Jews, he did everything in his power to aid as many as he could. Full of determination, Wallenberg's battle was halted only by his capture by the Soviets in 1945. Although the outcome of Wallenberg's fate remains hidden in mystery to this day, it is certain that only the direst of circumstances could have taken this selfless man from his mission.

Most would say that Raoul Wallenberg's greatest accomplishment in life is the issuance of 100,000 safe passes to Jews. However, I must disagree. The greatest gift Raoul Wallenberg left behind is the potent reminder of the universal duty we as humans have toward one another. People like Raoul Wallenberg, ordinary people who find the courage to perform the extraordinary, continuously remind us that to stand back watching brutality is equal to inflicting it. It is not strength or even intellect that makes one heroic. It is the ability to react to a sense of duty and call on the slumbering warrior each of us harbors that separates the bystander from the hero. We may all have the potential for greatness; yet, to tap into this potential is what makes one great.



Matthew Adam White

9th Grade
University High School
Ilene Thaler, Teacher

First Place, High School Poetry

Song of Mother Superior Anna Borkowska, “She Who Dared”

Morning, pale blue morning over the city
And the singing sighs of bells in the convent
Suddenly silenced by the ubiquitous wail
Spitting tongues of flame, burn the city, watch her bleed
All so fast, we cannot see through the smoke
Wondering aloud in the deadly tranquility following the red death
The new flag flies high in the summer breeze as the old one cries in its own ashes
The twisted and spidery black German cross
Looking out from the convent’s rooftop, sad wrinkled corners of her eyes upon
Such a sight burning into her mind; nothing is sacred anymore
So carry on with your prayers, Reverend Mother
“O Merciful Christ, grant us this clemency!”
And though she cannot see it, it is beginning already: one by one, they disappear
Women, children, babies, men, the elderly, the invalid of the *Untermenschen*
Crippled, naked, kneeling in the pits in the green woods
Gunshots carried on the warm upwellings of wind through the horrified birch trees
Scatter the birds to tell their families of the injustice
O Mother Superior, lead your nuns in prayer in chapel
Sing “Ave Maria” louder, louder to drown out the bullets
But you know you can’t override the screams of the dying Jews
Come one night, black as the German’s heart
A knock at the door, shrilly resounding through the twilight: Hebrews begging
And she knew she had to make a difference
For when it means saving the life of an innocent victim, theft is usually justifiable
So she stole those weapons and risked her existence running them to the oppressed
The time came when explosions rocked the city and the Vilna ghetto fought
And she could smile, her soul filled with a new knowledge of right and wrong
For she had released freedom and liberty gently from its iron cage
And nurtured the undying spirit of resistance when it lay half-buried in a muddy grave
Smile forever; you showed how to be the light in the black night of perpetual death

Sothea Ouch

12th Grade
Millikan High School
Kathy Charvat, Teacher

First Place, High School Art



Heroes of the Holocaust

To Change Our World

Legacy of Liberation

Gerda Weissmann Klein

Holocaust survivor and author

Prompt

So you can better understand the experiences behind this photograph, read the account of a Holocaust witness or liberator. So you can better understand the words of Elie Wiesel, research a specific situation that reflects his words, a situation where dissidents are in prison or where children go hungry or where freedom is denied.

In the tradition of survivors, such as Professor Wiesel, and of the soldiers who risked their lives to free Europe from tyranny, and drawing upon the Holocaust-era account you have read, give your voice to those in the world today who need us desperately.

THE SIXTH ANNUAL HOLOCAUST ART AND WRITING CONTEST

Chapman University and The "1939" Club

To Change Our World: Legacy of Liberation



Entry Due Date • February 11, 2005
Awards Ceremony • Friday • March 11, 2005
Guest Speaker • Gerda Weissmann Klein

Sponsored by:
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Sixth Annual Holocaust Art and Writing Contest

March 11, 2005



First Place, Middle School Essay

Gabriella Duva

St. Anne School, Laguna Niguel

First Place, Middle School Poetry

Kim Ngai

Fulton Middle School, Fountain Valley

First Place, Middle School Art

Monique Becker

Lakeside Middle School, Irvine

First Place, High School Essay

Irina Dykhne

University High School, Los Angeles

First Place, High School Poetry

Matthew Adam White

University High School, Los Angeles

First Place, High School Art

Marisa Moonilal

Mater Dei High School, Santa Ana

First Place, High School Art

Steven Vander Sluis

El Toro High School, Lake Forest





Gabriella Duva

8th Grade

St. Anne School

Mary Hoovestol, Teacher

First Place, Middle School Essay

It Starts with Me

What do the Holocaust and the Sudan have in common? Why are Elie Wiesel and Gerda Weissmann Klein important? Why should I wear green? Who are the Janjaweed? What can I do? These are questions that need answering and it's up to me to take action and respond.

Gassed in false showers and then burned in crematoria; shot in a selection; hanged on the gallows; murdered in death marches; withered away by malnutrition, these are some of the ways people were killed during the Holocaust. No one of any age, race, religion or physical appearance deserves to breathe his or her last breath because of such immense hatred. Elie Wiesel was just one of the survivors who endured cruel punishment. Now he is a great role model to many people who feel that they can't go on. He's a reminder of what could happen again at any time.

"'Be strong!' And I heard it again like an echo, 'Be strong.' These were my mother's last words to me," wrote Gerda Weissmann Klein in *All But My Life*. As babies were stripped from their mothers and tears raced down their faces, they couldn't possibly imagine the agony that stretched out before them. To stop such appalling behavior we must study and understand it. There is no one better to educate us than a survivor who experienced it herself. Gerda explained to us what happened and what we can do to help, but she cannot act for us. To continue her and Elie's legacies, we must also prevail over obstacles and help stop the present day genocide in the Sudan.

Terror, murder and prejudice against race are just a few ingredients used in both the Sudan and the Holocaust. Though it seems impossible, tragedy is occurring all over again. Innocent human beings are being persecuted because of their ethnicity. Rape, murder, and destruction hold sway.

Who is causing all of this destruction? The Janjaweed. The Janjaweed are armed men on horseback linked or allied to the government of Sudan and the Sudanese armed forces themselves.

What role do paper clips woven with green ribbon represent? Norway was where the paper clip was invented. During the Holocaust years, citizens in Norway demonstrated their opposition to the Nazis by wearing paper clips. I have made countless green paperclip wristbands to help show my opposition towards what is happening in the Sudan. I also string green ribbon through the wristband and write in gold ink "Save Darfur, Save Sudan." When I do this, I raise questions, and by raising questions, I can raise awareness. When students ask me for a wristband, I give them the website for the Committee on Conscience at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Then they must research the situation in Sudan and tell me what they've learned. Once they do that, I give them the wristband. This may not be the biggest change, but every little bit of awareness that I can share with others is a chance to save a Sudanese victim.

Although we need to educate people, we also need to raise money. My friends and I have been fundraising, and now we have over \$1,000. We aren't going to stop there. We have written a proposal telling people about ourselves and what we are doing. We ask them to support us by donating money. We are sending the donations to the Save Darfur Coalition so it will go directly to Sudanese victims.

To liberate is defined as to set free from oppression, confinement, or foreign control. Why do I wear green ribbons? I want to help make a difference in the world. I can't go to the Sudan and tell the Janjaweed to stop. What I can do is make people aware that this is occurring and that it needs to end. By making and wearing green paperclip wristbands and raising money, I'm working towards a solution. By watching films like *One Survivor Remembers*, *Schindler's List*, and *Hotel Rwanda*, and reading *Night* and *All But My Life*, I'm learning so I can educate others about genocide. Through education, we can stop this tragedy. Things aren't going to change by themselves; they will only change with each person's contribution, starting with me.

Kim Ngai

7th Grade
Fulton Middle School
Carissa Quan, Teacher

First Place, Middle School Poetry



Remember ...

It's been so long,
but I can still remember that night.
For what it seems, the "Happiest hour of my life."
It feels like a million years have gone by.

The green truck you rescued me in
Stands out in my mind, like the bright white star on it.
Finally, finally, it was not bearing the swastika.
Finally, I was rescued by you.

I can recall my weight — only 68 pounds.
My hair, a wispy white.
I was the only one who could speak German.
I can still picture your shock when you saw the other "ladies."

I can recollect when you said you were Jewish.
How surprised I was!
So you were not some mysterious man after all;
You were, and still are, my hero. My liberator. My husband.

I have been talking to the children and opening charities.
I have been doing as much as I could to stop hatred from happening.
Then why has history been repeating itself?
My guess is only as good as yours.

Genocide has occurred in Sudan.
Villages are being burnt.
Children cry for their mothers.
Like before, people in the street weep for their loved ones.

I remember the Holocaust.
The filthy, dirty camps.
I can see the people being murdered in Sudan right now.
I know how they feel.

And, yet, unlike them, I know how it feels to be rescued.
They will know too — when we become *their* liberators.



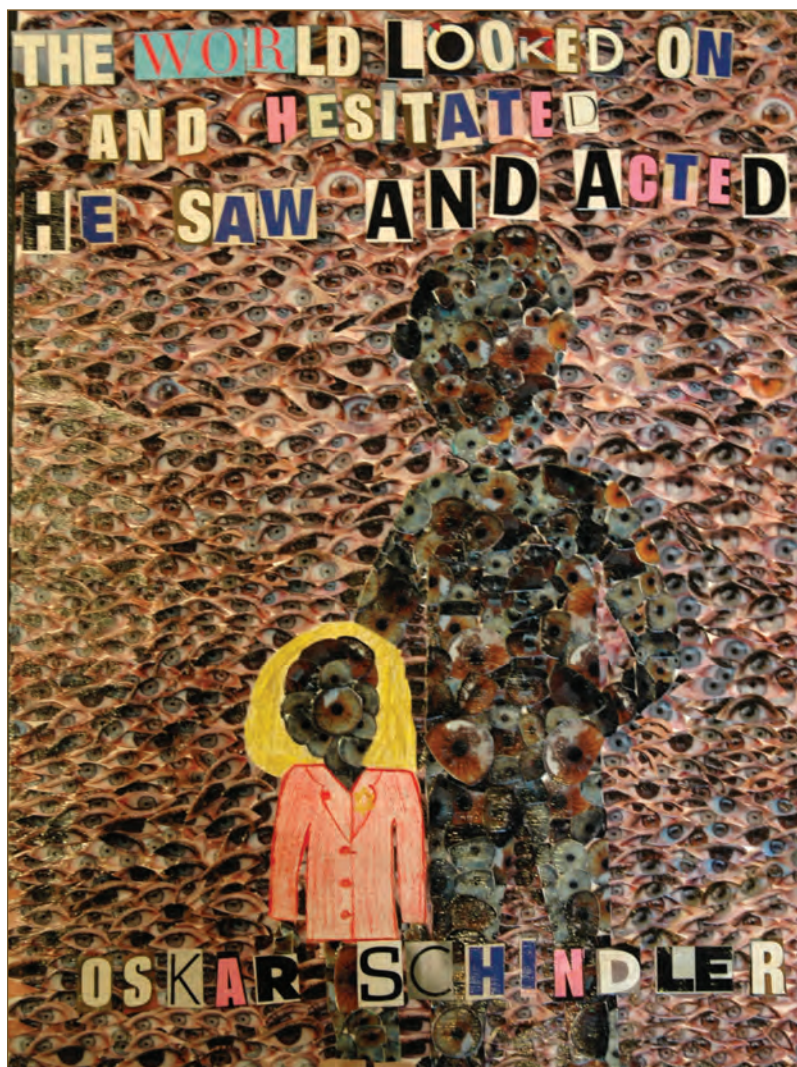
Monique Becker

8th Grade

Lakeside Middle School

Stephanie Colby, Teacher

First Place, Middle School Art



Through My Eyes

Irina Dykhne

10th Grade
University High School
Audra Garcia, Teacher

First Place, High School Essay



It is Time

An unfathomable hatred uprooted their lives, stole their families, and shattered their dreams, but nothing could steal their voices or their courage to speak up against ignorance. Nothing could stop them from telling the world about the pain, blood, and death they saw and felt. Nothing could stop them from telling the world all they knew, for if society learned of the atrocities then perhaps a crime against humanity such as the Holocaust would never happen again.

Through their gift of writing, two brave survivors of the Holocaust, Elie Wiesel and Simon Wiesenthal, spread a wave of awareness throughout the world. Both men had lost much in the Holocaust and both were left with aching scars, but they knew that those murdered didn't deserve to be forgotten. On the contrary, their stories had to be told so that the memories would be constant reminders of the destruction that hatred breeds. Elie Wiesel and Simon Wiesenthal used their memories and the memories of those who could no longer speak for themselves to tell the world of what they lived through, of what their friends and families lived through, and of the friends and family who had not lived. They told their stories to fight ignorance because ignorance leads to hatred and hatred leads to death, too much death.

When the public learned of the millions who had been massacred in what became known as the Holocaust, a cloud of fear settled over a world in mourning, but government leaders rose up with a noble promise of "Never again." Sadly, they were wrong. Now, many years after the Holocaust, the shock has begun to fade and society once again grows blind to the signs of intolerance. By forgetting what was, we are permitting it to happen over and over again.

As I write this essay, thousands of people in the Sudan are being slaughtered, but once again very little is being done to end their suffering. In Darfur, Sudan, the Arab militia known as the Janjaweed, is determined to wipe out the ethnic tribal groups in the western part of the country. About 1.2 million people have

been driven from their homes; 200,000 have fled to Chad for salvation, and at least 50,000 have died. Ignored by their government, the ethnic tribal groups of Sudan are staring genocide in the eye.

Why have the tales of hunger, disease, and death told by Elie Wiesel, Simon Wiesenthal, and so many others not stirred a fire without our hearts and made us more sensitive to human suffering? Why aren't we honoring the promise of "Never again" and why are we letting another people perish before our eyes? Will the world repeat what happened before, to sit passively by as millions die, then intervene only after their deaths and make an empty promise of "Never again"? Hasn't the world seen enough senseless violence and death? Isn't it time for humanity to stop petty judgments based on race, color and religion and recognize the common bond that unites us: we are all human? It is time.

As a member of my high school newspaper, I hold the power of language at my fingertips. I want to use the voice this gives me to inform others of the devastation crushing innocent lives in places such as the Sudan. Knowledge is power, and I want to help people attain that power. Every one of us must wake up from the naïve dream that what has happened before will never happen again because it has happened in places such as Rwanda, Cambodia, and Uganda, and it is happening still. The cycle of death and violence will continue to spin until each of us recognizes the responsibility we hold toward our fellow man. The heroes of the past such as Raoul Wallenberg and Simon Wiesenthal prove that it takes just one person, just one voice to make a difference. I hope that by writing articles in my school newspaper about the crisis in Sudan and by spreading awareness on the subject of genocide as I pursue a future as a writer, I too can have a voice that makes an imprint of change so that perhaps one day we will live up to the promise of "Never again."



Matthew Adam White

10th Grade

University High School

Audra Garcia, Teacher

First Place, High School Poetry

Mientras Soñaban, Otra Persona de Despertó

Sixty years ago, we were all liberated, all released from the white-knuckled hands
Of a man intent on having the Earth entirely to himself, an immense desert of ghosts
For, think on it ... if he had extinguished the Hebrews, he would have taken the races out
One by one; sequentially, even his own, until nothing could be left but him and emptiness.

Sixty years ago, we were all liberated; and we all said things would change
But in many ways, things have not; there are still madmen ruling this world
With minds poisoned by that which they themselves are too imprudent to understand
There are still masses of the manifestation of ignorance ... and they themselves
With closed eyes and ears, sedentary, lost, follow these madmen to seek what they crave:
That false promise that was given unto them upon which the madmen ride

We still fight the numbing wars that leave us psychologically damaged
That leave bereft households and towns, souls dead and the flesh continues to live
No point, no victors anymore, World War II ended that notion sixty years ago
Wars devoid of meaning ... wars that drift into images, rich with torment

The image of the Vietnamese girl running naked, her skin eaten by napalm
The image of the Afghan girl with the soul-mincing green eyes
The image of the Kosovo girl's white hand, pink nails framed with dirt
Protruding out from the condensation-soaked plastic sheet of a body bag
The image of the middle-aged Iraqi women washing the daughter's corpse as they cry
The horrors we may imagine, the pain of war's reality is still fresh, it still hurts

To liberate today means something else; it is understood that we cannot work miracles
We have the capacity to free by force, yet we should be conscious of what else may be
Something is always misjudged, liberation is now quite often in the eye of the beholder
To choose to be patriotic or not to, to realize Earth could do without countries
To recognize that religion is for those who need it, not to be inflicted on others
To plant trees, to breathe air and to fight for that air to be beautiful once again
To drink the water and to stand in the mountains and cry for the earth to be whole
To cry, to realize, to think, to act, to know ... to know how much a simple gesture can do
Our hands are made for reparation; healing of ourselves and our world can begin now

The alarm clock rings, a recalcitrant hand stifles it, and a new day will begin

Global Hope



Marissa Moonilal

12th Grade
Mater Dei High School
Charisse Kitsinis, Teacher

First Place, High School Art

Steven Vander Sluis

11th Grade
El Toro High School
Valaree Wood, Teacher

First Place, High School Art



**A Mother's
Nightmare**

Moments of Decision

Perpetrators, Witnesses, Rescuers

Dr. Samuel Goetz

Holocaust survivor and author

Sgt. (ret.) Robert Persinger

U.S. Army veteran and liberator

Prompt

Read the account of a Holocaust perpetrator, witness, or rescuer.

Research the moment of decision that transformed this individual.

Reflect upon a situation in your own life where you faced a moment of decision that resulted in your becoming a perpetrator, a rescuer, or a witness.

Create an essay, poem or work of art that connects the historical moment of decision you have researched and your own moment of decision. In your work, capture how these moments “illuminate or darken” life.

Awards Ceremony

11 a.m. • March 10, 2006

Memorial Auditorium

Guest Speakers

Samuel Goetz and Robert Persinger

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The “1939” Club, a Holocaust Survivors Organization
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The Catholic Schools, Diocese of Orange



Seventh Annual Holocaust Art and Writing Contest

March 10, 2006



First Place, Middle School Essay

Tito Joe Thomas

Brea Junior High School, Brea

First Place, Middle School Poetry

Sonia Ricci

St. Anne School, Laguna Niguel

First Place, Middle School Art

Laura Mai Beck

St. Cecilia School, Tustin

First Place, High School Essay

Ella Fishman

Woodbridge High School, Irvine

First Place, High School Poetry

Natalie Beisner

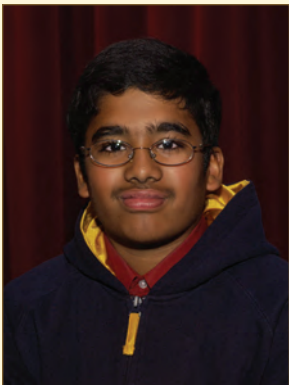
Mater Dei High School, Santa Ana

First Place, High School Art

Edwin Villa

Laguna Hills High School, Laguna Hills





Tito Joe Thomas

8th Grade

Brea Junior High School

Gina Dauphin, Teacher

First Place, Middle School Essay

A Nazi Propaganda Tool's Decision

On a sweltering night in June 1938, a mere boxing match riveted the eyes of people around the world. Those who had radios sat glued to their sofas listening intently, while more than 70,000 sat excitedly in Yankee Stadium awaiting the most anticipated match at that time, the rematch between Joe Louis, an African-American boxer, and Max Schmeling, considered a Nazi symbol. When the opening bell clanged, people gripped their seats tensely, straining to hear or see the progress of the match. After an action-filled hundred and twenty-four seconds, Schmeling was groveling on the floor, and a white towel, thrown by Schmeling's trainer, was lying in the ring signaling surrender. Newspapers declared the fight as a battle between good and evil, Louis representing good and Schmeling symbolizing the evil of the Nazis. On the contrary, reality displays that Schmeling refused to follow Nazi beliefs and dispose of his Jewish manager. Later it was discovered that he had hidden two Jewish boys during the Nazi reign of hate.

I feel a special connection to Max Schmeling's actions. On a bright and clear morning at Brea Junior High, I was faced with the decision that Max confronted. During our P.E. class, I was placed on a soccer team with a boy who was relatively small compared to many teenagers. He was used to harassment at the hands of his peers. On that Monday we were facing a team with one particularly popular boy. I had always thought of him as an amiable person, but that day altered my opinion about him.

As always, the game began with the opposing team scoring multiple goals on us. Then my disliked teammate began vying for the ball with the well-liked teenager. That was when chaos erupted, like a volcano. The popular boy placed his hands on the smaller boy's forehead. This prevented the smaller boy from running since the strength of the perpetrator was focused on his smaller and weaker body. Most of the players just stood there and snickered at the victim's toils at trying to escape humiliation. For a few seconds, I stood silent, watching with sorrowful eyes mourning the cruelty of mankind.

Then it dawned on me, what would be the use of speculating? My actions would halt

the mistreatment of someone who was being teased as a result of his height. Time flew by as I remained ambivalent, arguing with myself. If I confronted the popular teen, I had a very high chance of not being adulated but despised, but I also remained aware of the suffering my teammate faced. What would it be like to be that person? Wouldn't I yearn for someone to rescue me from further embarrassment? Those questions overpowered my doubt, and I chose to rescue my teammate.

What occurred afterwards surprised me greatly. The well-liked teenager stepped back and later left him alone. Like Max Schmeling, I encountered a decision that might have earned the hate of others. Schmeling was well-liked by the Nazis, seen as an excellent model for their so-called superior Aryan race, yet he refused to follow Nazi practices and did not fire his Jewish manager Joe Jacobs. Although this itself was a courageous deed, he undertook a more valiant and dangerous deed. Being very liked, Max Schmeling knew that his actions might drastically degrade his popularity, and earn him a spot on the gallows or in a concentration camp. Surprisingly, he did what was morally right and went against the crowd. Max sheltered two sons of one of his Jewish friends in his hotel evading visitors by telling the hotel staff that he was ill. Later, he helped the two boys find their way to safety.

Years after his defeat, Max Schmeling would write, "Every defeat has its good side. A victory over Joe Louis would perhaps have made me the toast of the Third Reich." This would have resulted in Schmeling being tried as a war criminal. His decision to assist the two boys to safety illuminated his life since his actions further debunked the idea that Schmeling promoted the Nazi regime. Likewise my experience also brightened my life, but in a more subtle way. In times where I am a perpetrator, I can recall my response to a conflict on a bright and clear morning and the consequence of that experience. Our similar incidents reveal one paramount theme; what is popular is not always right and what is right is not always popular.

Sonia Ricci

8th Grade
St. Anne School
Mary Hoovestol, Teacher

First Place, Middle School Poetry



Without Regret

Desperate Jews pounded at embassy gates,
Last hope for escape.
He was their sole consolation
Last chance for salvation.

But permission to grant visas was denied.
Sempo Sugihara had to decide.
Defy his country and risk going home a disgrace,
Or let human life go to waste.

If he made saving them his mission
Would he later regret his decision?

As death rapidly accrued
He couldn't watch the torture continue.
Human beings who needed help, his conscience they did prod.
He may have to disobey his government, but he wouldn't disobey God.

His moral compass guiding the way
Writing nearly three hundred visas a day,
Not stopping until the train left the station
Further demonstrating his determined dedication.

He lost his job and his reputation
But never regretted his decision.

Courageous enough to violate Japanese policy
With reasons based on moral philosophy.
He made saving them his mission
And never once regretted his decision.

There isn't a day I don't regret a decision I now disdain
When I deliberately caused my friend scarring, emotional pain.
I have learned from that choice, and through much forgiving
Now, before speaking, do a great deal of considering.

His actions taught a lesson we must never forget:
Don't make decisions you are going to regret.



Laura Mai Beck

7th Grade

St. Cecilia School

Diane Truxaw, Teacher

First Place, Middle School Art



Message of Hope

Ella Fishman

10th Grade
Woodbridge High School
Joan Malkin, Teacher*First Place, High School Essay*

No Other Choice

The decision — a moment, an instant — can change everything and define who you are. The path chosen at this junction of life-altering events is shaped by a culmination of life's experiences, the demands of the moment, and an intense desire either to act, or to withhold oneself from action. Only those who overcome fear's paralysis to act on another's behalf succeed in marking themselves as rescuers.

During the Holocaust, one of the most challenging feats was to gain the courage to help the Jews, even though it meant putting one's life on the line. People who accomplished this, such as Raoul Wallenberg, not only saved Jews from certain death, but also saved themselves from the helplessness that fear induces and became heroes.

Raoul Wallenberg was born in 1912 in Sweden. One of his first jobs was in a Dutch bank in Palestine where he encountered Jews who had escaped Nazi persecution in Germany. Their accounts of the horrors of the Nazis had a deep emotional impact on him. He was particularly susceptible to their words because of his naturally empathetic nature and his heritage of a Jewish great-great-grandfather. When he returned to Sweden, he went into business with Koloman Lauer, a Hungarian Jew.

In 1944, the United States' War Refugee Board teamed up with Sweden to attempt to save Hungarian Jews. Lauer was the Hungarian representative, and upon his suggestion, the Board chose Wallenberg to lead a rescue operation. Selected for his language skills, intelligence, compassion, and familiarity with the Nazi government, Wallenberg agreed without hesitation. This decision set him on a path towards heroism from which he never wavered.

To prevent the deportation of Jews, Wallenberg issued protective passes marking the carriers as Swedish to be released into his custody. He used 30 buildings to house 20,000 refugees protected by the Swedish flag and hid others in the embassy itself. When Hungarian fascist troops tried to take Jews out of one of his buildings, he yelled, "This is Swedish territory. ... If you want to take them, you'll have to shoot me first."

Wallenberg's courage was unswerving as he ran alongside the deportation trains amid Nazi gunfire, handing out passes and demanding that those in possession of them be freed. When Adolf Eichmann ordered a massacre in a Budapest ghetto, Wallenberg threatened General Schmidhuber, head of the German troops in

Hungary, with war crimes charges. The slaughter was halted. Raoul Wallenberg is credited with saving 30,000 to 100,000 Hungarian Jews.

My moment of decision was when, from my family's car, I witnessed a woman kick her young child brutally in the small of his back. The force sent him flying. I was in shock; my jaw and stomach hit the floor. I heard my mother's voice as she told me to call the police. By the time we got closer, the woman and child were in a car pulling away. I gathered up my courage and read the license plate to the police dispatcher. We followed the woman's car and I relayed the directions to the police as they arrived. I knew I could not stand to see someone being victimized when I could help.

Afterwards, I felt disheartened but relieved; a sickening burden of guilt and helplessness lifted. Even though my actions put me in no danger, I felt the difference between being a witness and a rescuer. Witnesses are the mass of the crowd, engulfed by their fear and powerlessness. Rescuers are far rarer, the diamonds of humanity. Their exceptional courage, strength, and compassion allow them to break through the crushing emotions that disable so many others. While my small act by no means made me a rescuer, it made me aware of the great difficulties faced to become one — and the moment of decision that changes everything.

Is it acceptable to merely *witness* atrocities, rather than *committing* them? Does the blood spray beyond the trigger finger and into the crowd? Raoul Wallenberg did neither and instead rescued. He said, "To me there's no other choice. I've accepted this assignment and I could never return to Stockholm without the knowledge that I'd done everything in human power to save as many Jews as possible." Despite great mystery surrounding his disappearance in 1945, whether he died of a heart attack in a Soviet prison, or was executed by the Soviets, his legacy lives. Not only did he save thousands with great risk to himself, but he inspired others to do the same — including me.



Natalie Beisner

11th Grade

Mater Dei High School

Laurie Rollinson, Teacher

First Place, High School Poetry

Zoete Eeuwige Hoop (Sweet Hope Eternal)

In honor of Silvia Grohs-Martin and the many who never lost hope

The world is silent — In a corner far removed from civilization, long forsaken by hope is a Hell
 In this place there are no names — only numbers
 And screams of terror and anguish are the language of the day
 The dawn of the new year 1944 does not bring joy to these forgotten children of Eden
 Tears stream from hollow eyes in Block 27
 But — Hark! — Smiles break through the tears and laughter trickles through the stale air
 Before them is a woman — she looks just like the rest —
 Head nearly bald, body long broken, with the devil's calling card etched upon her arm
Was it so long ago that you were at the peak of your fame?
Silvia Grohs — stunning red hair, voice of a nightingale, legend of the famous Schouwburg stage
Where you sang to the Jews when the rest of the world turned them away
And they applauded and showered you with Heaven's petals — enough to fill all of Amsterdam
 Now — less than one year later — as she sings with all her strength for these captives of Hell
 A light glows in her eyes and the air above her chants, "She is a survivor"
 And the women before her whisper, "She is a hero," for she has given them the gift of forgetting —
 Her notes dance on a breeze that blankets the faces of the ones they loved and lost — the ones who
 shrieked for blessed mercy and found none — the children who cried crimson tears upon their
 mothers' breasts — on this night these women dance on an earth that tastes not of salt, but of Hope
 For a moment, they are free as weltd hands join together to shatter the nations' silent disbelief
Has applause ever sounded so sweet, Silvie?

Weary hands in the kitchens preparing a meager meal — a feast for those who know hunger. ...
 My heart longing to do more before the day is done — for I know the hunger is not yet gone. ...
 The plea in these children's eyes overwhelms. ... I take a small frail body up in my arms
 "May I have this dance?" He nods and — O! — Blessed smile! ... Soon a million tiny feet tap the
 floor. ... Children's laughter floats in the air. ... Never was heard a sweeter symphony.

Hope is never lost. ... People only misplace it. ... Heroes are those who bring it back to us. ... I know of one
 who chose to sing when she was told to be silent, who danced so that others would not fall;
 a woman — and angel —
 Head nearly bald, body long broken, with the devil's calling card etched upon her arm
Silvie, you were never more beautiful than you are in this moment. ... This is your crowning glory.

Edwin Villa

11th Grade
Laguna Hills High School
Dalynn Malek, Teacher

First Place, High School Art



Ending Vision

Voices from Yesterday

Letters for Tomorrow

Felicia Haberfeld

Founding member of The "1939" Club

Leon Weinstein

Warsaw ghetto fighter and member of Polish resistance fighters

Prompt

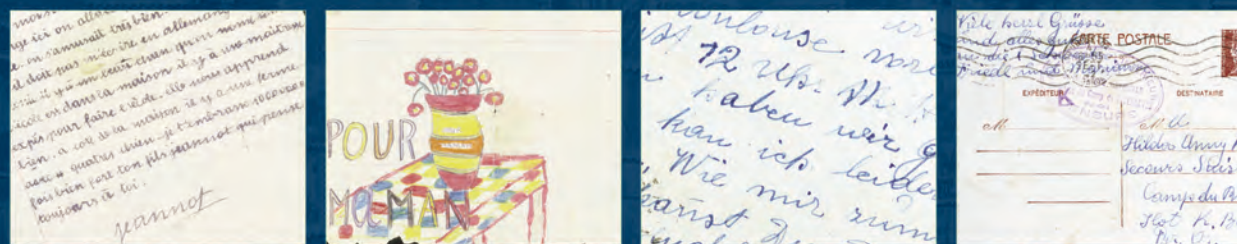
View and listen to at least one video testimony from The "1939" Club website (<http://www.1939club.com/>).

Reflect on the personal history you have watched. What are the main **themes and ideas** in this testimony? What aspects of this witness have special meaning for you? If you had been sitting with the person as he or she told you his or her story, what questions would you have wanted to ask? What might you have wanted to say?

Create a "letter" (prose, poetry, or work of art) for the survivor whose testimony you have heard. **Tell** the person through your prose, poetry, or art the specific understanding of the Holocaust you have gained through his or her testimony. **Share** with your survivor which aspects of his or her testimony have special meaning for you and will influence your values and decisions.

Chapman University and The "1939" Club

THE EIGHTH ANNUAL HOLOCAUST ART AND WRITING CONTEST



Voices from Yesterday: Letters for Tomorrow

Entry Due Date February 7, 2007
Awards Ceremony March 9, 2007

Sponsored by

**The Rodgers Center for Holocaust Education,
Chapman University
The "1939" Club, a Holocaust Survivors Organization
The Samuelli Foundation
Yossie and Dana Hollander**

In partnership with

**The Orange County Department of Education
The Catholic Schools, Diocese of Orange**

With generous support from

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With contributions from

**Facing History and Ourselves National Foundation, Inc.
The Anti-Defamation League**



Photo by Mendel Grossman, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection. A young Jewish woman in the Lodz ghetto writes her last letter before boarding the deportation train to Chelmno. Above left: USHMM, courtesy of Alfred Amert. Color drawing created by Herta and Paul Amir, a Jewish refugee child living in the children's home in Lodz. Above right: USHMM, courtesy of Herta and Paul Amir. Postcard sent by Herta and Paul Amir from a deportation train to her two daughters.

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Division of Office of Publications, Chapman University
Writing by Laurie Ullrich

Eighth Annual Holocaust Art and Writing Contest

March 9, 2007



First Place, Middle School Prose

Sahil Thiruvengadam

Kraemer Middle School, Placentia

First Place, Middle School Poetry

Julie Zafra

Fairmont Private School, Santa Ana

First Place, Middle School Art

Kendall Cornell

St. Anne School, Laguna Niguel

First Place, High School Prose

Sheba Plamthottam

Upland High School, Upland

First Place, High School Poetry

Jessica Nguyen

Katella High School, Anaheim

First Place, High School Art

Erin Walsh

Trabuco Hills High School, Mission Viejo





Sahil Thiruvengadam

8th Grade

Kraemer Middle School

Cathy La Bare, Teacher

First Place, Middle School Prose

Speak Up and Make a Difference

Survivor Testimony: Selene Bruk

I had never pondered deeply about the Holocaust and how hatred and ignorance affect a community as a whole until I watched your moving interview. At school when we reviewed words like prejudice or antisemitism, I could give a perfect definition of the words without understanding their true meaning. When you mentioned the humiliation and degradation of the Orthodox Jews in Bialystok, Poland, I got a glimpse of what you went through. Each incident you tell us about made me wonder why human beings do such harm to each other. You talk of the Polish boys laughing at you as you walked by, and I thought of how I too hate the feeling of others making fun of me, but it was so much more difficult for you. Your description of children crying, separated from their mothers, is vivid. In my mind's eye, I could see their terror, the chaos of people running, trying to escape from the Nazis. No child should have to go through that, and I feel very sad for all the children who could not make it.

Your desperate need to find your family members and stay alive showed how courageous you were in your effort to survive. The way you had to stand barefoot on the frozen ground, the beatings you bore, and all the other evil acts that you experienced made me think of the horrors of Auschwitz, Stutthof, and Ravensbrueck. Merely reading about this did not give as much perspective as listening to your experiences did. I do believe that we should never take freedom for granted, and that we should fight injustice everywhere, be it in our community or in far away Darfur.

Another incident that you narrated touched me deeply. You talk of when you saw your aunt dying and you could not give her a drink of water or a morsel of food, and how helpless you felt. I thought of how often I take most things for granted — food, my family, my home. I never stop to think about the millions of people who are starving in the world as I go about my daily life. When I learned of all you went through at such a young age, I admired your strength and determination of so many challenges. The way you scratched off a bit of paint to put on your mother's cheeks to make her look younger could have resulted in your hanging, but your courage and spirit prevailed.

Before I heard your interview, I thought my heroes were athletes or celebrities, but now I know that ordinary people like you can show extraordinary courage in times of peril and are true heroes. Earlier, in school, when one kid was being bullied by several people, I would never interfere, but now I realize that I cannot always remain quiet and must speak up. Your experience has changed the way I view injustice today and I hope I can make a difference as well.

Julie Zafra

8th Grade
Fairmont Private School
Benjamin Hughes, Teacher

First Place, Middle School Poetry



This Little Story of Mine

Survivor Testimony: Zelda Gordon

The screen flickers on,
 The camera whirrs,
 I listen attentively,
 As memories flow through my head faster than my blood,
 To the memories of a survivor.
 Of broken families, friendships of the past, the forgotten.
 This is your story | *This is my story.*
 Clear words,
 Confused thoughts,
 My family never to see each other again,
 Warmth of my family, so close,
 so far away.
 as all I can do is sit here and watch...
 | "... But it was all just dreams that never came true." |
 I have dreams,
 ... I remember dreams that I had.
 I have friends I laugh with,
 ... I remember my friends' tinkling laughs,
 I have smiled at their daydreaming faces,
 ... I remember my boyfriend's smiling face.
 | I can see them everyday, |
 Every night, in my sleep,
 At school. They would always
 Protect me. Support me. Watch for me.
 Care about me.
 ... I can't say I know how you feel,
 "I'm trying to tell my little story the best I can..."
 But I know I feel grateful, as I listen,
 As I tell
 | *This little story of mine ...* |



Kendall Cornell

8th Grade

St. Anne School

Mary Hoovestol, Teacher

First Place, Middle School Art



Tell Someone

Survivor Testimony: Ilse Diament

Sheba Plamthottam

10th Grade
Upland High School
Marilyn Lubarsky, Teacher

First Place, High School Essay

Dear Mrs. Gabor,

I would like to thank you for turning the voices from yesterday into letters for tomorrow, for enabling each and every one of us to keep hope alive — to prevent the truth about the Holocaust from being buried by denial. Your incredible struggle for survival echoes Professor Elie Wiesel’s statement, “The opposite of love is not hate; it’s indifference.”

Indifference — the true word that was the Holocaust. There were far more villains than saints, there were far more Nazis than rescuers, and there were far more cowards than those brave enough to take a stand. When we remember the courageous deeds of the few righteous gentiles, we must not forget the silence of the many bystanders.

Like poison gas it crept under their noses, invisible to the naked eye — suddenly choking, suffocating — torture, death — the Holocaust. It advanced slowly but rapidly. It engulfed a continent — first Germany, then Austria, Poland, Denmark, Norway ... finally Hungary ... Budapest — where the last remaining large Jewish population existed. Your family and fellow Jews were taken aback by the sudden mass murder committed. Yet, you would not give up hope.

The odds of a Jew surviving during this time were one in a million. The odds of a Jew surviving, unscathed, were even less. You, Georgia Gabor — a voice from the past — were captured three times by the Nazis, but miraculously managed to escape. Miracle after miracle, you escaped untouched — perhaps saved by God for the sake of keeping your story alive—for the sake of keeping hope alive. You stated, “I do believe God had preserved me ... to leave for posterity the documentation from my own experiences.”

By coming face to face with death and fending for yourself, you truly are an inspiration. Your eyes were witness to murder — so gruesome, so inhumane. Bodies hanging upside down; half-beaten, half-living Jews herded into a tunnel, the horror of the cries and screams, thousands of rats scurrying across your face in that tunnel — you described everything in a calm, controlled manner. One question I would like to ask if I ever had the honor to speak with you: How did you, as a girl only fifteen years of age, manage to keep your hopes high during this terrible time?

As you stated, “We honestly believed it couldn’t happen to us.” Your story taught me that indifference is the epitome of evil and that the shock of the Holocaust was also a result of naiveté, which must be avoided today.

The passionate message you conveyed about the Holocaust can only have significance if people respond. I hope to do my part by spreading the word about the Holocaust.

Your story clearly portrays Professor Wiesel’s message: “Just as despair can come to one only from other human beings, hope, too, can be given to one only by other human beings.”

Thank you for sharing your memoir with the world.

Sincerely,

Sheba Plamthottam





Jessica Nguyen

9th Grade

Katella High School, Anaheim

Michelle Gawronski, Teacher

First Place, High School Poetry

Thunderstorms

Survivor Testimony: Rose Toren

Dear Friend,

I imagine you in lush green meadows
Strolling under floating clouds
Peaceful and serene.

Then, you turn to hear the thunder
Fierce and frightening
The storm rolls in
Shooting lightening
Flashes left and right
With no particular care
At random it chooses
What lives and what dies
Rains pour and winds blow
Howling through the black night.

Chances grow slim
That anything will survive
Red flames of hatred rage
And ravage the land
For days, months, years
And tomorrow seems
No different than yesterday.

Friend, because of you,
A ray of light
Creeps from behind the clouds
Hope for the better
Faith must never cease
Or there is no use
I witness by you
Only determination conquers storms.

Erin Walsh

12th Grade
Trabuco Hills High School
Barbara Gard, Teacher

First Place, High School Art



**Reflections on the
Life of Joseph Fenton**

Survivor Testimony: Joseph Fenton

Saving Memories

History as Witness to the Future

Erin Gruwell

Educator and President,
Freedom Writers Foundation

Prompt

View and listen to at least one video testimony from The “1939” Club website (<http://www.1939club.com>).

Reflect on the memories that are central to this person’s testimony. These may be memories of life before the Holocaust, during, or after. What did you learn though these memories about the history of the time?

Choose one memory that has spoken in a special way to you. Think about the images the survivor uses which have brought this memory to life.

In prose, poetry, or art, **share** the memory you have chosen to “save.” **Explore** how this memory represents a theme important to the history of the time and how you will **witness** to this memory by your decisions and actions.



❖ Saving Memories ❖

History as Witness to the Future

Entry Due Date • February 6, 2008
Awards Ceremony • March 7, 2008



Sponsored by:

The Rodgers Center for Holocaust Education, Chapman University
The “1939” Club, a Holocaust Survivors Organization
The Samueli Foundation
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The Rodgers Center for Holocaust Education
The Stern Chair in Holocaust Education
The Sala and Aron Samueli Holocaust Memorial Library

Ninth Annual Holocaust Art and Writing Contest

March 7, 2008



First Place Middle School Prose

Danielle Spriggs

St. Anne School, Laguna Niguel

First Place Middle School Poetry

Elle Gault

McPherson Magnet School, Orange

First Place Middle School Art

Shin-Young Park

Lakeside Middle School, Irvine

First Place High School Prose

Shelli Bautista

Downey High School, Downey

First Place High School Poetry

Clara Mora

Santa Margarita Catholic High School,
Rancho Santa Margarita

First Place High School Art

Ophelia Yin

Trabuco Hills High School, Mission Viejo





Danielle Spriggs

8th Grade

St. Anne School

Mary Hoovestol, Teacher

First Place Middle School Essay

A Pear of Lessons

Survivor Testimony: Ilse Diament

At lunch time one day I grabbed my lunch out of my backpack. What I discovered was that the pear inside my lunch had become mushy, and the remains of the pear were smeared all over my backpack. When I got home that day I told my mom that I didn't want pears in my lunch anymore. Recently, however, a fragment of a story from a woman who lived through the Holocaust brought a blanket of shame over me. After hearing her story, I came to realize how much one small fruit can mean to someone who had faced great evil and how much I take for granted.

The sound of gunshots could be heard. Naturally, most would be scared, but for Ilse Diament it was a different story. Those shots were not from the enemy, but from the British soldiers who had come to liberate the prisoners from the unbearable conditions of the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. Planned in January 1942, Hitler's Final Solution to put all the Jewish people in gas chambers no longer threatened Ilse.

A British doctor came to Ilse and gave her a shot because she was sick with typhus. Then he gave her a can of pears. While talking about the pears, Ilse almost couldn't describe how good they tasted. After eating scarcely anything for such a long time, I can only imagine how wonderful those pears tasted to her. Now, every time she eats a pear, she is reminded of the first pears she ate after her liberation.

Never again will I complain to my mom about putting pears in my lunch. I realize how much I take for granted and how food that is always in my lunch bag could be so greatly unappreciated by me but so greatly appreciated by someone else.

Before studying my survivor, I was scared to learn about the Holocaust and the humiliation and torment that so many people experienced. Now I know that our generation needs to be educated about it because we are the ones who have the power to prevent genocide from ever happening again. Why should someone be discriminated against because of their skin color, race, religion, or appearance? If I see or hear someone being picked on, I should intervene and not keep walking like I didn't see it.

From this day forward, I will never be able to eat a pear without thinking of Ilse and her story and how she found the will to live so that she could educate those who don't understand the dangers of intolerance and prejudice. This sentence from the foreword to the book *Night* by Elie Wiesel sums up why survivors like Ilse tell their story despite the pain they have to relive: "Better that one heart be broken one thousand times in the retelling, if it means that a thousand other hearts need not be broken at all."

Elle Gault

8th Grade
McPherson Magnet School
Lynne Palucki, Teacher

First Place Middle School Poetry



Marked

Survivor Testimony: Isaac Cohen

This number broke the last strand of hope
I am marked forever by the 6 numbers that are branded on my arm

I am marked by the pain,
Of walking to no end, walking to get to a place of hatred and scorn

I am marked by the feeling,
That I could not do anything to save the people around me

I am marked by the reek,
The stench of hope and despair mixing with the ashes of sorrow from the crematoria

I am marked by the hate,
The hate that brought pain, suffering, and death to cover us like a blanket, never to forget

I am marked by the people,
The people who had lost all hope to live and those who kept fighting for it

We are marked by the thought,
Can this happen again?

We are marked by the responsibility,
This time not to stand by and watch

We are marked by the guilt,
We didn't help them, we didn't save them

I, as this writer, am marked by the thought,
If I was marked by a number, who would I really be?

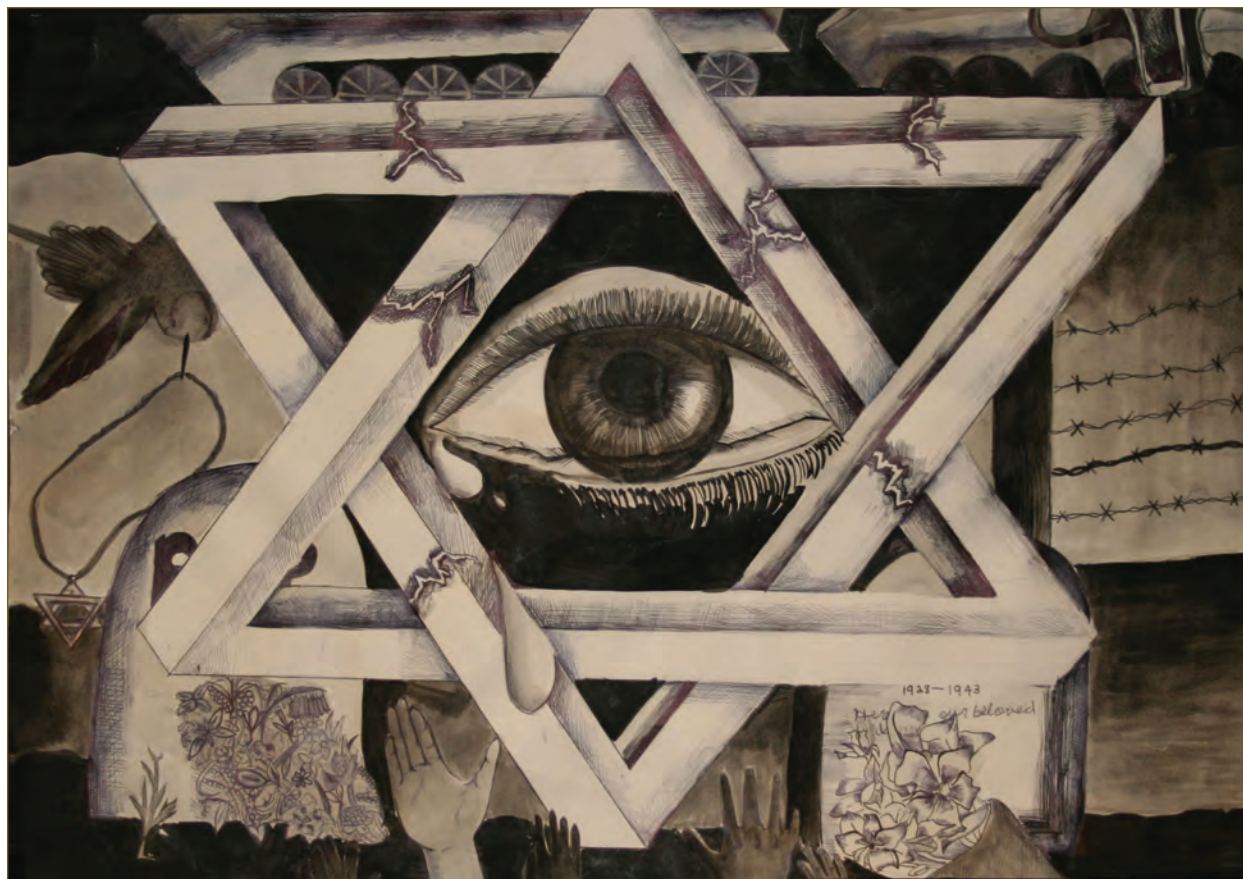
But he is still marked by that number,
114256, the numbers imprinted, like the memories, on him forever.



Shin-Young Park

7th Grade
Lakeside Middle School
Kelli Seydewitz, Teacher

First Place Middle School Art



Lost Hopes

Survivor Testimony:
Zuzanna Ruzickova and Stephen Nasser

Shelli Bautista

12th Grade
Downey High School
Teresa Hill, Teacher

First Place High School Essay

In Remembrance There Is Only Kindness

Survivor Testimony: Ludmila Page

For three days and two nights, the women were hungry and thirsty inside crowded cattle cars. They could see the countryside from a small window, yet remained unaware of where they were heading. They arrived at the station and were greeted by towering chimneys. One of the women cried, "My God, they brought us here. Now they are going to gas us!" But Ludmila Page was quick to say, "They wouldn't have to take us for three days and two nights, they could have done the job in Auschwitz. We are going to Schindler, you'll see."

I have read books and seen movies of the Holocaust, but I had never heard a survivor tell their own story. Before I watched Ludmila Page's testimony, I pondered, "How can I save a memory?" I thought of books that will tell stories; movies that will reenact memories; paintings that will portray scenes. But what use are those things if people today no longer want to be reminded about infants thrown in the furnace, women gassed inside chambers or men forced to dig their own graves?

Does saving a memory necessarily mean we immerse ourselves with the horrible images of our past? Or could it be as simple as performing an act of kindness every day?

Listening to Ludmila Page, I felt transported back in time. I heard fear in her voice; yet she remained optimistic. It was her optimism that moved me to do something I have never done before.

On January 14, 2008, I called 411 and inquired if a Ludmila Page lived in Beverly Hills. The operator acknowledged one did and gave me her phone number. Two scenarios loomed: I will find her or I will not find her. I prayed repeatedly that the latter was not going to happen. Then, a miracle — I was talking to Mrs. Ludmila Page.

Our conversation was not long. I told her I was participating in Chapman's Holocaust Art and Writing Contest. She suggested I write to her and promised to answer all my questions. I immediately began composing my letter. Three days later, I realized I had only one question: How do you want me to keep your memories alive?

Twelve days after I mailed the letter, Mila answered, "... all of us should be tolerant and understanding of others regardless of our differences ... tolerance and understanding are the best way of remembering, so that the tragic experiences of our lives will *never* happen again."

At the beginning of this assignment, I wanted to win in order to meet my survivor. But hearing Mila's voice transformed an assignment into a journey no words could describe. Elated and excited lost their meanings — what I felt was far stronger.

I have won. This experience is the prize I will carry the rest of my life. A prize that will be a constant reminder of what Mila's late husband Leopold said ...

"It is so much easier to love than to hate."





Clara Mora

9th Grade

Santa Margarita Catholic High School

Bruce Fleming, Teacher

First Place High School Poetry

Boots

Survivor Testimony: Paula Lebovics

With Background Testimony of Barry Bruk

Snow falls

I raise my head, tasting the first spoonful of freedom

My cold feet barely move across the white land.

I was just a child.

I stumble my way through the abandoned camp

My thin garments hanging loosely on the skeleton form of my body.

I was just a child.

Other children surround me

Their shaven heads and thin bodies shiver in the cold

Impossible to tell if they are male or female

Together we staggered to an adjoining block

I was just a child.

Mounds of snow protrude from the flat ground

Corpses of those now forgotten

I survived but when I stared at the small hills

"a knife went through me as if I was being killed"

I was just a child.

We reach a store room filled with mounds of clothes

I threw layer upon layer over my body, warming my very soul

"I'll never be cold again"

I was just a child.

We turned and found piles upon piles of shoes

Shoes of every color, size, and shape

And boots! Oh, how I wanted boots!

I was just a child

I searched and searched but every time I found boots

My small feet barely fit into the soles

Until I found a fitting pair, the connection of where they came from never reached my mind

"I was still a child."

Ophelia Yin

11th Grade
Trabuco Hills High School
Barbara Gard, Teacher

First Place High School Art



A True Reflection of Rose Toren

Survivor Testimony: Rose Toren

Witnesses to the Holocaust

*Identities Shattered —
Identities Shaped*

Natalie Weinstein Gold


Child survivor of the Holocaust
and psychotherapist

Prompt

View and listen to at least one video testimony from The “1939” Club website (<http://www.1939club.com>) or the USC Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education (<http://tc.usc.edu/vhiechoes>).

Think about the experiences and events that are central to this survivor’s identity. In what ways did this individual experience the “shattering” of identity during the Holocaust? How did this very “shattering” create identity?

Share in prose, poetry, or art your understanding of this survivor’s identity and **explore** how what you have learned from this testimony will influence you as you create your own identity.



10th Annual Holocaust Art and Writing Contest

Witnesses to the Holocaust
Identities Shattered—Identities Shaped

Contest Entry Date: Wednesday, February 4, 2009
Awards Ceremony: Friday, March 6, 2009


In celebration of the 10th Anniversary of the Holocaust Art and Writing Contest
First prize recipients, one parent/guardian and recipient’s teacher will receive an expense-paid study trip from June 23-26, 2009, to visit the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and other sites in Washington, D.C.
Travel arrangements will be coordinated by The Rodgers Center for Holocaust Education.

Sponsored by:
The Rodgers Center for Holocaust Education, Chapman University
The “1939” Club, a Holocaust Survivors Organization
The Samuelli Foundation
Yossie and Dana Hollander

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Anti-Defamation League

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UNIVERSITY

The Pinkas’s Book of Art Holocaust Education
The Office of the President of the United States
The Holocaust Remembrance Project of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Tenth Annual Holocaust Art and Writing Contest

March 6, 2009



First Place Middle School Prose

Annie Pankowski

St. Anne School, Laguna Niguel

First Place Middle School Poetry

Shannon Annarella

St. Columban School, Garden Grove

First Place Middle School Art

Christina Trinh

St. Cecilia School, Tustin

First Place High School Prose

Gloria Gallardo

Orange High School, Orange

First Place High School Poetry

Laura Redmond

Santa Margarita Catholic High School,
Rancho Santa Margarita

First Place High School Art

Ashley Austin

Polaris High School, Anaheim





Annie Pankowski

8th Grade

St. Anne School

Mary Hoovestol, Teacher

First Place Middle School Essay

Changed in a Moment

Survivor Testimony: Sophie Weinstein

Identity. Who we are, our “identity” is shaped by life experiences. After watching Sophie Weinstein’s testimony, I have become aware of how reality can change in a moment. Events, such as a war or genocide, can shatter the identity of a whole generation. Where different beliefs, religions, and races are not tolerated, we are not safe to be who we are. Awareness of these tragedies helps us avoid repeating another Holocaust.

Before the war began in Poland in 1939, Sophie was a happy Jewish 17-year-old. Her life was filled with a loving family, supportive friends, and a drive for education. She was ready to start college until everything she saw, felt, and heard shattered who she was. As a young adult in the Warsaw ghetto, she lost the naïve illusion of safety as her family and friends vanished, murdered one by one. All alone in Majdanek, Sophie lost her extroverted, happy personality and the once carefree social girl was transformed into a quiet and wary adult.

The war caused Sophie to lose many aspects of her personality. Witnessing the brutal actions of the Nazis, such as forcing Jews to jump to their death or be shot, Sophie experienced hate and prejudice daily. With no one to lean on, Sophie realized she must take responsibility for her own safety. In Auschwitz, when her survival depended on being selected for work details, she was sick with typhus. Realizing she was the only one of her bunkmates not chosen, and acting on instinct, she risked being shot and ran to join the group of selected workers. Taking that risk changed her life. The cruel events that she experienced during the war prevented Sophie from emotionally connecting to others, forcing her to see the worst of humanity.

Sophie’s story has given me personal awareness of human suffering and the loss millions endured because of religious and racial intolerance.

Safety. I developed a sense of how fragile safety is. Sophie and many others who were persecuted during the war lost their entire lives in a matter of days. Tolerance. It is important to respect and tolerate everyone no matter what they believe in, what color their skin is, or whatever else separates them from the group. Awareness. Being aware of world events means watching the news or reading the newspaper and understanding how those events could impact your life. Intolerance and lack of awareness cost the lives of millions of people during the Holocaust.

Just like Sophie’s identity was shaped by the unspeakable acts of the Holocaust, my identity has been changed by hearing her story. Now I understand the danger of misguided beliefs and recognize how quickly life can change when we cannot tolerate the different identities in our world. I am more aware of how intolerance jeopardizes the safety to form one’s identity. Awareness. Tolerance. Safety. We all expect these in our lives, but how can they exist until we truly value each and every identity?

Would You?

Survivor Testimony: Zelda Gordon

If all you had was taken away
And it was just your family and you
If all you could define your life with was
“Just dreams that never came true.”
Would you still dream?

If every day was a fight to live
And walls were your world's borders
If bullets and screams were all you knew
And you were always under Nazi orders
Would you still have hope?

If a loved one died before your eyes
And you found out your family was dead
If you were starving, sick, and cold
And all you felt was fear and dread
Would you still have faith?

If everyone hated you and was out to kill
And you didn't know when to expect an attack
If life was a living nightmare
Where you knew friends weren't coming back
Would you still love?

If people wouldn't believe what you went through
Turned their backs and shut their eyes
Denied all the evidence
And spoke their twisted lies
Would you endure?

If I were Zelda Gordon
And had to relive those times
Build who I am out of nothing
And speak out against their crimes
Could I forgive?

Shannon Annarella

8th Grade
St. Columban School
Thelma Anselmi, Teacher

First Place Middle School Poetry





Christina Trinh

7th Grade
St. Cecilia School
Diane Truxaw, Teacher

First Place Middle School Art



Shattered Innocence

Survivor Testimony: Sophie Weinstein

Gloria Gallardo

9th Grade
Orange High School
Marianne Petersen, Teacher

First Place High School Essay



Selene Bruk

Survivor Testimony: Selene Bruk

The Holocaust shattered Selene Bruk's identity, but as it was being shattered, a new identity was shaped.

Selene Bruk was only in fifth grade when her identity took its first blow. She was forced to witness the unyielding hatred of the Nazis and their cruel treatment towards all the people she loved. The Star of David marked her as a Jew. It represented something more than just her religion. It gave the world permission to humiliate her and her family. Experiencing so much suffering and loss caused tears in her identity. She felt her heart beat at an incredible pace when she realized that she might never see her family again. The cattle cars separated her from all but her mother, but inside of herself, she found the courage to keep them forever in her heart. She survived five concentration camps: Stutthof, Birkenau, Auschwitz, Ravensbrück, and Neustadt. Each day that she passed at those camps her mother gave her the strength to keep living.

Her testimony was powerfully compelling because through all of the pain and suffering, Selene Bruk never completely lost who she was. After she was liberated, she found her father and brother when she needed them the most. They were the answer to her prayers; they were everything to her. After the Holocaust, she married a fellow survivor and had two daughters and five grandchildren. Years later she revisited Poland where she found herself standing in front of her old home, and everything came back to her; all of the painful memories hit her like a wrecking ball. Everything that she did not want to remember was now forever engraved in her mind, but mostly in her heart.

From Selene Bruk I learned that when you have lost everything that there is to lose, you must always remember that your faith can be all that you have left to live for. Her hope and determination inspires me to believe that your identity can never be shattered when you know who you are. When Selene Bruk revisited Bialystok, her hometown, she was overwhelmed by the stillness, the silence that filled the air with memories that would never fade from her mind. Six million of her people have been silenced forever, but Selene Bruk vows never to remain silent and most of all never to forget.



Laura Redmond

12th Grade

Santa Margarita Catholic High School

Bruce Fleming, Teacher

First Place High School Poetry

Rebuilt

Survivor Testimony: Rose Toren

Do you remember me?
You may have broken me down,
But I don't need you to piece me back together.
You may have taken my warm home,
But you couldn't take my hopes.
You may have taken my education,
But you couldn't take my guts.
The sun was in hiding as my feet fled.
Trees bending in the wind covered me
From you who made me hide who I was
You would find my Jewish upbringing
But you could never find my strength, my hope, my luck.
They are not in hiding.
Do you recognize me now?
I was the child who wanted to be something.
Can you see it?
Now I am the woman who is more than something.
I am everything, everyone.
I am the thunder of running feet,
The tears of frightened families,
The sister who took the chance to flee,
The false papers of hope.
I am the one who was lucky.
Do you know it now?
I am their story,
Their voice,
Their beauty and their pain,
And you can never take that.

Ashley Austin

12th Grade

Polaris High School

Lorna Farnum, Teacher

First Place High School Art



Edgar's Defiance

Survivor Testimony: Edgar Aftergood

Tenth Annual Holocaust Art and Writing Contest Study Trip to Washington, D.C. • June 23-26, 2009

A Commemorative Journal dedicated to Yossie and Dana Hollander



To The Hollanders

From: Shannon Annarella

We came home from our trip
More aware and wise
The evils we all knew about
Were brought before our eyes

Thanks for giving us the chance
To see life in '45
To walk in someone else's shoes
And find out who survived

Thank you for allowing us
To march down memory lane
To what victims' lives were like
And share in their grief and pain

I hope people remember
And really mean it when
They get to see the evidence
And promise, "Never again!"

By seeing what we must prevent
And what is left to do
We've been inspired to take action
And it's all thanks to you

Thank you so much for letting us
Experience DC
Through memorials and monuments
And through the symphony

Such a great experience
It's one we won't forget
Thank you for giving us this chance
Even though we've never met

THANK YOU!

The memory man is selective with tough criteria. He delegates countless applicants to the dreaded short term memory. Grocery store trips, geometry rules, and magazine articles commiserate over their shared fate. But every so often, the memory man spots a gem, polishes it off, restores the details and keeps it forever. Although it requires far more effort, these gems are worth the work. Currently, the memory man is unavailable — he has been working overtime these past four days but has been compensated by thousands of gems.

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By Laura Redmond

Itinerary

- June 23: Depart Long Beach Airport
Arrive Washington Dulles International Airport
Evening monument tour: Jefferson, Roosevelt, Lincoln, Washington, Korea Conflict Memorial
- June 24: Early admission/tour, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
Senator Barbara Boxer's Town Hall Meeting, Dirksen Building
Nationals baseball game, Nationals Park
- June 25: Visit with Congressman Ed Royce
Capitol Tour, visit Senate Gallery
National Symphony Orchestra performance, The Kennedy Center
- June 26: Visit Mt. Vernon
Visit Arlington National Cemetery
Depart Washington Dulles International Airport
Arrive Long Beach Airport

Student participants: Shannon Annarella, Ashley Austin, Gloria Gallardo, Annie Pankowski, Laura Redmond, Christina Trinh

Parent/Guardian participants: Frances Annarella, Allison Austin, Diane Craig, Theresa Do, Anne Redmond, Maria Romo

Teacher participants: Thelma Anselmi, Lorna Farnum, Bruce Fleming, Mary Hoovestol, Marianne Petersen, Diane Truxaw

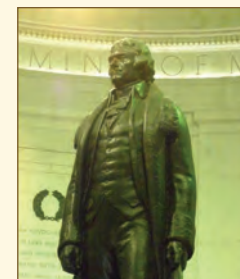
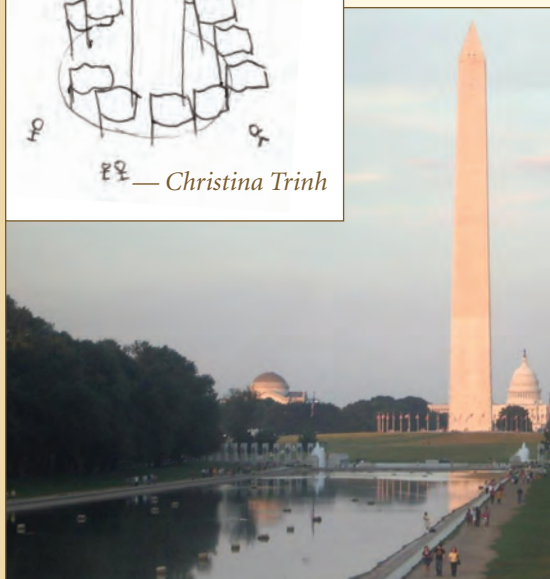
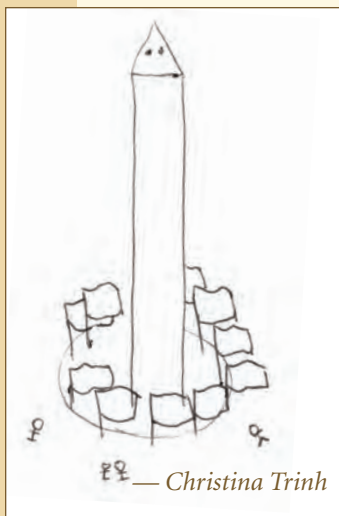
Chapman Trip Administrators: Jessica Cioffi, Marilyn Harran, Jan Osborn

Orange County Department of Education: Deborah Granger

Photos contributed by: Ashley Austin, Jessica Cioffi, Deborah Granger, Annie Pankowski and Laura Redmond

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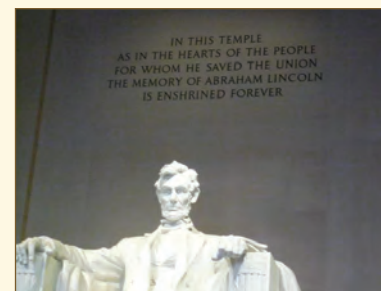
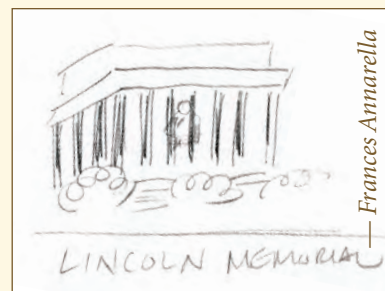
Evening Tour of Washington, D.C. Memorials



National treasures, monuments, tangible
relics of national struggles,
and their resolution.
(Hopefully)

National treasures, monuments,
tangible relics of national struggles,
and their resolutions (hopefully).

— Diane Craig



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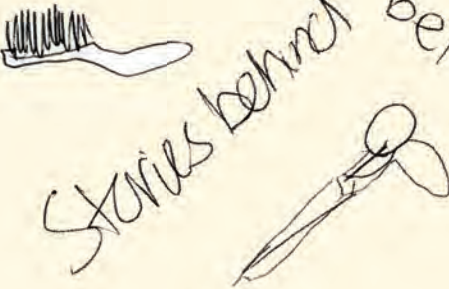
Shannon Annarella

Trying to capture now
The thoughts my mind erases

Never Again

Stories behind belongings

ECHOES of History & Memories




... we said 'never again' but the challenges are many and seemingly overwhelming — but I still have faith that we can in some way effect the change that needs to happen.

— Thelma Anselmi, Shannon's teacher

True we said "never again" but the challenges are many and seemingly overwhelming — but I still have faith that we can in some way effect the change that needs to happen.

Remember



Enjoyed having a special time to spend with my daughter — it's rare to get "mommy & me" time and we always cherish those opportunities.

Enjoyed having a special time to spend with my daughter — it's rare to get the exclusive "mommy & me" time and we always cherish those opportunities.

— Frances Annarella, Shannon's mother



Tenth Annual Holocaust Art and Writing Contest

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United States Holocaust Memorial Museum



Janusz Korczak was offered a way out of the ghetto for himself, but not for the children of his orphanage. The teacher wouldn't abandon his students.

— Ashley Austin

enormity of the Holocaust is too big to comprehend we have no frame of reference, the museum brings the victims to life for us and reminds us we are collectively responsible to oppose human rights violations always.

... enormity of the Holocaust is too big to comprehend
... the museum brings the victims to life for us and reminds us we are collectively responsible to oppose human rights violations *always*.

— Anne Redmond

The visit to the Holocaust museum impacted me more than I could have ever expected.

— Laura Redmond

The visit to the Holocaust museum impacted me more than I could have ever expected.

I marvel at the thought and planning that went into creating the USHMM. What they had to overcome in order to get it built is astounding.

Remember
777

— Allison Austin



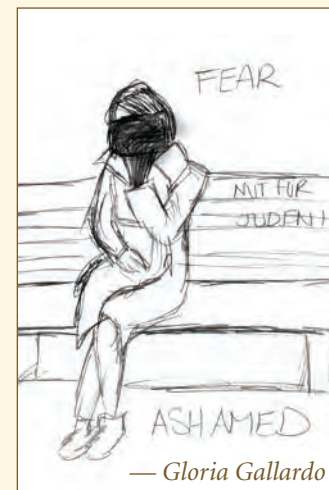
— St. Louis by
Lorna Farnum

I marvel at the thought and planning that went into creating the USHMM. What they had to overcome in order to get it built is astounding."

— Thelma Anselmi



— Allison Austin



— Gloria Gallardo

Tenth Annual Holocaust Art and Writing Contest Study Trip to Washington, D.C. • June 23-26, 2009

Ashley Austin



Emanuel Ringelblum



This doll was made especially for Zofia Charwicz. It was saved for her by a non-Jew until she retrieved it after the war.

Never Say, written by Hirsh Glik, a young Vilna poet, became the partisan theme:

Our courage and our strength will have rebirth.

Tomorrow's sun will gild our sad today,
The enemy and yesterday will fade away



Looking ahead
Looking in the past
Looking in others
Looking at HISTORY
and THE FUTURE

Looking ahead,
Looking in the past
Looking in others
Looking at HISTORY
& THE FUTURE

— Lorna Farnum,
Ashley's teacher

He was killed at age 27
in a bombing. I said a
prayer of remembrance
for him in the
Remembrance Room.

I said a prayer of remembrance for him in the remembrance room.
— Allison Austin, Ashley's mother

Tenth Annual Holocaust Art and Writing Contest Study Trip to Washington, D.C. • June 23-26, 2009

State Capitol, Senator Barbara Boxer and Congressman Ed Royce



Having the chance to attend Senator Boxer's townhall meeting was really an honour. It was fascinating to see a provision of American democracy at work and to get an idea of the scope of her work and the way in which issues are raised by citizens.

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— Laura Redmond

Congressman Ed Royce ... *wanted* to spend time with us, though we all know he had much to do.

— Thelma Anselmi

Congressman Ed Royce was a dream. He wanted to spend time with us, though we all knew he had much to do.



Tenth Annual Holocaust Art and Writing Contest

Study Trip to Washington, D.C. • June 23-26, 2009

Gloria Gallardo

I feel overwhelmed by the fact that I'm going on the trip to Washington D.C to visit the Holocaust Museum. Words can't describe the immense joy that I feel. I've never traveled to anywhere in the U.S so this trip will be my first trip. My expectations are to have the most memorable trip of my life and to experience a life changing moment when I am standing in the Holocaust Museum. I am truly happy and honored to go on the study trip to Washington D.C.

NO HELP...
NO HANDED.

ONE SUITCASE

that held the Jewish people
together were slowly cut

I'm really excited about our trip to Washington, D.C. It's such an amazing city, and I'm realizing how fortunate I am to be included in this adventure.

I'm really excited about our trip to Washington, D.C. ...
I'm realizing how fortunate I am to be included in this adventure.

— Marianne Petersen, Gloria's teacher

Strings of hope

Tenth Annual Holocaust Art and Writing Contest

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Nationals Baseball Game, Nationals Park



My very first major League B-B game

— Thelma Anselmi

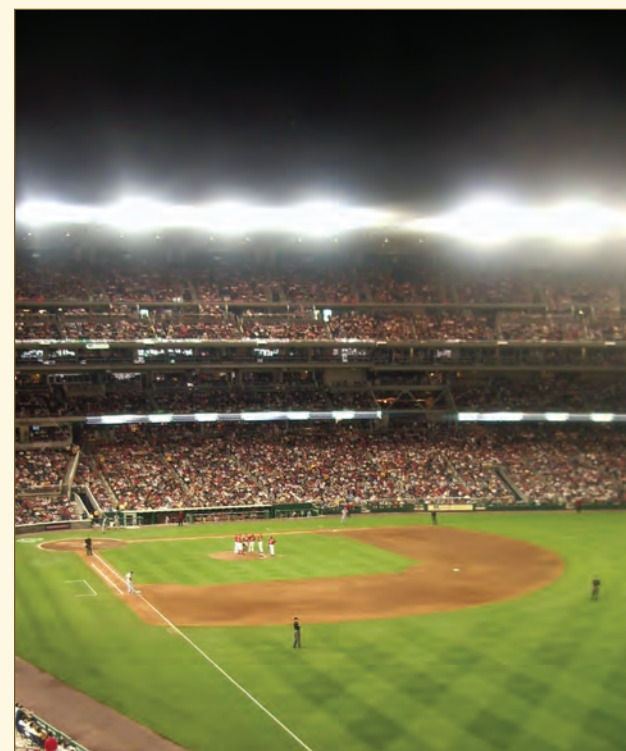
not dogs cheer! melons Red Sox Nationals smell & food spirit home run huge stadium singing "take me out to the ball game" the wave great crowd

I was so excited to attend my first baseball game - actually my first ever professional sports game. It was so much fun and I have definitely been converted to a major baseball fan! And the stadium was amazing - there was everything from a build a bear to a dunking tank!

energy excitement charge!

the wave

— Laura Redmond



Dr. Harran's red "topper"

— Mary Hoovestol

Tonight was my first time at a baseball game, it was a lot of fun

— Anne Redmond

Tenth Annual Holocaust Art and Writing Contest Study Trip to Washington, D.C. • June 23-26, 2009

Annie Pankowski

Wow! I am proud of myself for accomplishing what I did. It took me by surprise. Washington is exciting for me. I have heard great things and I can't wait to experience them.

Wow! I am so proud of myself for accomplishing what I did. It took me by surprise. Washington is exciting for me. I have heard great things and I can't wait to experience them.

Return to Remembrance
Unprecedented TRAGEDY
Remember the
CHILDREN

Responsibilities as a
CITIZEN OF
DEMOCRACY



— Diane Craig, Annie's mother

S
U
DARFUR
A
N

— Mary Hoovestol, Annie's teacher

Tenth Annual Holocaust Art and Writing Contest Study Trip to Washington, D.C. • June 23-26, 2009

Kennedy Center

We loved our chorister seats. What a great view of the orchestra! Being able to see the conductor's face & expressions was priceless.

— Frances Annarella



Our seats were really awesome because we got a different perspective than most of the audience

— Laura Redmond



— Ashley Austin



— Shannon Annarella

A birds-eye seat to perfect harmony and a golden glockenspiel

— Mary Hoovestol

When I was watching the orchestra, I was enthralled. The music was so beautiful & touching

— Christina Trinh



— Ashley Austin

Tenth Annual Holocaust Art and Writing Contest Study Trip to Washington, D.C. • June 23-26, 2009

Laura Redmond

It was amazing to see the sites of
so many important moments
in history - especially standing
where MLK Jr gave his "I have
a dream speech" and envisioning
the march on Washington.

... but those who simply stood by aware of the
situation but not doing anything ... were also
perpetrators. I do not want to be like them.

but those who simply stood by aware
of the situation but not doing
anything were also the perpetrators -
I do not want to be like them..

rescuers really showed me how great
a difference anyone can make - and
the time to act is now

... the rescuers really showed me how
great a difference anyone can make
— and the time to act is **now**.

now and for always.

I have been trying to use logic
to understand how this happened
but I realize it's when good people
do nothing.

I have been trying to use logic to under-
stand how this happened but I realize it's
when good people do nothing.

— Anne Redmond, Laura's mother



Tenth Annual Holocaust Art and Writing Contest Study Trip to Washington, D.C. • June 23-26, 2009

Mt. Vernon and Arlington National Cemetery

At the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier I couldn't help thinking about those who lost their lives during the Holocaust — including American soldiers during the liberating of the camps.

At the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier I couldn't help thinking about those who lost their lives during the Holocaust — including American soldiers during the liberating of the camps.
— Thelma Anselmi

VALOR
HONOR



Arlington has a special place in my heart.
— Frances Annarella

Arlington has a special place in my heart.

I couldn't help but feel a huge pang of pride as I watched the changing of the guard today. The discipline, the perseverance, the absolute adherence to duty exhibited by the soldiers was awe-inspiring, even after having seen it before.

I couldn't help but feel a huge pang of pride as I watched the changing of the guard today. The discipline, the perseverance, the absolute adherence to duty exhibited by the soldiers was awe-inspiring.
— Bruce Fleming

6 feet tall
28 inch waist
ramrod posture
21 steps
21 seconds
night and day
24 hours
320,000 headstones
duty, honor, respect, sacrifice
24/7



Tenth Annual Holocaust Art and Writing Contest Study Trip to Washington, D.C. • June 23-26, 2009

Christina Trinh

I've been visiting
a lot of awesome places

When I saw the room with all the stolen shoes, I became a bit emotional. Each shoe represented ONE life, and there were so many shoes ...



the room with
When I saw^v all the stolen shoes, I became a bit emotional. Each shoe, represent ONE life, and there were many shoes...

... a mountain of shoes from Majdanek. All kinds of shoes belonging to men, women and children, even babies. Some shoes are basic work shoes, some are fancy. All different types. I see a shoe like my own.

— Diane Truxaw, Christina's teacher

Huge impact exhibit - a mountain of shoes from Majdanek. All kinds of shoes belonging to men, women, & children, even babies. Some shoes are basic work shoes, some are fancy. All different types. I see a shoe like my own.



this trip was the most memorable
experience that I've ever had and...
I am sincerely
grateful towards everyone who
made this trip possible. Thank
you so very much.

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everyone who made this trip possible.
Thank you so very much.
— Gloria Gallardo



"One of the parts I enjoyed most
about the trip was getting to know
the other members of the group.
Initially we were all a little shy
(okay, maybe Jan wasn't!) but after
4 days we had completely warmed
to one another and I got the chance
to know some truly lovely people
full of energy and kindness."
— Laura Redmond

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Thank you to all the people
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Thank you!

Thank you to all the people who made this possible
— all the coordinators & the donors! Thank you!
— Frances Annarella



To our sponsors, thank
you so much for your
generosity in funding
this trip. If I had to
describe my daughter
to you, I would tell you
she is a very bright,
compassionate girl
whose vocation is to
make a difference.
— Anne Redmond

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A "thank you" does not begin
to express my admiration and
gratitude for allowing me to
participate in this memorable
once-in-a-lifetime experience
THANK You ☺

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once-in-a-lifetime experience.
Thank you.

— Thelma Anselmi

The Annual Holocaust Art and Writing Contest is co-sponsored by Chapman University; The “1939” Club, an Organization of Holocaust Survivors and Descendants; the Samuelli Foundation; Dana and Yossie Hollander; and the USC Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education. Chapman University is deeply grateful to our co-sponsors for their support of the contest and awards ceremony.

A special word of appreciation must go to Louis Weber and Publications International for donating more than 300 copies of *The Holocaust Chronicle: A History in Words and Pictures*, the 800-page book that continues to be the cornerstone of the contest. Over the last ten years, Publications International has given close to 3,500 copies of the book to our contest — a gift of extraordinary generosity for which we are deeply grateful.

We express our appreciation to the following individuals and organizations for their support of the contest over the past decade:

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