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The WYHS BRAINSTORM

It's Time To Hear What's On Your Mind

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

The WYHS
BRAINSTORM

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Dear Reader,

I forgot "Never Forget." As a Jewish teenager, the lessons of the Holocaust are familiar; they linger in speeches, in textbooks, in our collective conscience as a people. But constant exposure rendered me desensitized. The Holocaust had become invisible by its very ever-presence. Shocking images no longer shocked. Inspiring testimonies failed to inspire. "Never Again" rang hollow.

This summer, that all changed. I had the privilege of participating in the Holland and Knight Holocaust Remembrance Project alongside five remarkable teachers and nine remarkable teens from all over the United States. Together, we met survivors who embody perseverance and hope with their every breath. In fact, the *Brainstorm* had the distinct honor of interviewing two of these survivors for this issue. We explored the Simon Wiesenthal Center, viewed pieces of Nazi propaganda from their archives, and were shown the importance of combating prejudice and hate. More than anything, I began to view the Holocaust not as a remote, archaic event in a history book, but as an immortal testament to the dangers of conformity and groupthink, to the enormity of man's evil. When the first survivor we met turned over her hand and revealed a string of numbers, I was taken aback by the gasps of adults in the room. They looked at the Holocaust through fresh eyes, and for rubbing my glasses clean and daring me to perceive the past anew, I am forever grateful.

This Holocaust-themed issue is a result of the talent and dedication of the Brainstorm writing, editing, and technical staff. The Brainstorm is further indebted to Mrs. Claudia Cohen and Rabbi Allen Houben, whose assistance has been unfailing. On a personal note, I would like to thank Ms. Angela Ruth and Ms. Joni Krevoy as well as all the participants in the Holland and Knight Holocaust Remembrance Project for a truly eye-opening and transformative experience. Much gratitude is also owed to Ms. Marcia Korman who lent her beautiful gift for photography to this issue. Finally, the *Brainstorm* would like to thank Mr. Ben Lesser, Ms. Renee Firestone, and Ms. Gabriella Karin, three extraordinary survivors who shared their stories with us.

Rabbi Lau, in his address at the dedication of the BRS Holocaust Memorial, spoke about "*Nekamah*"—revenge. What revenge can really be achieved seventy years later, with the voices of six million souls muffled, and most Nazis dead? Our very existence, our refusal to compromise our beliefs as we look to the future, answered Rabbi Lau—that is our revenge. And so in a small way this issue is much more than a commemoration. It is a group of Jewish teenagers preserving the lessons of the Holocaust with their words. It is *Nekamah*.

Sincerely,

Shalva

We genuinely welcome your feedback. Please e-mail us at WYHSBrainstorm@aol.com

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Ripley's Believe It or Not!

Just Like a Waving Flag

Jared Samilow ('14)

The word "Holocaust" in a quick round of word association would most likely yield "swastika," "Nazi," "yellow star," "Auschwitz"—not "Mauthausen Flag." But this little known flag and the little known story behind it represent the transcendent power of gratitude, especially poignant in the wake of the devastation wrought by the Holocaust. On May 5, 1945, the American Eleventh Armored Division entered the Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria. What the American troops saw there defied comprehension. Bodies lay strewn on the ground. Rats gnawed on corpses. Indeed, Former Staff Sergeant Albert J. Kosiek writes that "I saw things that I would never have believed if I hadn't seen them with my own eyes. I never thought that human beings could treat other human beings in this manner." And yet, the Americans were in for a greater surprise. Though their first impressions of Mauthausen exposed man's capacity for evil, they would soon receive a gift that would expose the beauty of the human spirit.

"The world may have turned on them, but still they said 'thank you.' "

The Jews of Mauthausen managed to scrounge together the materials necessary to create an American flag, which they presented as a token of their gratitude to the Americans who liberated them. The camp's inmates surreptitiously weaved the flag out of sheets from the laundry, red fabric from old Nazi banners, and blue-gray cloth from their ragged prison jackets. In the face of inhumanity, they remained human. Though the survivors mistakenly sewed on fifty-six stars, there was no mistaking their sentiment. The world may have turned on them, but still they said "thank you." And when that ad hoc flag with the 56 stars replaced the camp's swastika, there was no mistaking the symbolism. The survivors of Mauthausen were those who refused to break and surrender to the Germans. Though the Nazis were able to deprive them of physical needs, they failed to fracture their unwavering resolve. The Jews of Mauthausen made the best of a most desolate situation, and from tattered pieces of cloth they produced a glorious swatch of history. As Simon Wiesenthal, a survivor of Mauthausen, remarked, "The Stars and Stripes represented Hope."

The actual Mauthausen Flag

BRS Dedicates Holocaust Memorial

Avraham Adelman ('14) and Moshe Levenson ('14)

Whether by car or on foot, those who pass by Boca Raton Synagogue these days are hard pressed to miss the marble set of pillars on the front lawn. Indeed, BRS has taken the initiative to build a Holocaust Memorial in order to commemorate the six million Jews who are no longer with us, as well as those who survived this horrific event in history. The memorial includes benches facing six large pillars which are engraved with the names of survivors, the deceased, and a map of key places where the devastation occurred.

The official unveiling of the monument took place on Sunday, the twenty first of November, and featured a keynote address from the renowned Rabbi Lau, Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv. The primary objective of the memorial is to serve as an immortal testament to the destruction wrought by the Holocaust. As Rabbi Goldberg, Senior Rabbi of BRS stated, "It is critical that we, as a community, maintain the events of the Holocaust as part of our active memory. We do so to memorialize the 6 million martyrs as well as to motivate ourselves to act to make sure it can never happen again. This memorial will serve educationally to teach about the Holocaust and will be a constant reminder of our obligation to fight those that deny the Holocaust and seek to perpetrate another one." With the Boca Raton Synagogue being such a central part of this community's daily life, the memorial, located at the building's entrance, is placed in the best possible location to maximize its visibility. For children, teenagers, and adults alike, each comprehending the Holocaust on their own level, the Holocaust Memorial serves as a constant reminder to us, as a nation, that these atrocities must never be forgotten.

Holocaust Memorials are necessary for an explicit reason: to pass on the truth and to forever remember this national tragedy. Sadly, the day when no eyewitnesses to the Holocaust exist is imminent; documents, photographs, and memorials will be the only evidence to prove that the war really took place and to refute the allegations of Holocaust deniers. When asked about his thoughts on the new Holocaust Memorial, Rabbi Moskowitz, the Assistant Rabbi of the Boca Raton Synagogue, remarked, "It has been a dream of Boca Raton Synagogue to properly memorialize those who perished in the Holocaust and to educate this and future generations about the Holocaust and the dangers of anti-Semitism. We are excited that this dream will now come to fruition. In a generation where evil has reared its ugly head yet again in the form of a madman who denies the Holocaust and has a stated goal of the destruction of the State of Israel, and where wicked people have amassed thousands of rockets to Israel's north and thousands to its south, the need to remember and learn from our past is critically important." Rabbi Klein, a Holocaust survivor and a member of BRS, gave his thoughts about the final completion of the memorial: "For twenty years I have been waiting for this memorial to be built."

> "BRS has imbued six slabs with the power to preserve the past"

The BRS memorial, it seems, is reflective of a larger trend. In fact, the

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Interview with Gabriella Karin

Aaron Zimmerman ('13)

Gabriella Y. Karin is an extraordinary artist and individual. She was born in the Slovak Republic and her life was irrevocably shattered by Kristallnacht. The war forced her into hiding; at first she was concealed by nuns in a convent, later she and her family were taken in by a righteous gentile. After the war ended, she moved to Israel and then to Los Angeles where she became a fashion designer. In her retirement years, Ms. Karin discovered her flair for sculpting; she channels her creativity into remarkable, life-affirming works of art. Her award-winning art has been featured in many venues, including the Museum of Tolerance in L.A, and her Holocaust-themed pieces powerfully evoke the lessons of the Holocaust. She is currently compiling photographs of tattooed arms to create an enduring visual account of the Holocaust.

Q: How would you describe your life before the Holocaust?

A: Growing up in the Bratislava, today's capital of Slovakia, I had a great childhood and a loving family. I was an only child, and I lived with my parents and grandmother. Everything was beautiful until Kristallnacht. Preceding the discrimination, my life was fantastic, but we slowly lost our rights in society. Our citizenships were revoked, our apartment was taken away, and we were reduced to living in a one room apartment with no bathroom.

Q: Kristallnacht was an immeasurably degrading event for European Jews, both physically and conceptually. To what extent did Kristallnacht affect you personally?

A: Kristallnacht changed everything for me. My father thought an event like Kristallnacht was impossible because society was too civilized. My mother, on the other hand, believed that something horrible was approaching. My family tried to escape, but we could not. My mother's intuition was correct. The day of Kristallnacht, a policeman and friend of my mother's warned her of the occurrences that would take place on that night. At the time, my mother was working in the underground, so she took me to warn people that we would soon be expelled. I remember people crying, and how all of my relatives began to sob. My family was saved from the deportation trains because another friend of my mother's warned her to run and disappear right

"My father thought an event like Kristallnacht was impossible because society was too civilized."

before we were to board the trains. I was then sent to a nunnery, where I cried immensely and had no contact with my parents. After my mother came to visit, she took me away and we went into hiding. Kristallnacht was the starting point of when my life spiraled into misery.

Q: What was life like while you were being hidden in a Gentile home? How did this make you feel?

A: The experience was terrible. I was thirteen and a half. My family and I couldn't speak for nine months, and the only thing that I could do was sit on a chair and read, so I did. There was not much food; I constantly got

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sick from the lack of sun and air. Reading kept me sane.

Q: What kinds of intellectual and educational stimulation did you find while in hiding? Did your studies influence your future in any way?

A: Mostly history including overall European, Russian, and French history, especially the Napoleon War. Reading all this history that I never found useful made me desire to learn something of practicality. I then explored sewing, which led to my pursuit in fashion.

Q:Once the Holocaust ended, what was in store for you next? Did you reunite with any family afterwards? Focus on pursuing your career in art?

A: After the war I returned to school. Since I had read so much while I was in hiding, I was able to skip a grade in high school and graduate early. I remained in Slovakia until I married at seventeen.

Q: Can you explain how you felt about living in Israel when it first became an officially Jewish state? Did this evoke a sense of pride in you?

A: Absolutely. Slovakia was friendly with Israel. They sent many immigrants on transports when Israel was first established. My husband and I were on the second transport, as we were very anxious to get there.

Q: What inspired you to explore art? Have you always loved art, or did you develop a passion for it later on in your life?

A: I was always curious about art. I tried painting at first, but I wasn't happy with it, so I started to work with clay. Once I started, I really enjoyed it, and I felt that I could convey my feelings in realistic form through sculpting. In the beginning, I didn't make sculptures pertaining to the Holocaust, but the denying of the Holocaust upset me, so I dedicated my sculpting to visual aids for the Holocaust.

Q: How would you say your artworks reflect your sentiments and experiences pertaining to the Holocaust?

A: The first sculpture that I did was about the Holocaust in general, where people were "sucked in" and bones stuck out. However, my second sculpture represented my hiding; it reflected my personal life. In the sculpture, I am sitting and reading, and the Gentile is bringing me food. It depicts the people who were with me. There is a thought bubble, and in the bubble there are shoes and screaming faces, representing the people who were left behind and did not survive. This refers particularly to the members of a birthday party from long ago. I have a picture of a bunch of girls all smiling at the party, and I am the only one who survived. I have about twenty pieces about these girls.

Q: Looking back on your career in art, what would you say is your most meaningful piece and why?

A: I actually just recently finished it. My most meaningful piece is a column that is five feet tall, full of screaming faces. This symbolizes the last moments of the Jews who perished in the gas chambers. There is a bond fire going around it, and the fire has swastikas. I believe that this is my strongest piece. Why? Because of the intensity of the faces. The deepest meaning of the sculpture lies in them.

Q: After surviving the Holocaust and establishing yourself as an accomplished artist, what would be the one, most crucial message that you have for future generations?

A: Learn, because the only thing that people cannot take away from you is what you have in your head.

To Forgive But Not Forget

Saige Rosenberg ('13)

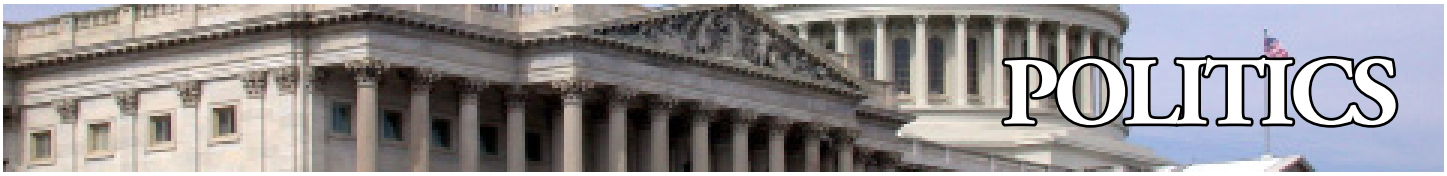
Anyone in high school or who has survived it can attest to the fragility of friendship. Indeed, high school relationships are often fraught with misunderstandings, occasional spats, periods of cold-shoulders, hurt feelings. But more difficult than keeping track of who is on speaking terms with whom is mustering up the courage to forgive and to ask for forgiveness. I have learned a valuable lesson in forgiveness from a most unlikely source: Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel.

My sister, a student at Boston University, recently had the opportunity to hear Elie Wiesel speak at her school. I asked her to tell me something about the speech, just trying to make conversation, when she revealed the topic of his address. I was expecting to hear that he discussed his horrific experiences in the Holocaust or the evil of the Nazis. Instead, Mr. Wiesel stated that if a Nazi approached him and truly apologized for his cruel and ruthless actions, he would forgive the Nazi. Indeed, in an article in Deseret News, Suzanne Dean notes that "(Wiesel) had often been asked if he could ever forgive the perpetrators of the Holocaust. He wasn't sure how to answer. Then, while in Jerusalem for the trial of Nazi war criminal Adolph Eichmann, he recognized a man on a bus who had been one of the guards at Auschwitz and who had beaten him on occasion. At that moment, he realized the former guard was doing what he had been ordered to do. He told him softly, 'Don't worry' about what had happened years ago." Alan Dershowitz, in "A Biblical Life," writes, "The great sage Hillel tried to summarize Jewish attitudes toward this issue when he said, 'if I am not for myself, who will be for me, but if I am for myself alone, what am I?' Elie Wiesel has succeeded in striking this balance for the post-Holocaust world. He will not forget or forgive. But he will also not allow the evils of the past to justify contemporary recrimination. He has lived Santayana's dictum: by not forgetting history, he as helped us to avoid its repetition."

"Can we forgive? Who are we to usurp God's role?"

Rabbi Albert Friedlander, Dean of the Leo Baeck College in London and Rabbi Emeritus of the Westminster Synagogue as well as survivor of Kristallnact, writes in his article "Is Forgiveness Possible? A Jewish Perspective": "When I was asked to speak for the Jewish community, I reported a frequently retold incident in my life: 'Can we forgive? Who are we to usurp God's role? Once, at a Kirchentag in Nurenberg, I talked about the anguish of Auschwitz. A young girl rushed up to me after the lecture. 'Rabbi, she said, I wasn't there, but can you forgive me?' and we embraced and cried together. Then an older man approached me. 'Rabbi', he said, I was a guard at a concentration camp. Can you forgive me?' 'No, I said. I cannot forgive. It is not the function of rabbis to give absolution, to be pardoners.' Between the New Year and the Day of Atonement, we try to go to any person whom we have wronged and asked forgiveness. 'But you cannot go to the six million. They are dead I cannot speak for them. Nor can I speak for God. But you are here at a church conference. God's forgiving grace may touch you, but I am not a mediator, pardoner, or spokesperson for God.'"

Clearly, the subject of forgiving Nazis is a sensitive one; universal forgiveness might precipitate universal forgetfulness. But on an individual level, Elie Wiesel exemplifies man's remarkable ability to match hatred with integrity. Suddenly, high school grievances seem petty. In kindergarten, when your best friend (who differed from week to week) stole your favorite new toy, his parents would make him say "sorry" and you would automatically respond "I forgive you." As a teenager in high school, I know that it is not that simple to "forgive and forget." The forgiveness process is even more nuanced in the context of the Holocaust, in which forgiving must preclude forgetting. But one can only imagine the sense of camaraderie which would pervade those often angst-filled halls of high school if teenagers would take a lesson from Elie Wiesel.



Obama's Not a Nazi

Randi Prince ('11)

Way back when, the use of words like "shut-up" and "idiot" was cause for a time out and a stern "talking to." Sadly, time desensitized us to many breaches in etiquette; words which once had powerful connotations have now all but lost their meanings. Indeed, phrases and expressions which we often utilize in our everyday language are even more inappropriate than we may realize. And when we employ a word like, say, Nazi, to describe a person who is slightly strict, we are not only mitigating the evil of the Nazi party but are revealing a tactless, apathetic attitude towards violence and genocide.

Comedians are prime culprits. Jon Stewart, on *The Daily Show*, made a whole slew of presidential-Nazi jokes that were all, to be honest, funny—I have little doubt that almost all of his viewers laughed without a second thought. The over-use and abuse of calling others Nazis has grown in popularity in recent times. Mike Godwin, at *Wired Magazine*, has gone so far as to label Nazi comparisons a "virus of the mind" that spreads from person to person until it becomes almost a trend, especially on internet debates and blog discussions. Nazi allusions can be as radical as comparing the President of this free country to Hitler or as Glenn Beck dubbing George Soros, a Holocaust survivor himself, a Nazi. Other times the references are seemingly benign such as silly online threads about video games or the "Soup-Nazi" from Seinfeld. In all instances, however, Nazi allusions are problematic. You can disagree with Obama's or any other administration's policies—but you must recognize that Obama's opposing take on healthcare does not make him a Nazi. Furthermore, and perhaps more importantly, desensitizing ourselves to the party's name is only a step towards their return. Flippant applications of the term "Nazi" make light of a tyrannical regime, one which threatened the very existence of our grandparents' generation.

Tragically, we are approaching a time in which no eyewitnesses to the Holocaust will exist. The Holocaust will soon be just as easy to forget as it is important to remember. The message we have been brought up with is, of course, that those who forget their past are destined to repeat it. By making jokes about Nazis, we are subtly, blindly turning the name of one of the most dangerous groups in our history into just another phrase or comparison in our vocabulary. We are diluting the impact of the word. If the name Hitler no longer evokes fear, then how long before the history of what he did is no longer something we fear—or even care to teach over? It may seem irrational, but search Nazi on Google and it isn't long before "How to Become a Grammar-Nazi" shows up, even before actual articles and information regarding Nazi war-crimes appear.

> "We are diluting the impact of the word."

Let us not underestimate the power of speech to influence the course of history. The Nazis, chief propagandists themselves, exploited words to bolster support for actions. We, unbeknownst to even ourselves, support their cause when we bandy the term Nazi about casually. Our goal may not be to undermine the terrible occurrences of the past, but we do just that every time we call each other Nazis.

Interview with Ben Lesser

Yair Bengio ('13)

Mr. Ben Lesser is the founder of the Zachor Foundation, an organization which gives speakers and survivors "Zachor" pins to distribute to audiences all over America. It is the mission of the Zachor Foundation to preserve the lessons of the Holocaust, specifically via this tangible memento. Mr. Lesser was born in Krakow, Poland and was deported to Auschwitz/ Birkenau in May of 1944. After the war, he moved to Brooklyn, New York. He returned to Auschwitz-Birkenau in April of 2010 on the March of the Living.

Q. How would you describe life right before the war?

I lived in Poland. It was pretty good for Jews. Although there was always anti-Semitism, there was no flat out hatred. The Jews lived in segregated areas, not because they were forced to, but rather because the Orthodox Jews wanted to be near their shul. There was a nice Jewish community there.

Q. I know you traveled a lot after the German occupation of Poland. What were the conditions like--did you live in perpetual fear?

The conditions were very depressed in Krakow. No Jews could stay there and by the end of 1940 all Jews had to leave Krakow or go to the ghetto. We were allowed to go to the outskirts of Poland and this is where my brother and I went.

"...a profound metaphor for the dehumanization of Jews in the Holocaust"

Q. What was your first impression of Auschwitz-Birkenau?

I was not there until 1944; I was in Hungary for a long while. Traveling in a cattle car was a nightmare. It is indescribable—eighty people were stuffed into one car. We were told to bring all our valuables; it was 80 people plus all their stuff and there was no sitting room. For three days we stood. The food was alright in the beginning because women packed food to take along. A big problem was that there were no facilities, only two buckets of water. Three days, eighty people, and no toilets or water—you can imagine the stench. Pregnant women, little kids, young and old and they were all going crazy in complete madness. All hell broke loose as they got into Auschwitz. We arrived at night and they (SS) immediately started to beat us and yelled at me and everyone else. They made us leave our belongings and valuables. I held on to my brother and sister. They said "women to the right, men to the left." Eichmann was leading the selection. The "Doctor" said right or left for another selection. He was choosing peoples' life or death. They wanted us to be healthy. I was fifteen and a half at the time. The doctor asked questions like, "Can you run five kilometers or would you rather go by truck?" A twenty year old, healthy man in front of me said he would want to take a truck probably; he was sent left and ended up dying. My uncle and cousin were behind me and I said they should say they could do hard work so we would be put together. I said I was eighteen and could do work and do the five kilometer run. I was sent to the left where I was joined by my cousin and uncle. I saw the ashes and we made foot prints on the ground from them. We thought it was factories, we couldn't imagine what happened, that it was actually our brethren being burned. We were taken into a big room and they made us shave and then gave us a shower and a bundle of striped clothes.

Q. What form of labor did you have to do?

I worked at a rock quarry. When they would

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Interview with Renee Firestone

Gabriella Sobol ('13)

Renee Firestone is a remarkable speaker and designer. Originally from Uzhorod, Czechoslovakia, she was incarcerated in Auschwitz/Birkenau for thirteen months. With the exception of her brother Frank, a partisan, and her father who passed away from tuberculosis shortly after the war ended, Ms. Firestone is the only survivor from her family. Ms. Firestone attended the Prague School of Commercial Arts and upon her immigration to America, she became a successful fashion designer. She is also the founding lecturer at the Simon Wiesenthal Center's Education Outreach Program and is featured in the academy-award winning movie, "The Last Days."

Q: What was your life like before the atrocities of the Holocaust occurred?

I grew up in a small town in Czechoslovakia that was the capital of the region, so it had all the advantages of a big town. My parents were upper middle class Jews. I grew up in a pleasant and comfortable situation, with a brother that was five years older than me, and a sister four and half years younger than me. We had many friends and enjoyed the beautiful seasons.

Q: While you were in Auschwitz-Birkenau, did you witness any incredible acts of compassion from your fellow Jews that helped you to believe in the kindness of humanity?

Everyone was in the same situation, so everyone cared about each other and tried to help one another. I know that one of my friends came in pregnant to the camps, and her fellow prisoners in her barrack protected her from being seen by Dr. Mengele. When the time came for her to give birth, they brought her to a midwife, and in the middle of the night she gave birth to her child. Obviously, the child was killed but the extraordinary kindness showed by the fellow inmates was incredible.

Q: You also interviewed Dr. Munch, who performed experiments on your younger sister. How did you feel when performing this interview, and do you feel now that you have any insights into why he committed these atrocities?

He has actually passed away since then, but when I did interview him I could not understand him and why he did what he did. Every doctor has to swear that they will save lives when they become a doctor, and these men were killing innocent people and not caring at all. He said that my sister would have died six months later anyway. He completely did not care and felt he was justified in his actions.

Q: What was your life like after you were liberated from the camps? Were you immediately reunited with your family?

My family died except for my brother, who was in a forced labor camp before they took the rest of us to concentration camps. He was able to escape, and became a partisan and he fought the Nazis during the war. He managed to survive the war, and 3 months after

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liberation I accidentally ran into him. We found out that my father was alive and were reunited with him but he was dying of tuberculosis and he died 3 months later. Since we were in Prague we decided to stay there since it's the capital city and we settled there. My brother got married, as did I, and we bought an apartment and restarted our lives.

Q: How did it feel to be reunited with your family after the war? Do you see it as a miracle that you were able to be with your father right before he died?

Yes, I do see it as a miracle, because at least my father died knowing two of his children survived. Also we were able to bury him in Prague with a gravestone that also had my mother's and sister's names. It gave us some kind of closure about what happened with our father.

Q: How did you feel when you discovered that the aluminum milk can that your father had left in your backyard years earlier was still intact with the money he had left for you, although many different people had tried to dig up your backyard to find valuables?

"The 20th century will be recorded as the most brutal century."

What happened was my father told us to go back home and see if we could find this little milk can in the backyard, but he didn't tell us what was inside of it, so we wouldn't be disappointed if we couldn't find it. So I went back but the yard was all dug up, because everyone was digging it up looking for valuables. And on a mound of dirt I found the can, and when I opened it there was $318 in American currency in it, which we used to start our lives over.

Q: How did you end up becoming a fashion designer? Was this something that you had pursued prior to the war?

No not really, but my grandfather was a tailor and I always wanted to be a designer. Obviously during the Nazis I couldn't study, but after the war I went to school in Prague and graduated, and soon afterwards began my career.

Q: How did you feel about the creation of the state of Israel? How do you feel things would have gone

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Holocaust Memorial in Miami Beach was formed in the fall of 1984 by several survivors of the war. These survivors took a major step in trying to spread the truth and make the Holocaust a part of recorded history and are "dedicated to building permanent [memorials] to the memory of the six million Jewish victims of the Holocaust." The memorial opened in 1990 and notably features the "The Sculpture of Love and Anguish" which is described by sculptor Kenneth Treister: "This is my portrayal of the Holocaust ... a giant outstretched arm, tattooed with a number from Auschwitz, rises from the earth, the last reach of a dying person. Each visitor has his own interpretation ... some see despair ... some hope ... some the last grasp for life . . . and for some it asks a question to God... "Why?" (holocaustmmb.org) It is imperative

Rabbi Klein at BRS.

that today's Jewish communities do not allow the Holocaust to be lost forever because of inadequate efforts to safeguard the story. BRS has imbued six slabs of marble with the power to preserve the past.

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differently had the Jewish state been created before the Holocaust?

The creation of the state of Israel was one of the most important things to happen to the Jewish people. If there were any such land for us during the Holocaust, thousands of people could have survived. We had absolutely nowhere to go as no one wanted us during the war, but if Israel had been there we could have survived.

Q: Was your belief in G-d affected by the Holocaust?

I didn't include G-d into the Holocaust because I felt that He put people in this world, and allowed them to have free choice and choose to either do good or evil. I didn't want to include G-d into these evil actions because I'm sure G-d was above Auschwitz crying, "What is happening to my people!" because this is not what He created. All babies are born good, but they learn to be killers on their own, not through G-d's choice.

Q: How do you feel that you yourself have changed as a person due to the Holocaust? How do you feel that you would have been different as a person had you not gone through this experience?

I'm sure my life would have been completely different had I not gone through the Holocaust. I probably would have gotten married, had children, been in a small community as a housewife. I probably never would have pursued my desire to be a fashion designer, and never done many things I have, such as receiving an honorary doctorate. This is because that was a very different time, so my life would have turned out much differently had I not gone through the war.

Q: What have you seen in the media that you feel is an accurate portrayal of the Holocaust?

I know that *Schindler's List* is very accurate as well as documentaries like *The Last Days* as well as *Swimming in Auschwitz*. These stories in the documentaries are as accurate as the survivor remembers it.

Q: How do you feel about the Muslim extremists and others who deny that the Holocaust occurred? How do you feel that we can combat these denials and make sure that the next generation gets an accurate portrayal of the horrors that occurred, instead of being swayed by the media and others who tell them that the Holocaust did not exist?

It's not the media, most of the media knows that it happened, and those who claim that the Holocaust didn't happen are the most ignorant people. The German government acknowledges that the Holocaust occurred and pays reparations to the survivors. The Germans also teach the Holocaust in Germany- they were the first country to do so! So you (Holocaust deniers) must be very ignorant to say this or you must have some very devious reasons to say this. The extremist Muslims do this because they are Jew haters who want Israel to be destroyed, even though they could do much better if they worked together with us.

Q: Do you believe that something such as the Holocaust could ever happen again? Do you think that it will happen again? What are the most important things that we can do to prevent it?

I think it could happen again, as it is happening all the time to others! The 20th century will be recorded as the most brutal century. Genocides occurred in Cambodia, Rwanda, and are still going on in Darfur. Yes, it can happen to anyone. As long as we keep educating our children to let them know about the Holocaust and other genocides, so they can understand what happens if we are bad and can't live with each other in peace and help and love one another, we can prevent this cycle from continuing to happen.

Q: What message would you like to share with the world and especially the next generation?

My most important message to the children is that you should not judge a group of people collectively, because that's what the Germans did and that's the most dangerous thing. If you want to judge one person, you must get to know him first, and not judge any group due to a single or a few people. This is what causes hatred and genocide, and if we can stop this we can make the world a better place.

A 1936 Wally Pipp Story

Shalva Ginsparg ('11)

A sports edition of the now-deceased SAT analogy section might read: "Tom Brady is to Drew Bledsoe, as Lou Gehrig is to Wally Pipp, as Kurt Warner is to Trent Green, as Jesse Owens is to…Marty Glickman?" Talented replacements often eclipse the athletes they replace. Such is the case with Marty Glickman. The year was 1936; Marty Glickman and Sam Stoller were two Jewish runners poised to compete at the Berlin Olympics. Once they had already arrived in Berlin, their coach, Dean Cromwell, declared in a team meeting that Glickman and Stoller would be replaced respectively by Jesse Owens and Frank Metcalfe.

Marty Glickman & Sam Stoller

"Why did they wait till that morning, that day, to tell us that we were not going to run? Because they knew there was going to be some furor about it, some objection about it," asserted Glickman. "If they did it earlier, they might be forced to make a change, but they did it that morning. The only people on that team who didn't get to compete were Sam and me. In the entire 100 year history of the Olympics, no other fit American athlete who was on the team -- I don't mean those who pulled muscles -- has ever not competed in the games." Glickman further contends that Jesse Owens did not even want to run and told Cromwell, "Coach, I have won my three gold medals; I have won the races I set out to win. I've had it. I am tired. I am beat. Let Marty and Sam run. They deserve it."

Glickman alleged that he and Stoller were denied a chance to run out of a mixture of Anti-Semitism and the American Olympic Committee's desire not to offend the Nazi hosts. However, Hitler detested blacks as much as Jews and infamously refused to shake Jesse Owens's hand. Why would a Jew be pulled out to placate Hitler only to be replaced by a black man? "There is a fairly firm answer on that," answered Glickman. "There were two Jewish athletes on the track team. There were 12 black athletes on the track team including the world's best sprinter and world record holder, Jesse Owens; including the world record holder in the high jump, Cornelius Johnson .... There were 6-7 gold medal winners who were black athletes. Sam Stoller and I would have been gold medal winners but we were two relatively obscure athletes, two Jewish athletes. It was relatively unimportant to take the Jewish athletes off the relay team and replace them with Black athletes, whereas there would be no American Olympic track team without the Black athletes because they won the 100, 200, long jump, 400, 800, high jump and medals in every track event in addition to those. There was no way they could remove all the Black athletes from the Olympics, whereas this was just dropping two guys from the relay team."

"Basketball was an incidental sport back then"

The only Jew to win a gold medal in the 1936 Olympics was Sam Balter who played on the United States Basketball team. "Basketball was an incidental sport back then," explained Glickman. "It was so unimportant in 1936 that they didn't even have an arena to play in. They played outdoors and they didn't have benches around the court. They had a court on an open field, not cement, but a dirt field, and they played on that basketball court. I watched some of the games and it was a competition like there might be in a school yard."

Glickman recognized that the snub paled in comparison to the treatment of Jews in Europe: "I am aware that what happened to me was nothing compared to what happened to other Jews following that…I want to stress that the 1936 games were two years before Kristallnacht, three years before the outbreak of the war." Reflecting back, Glickman noted, ""I don't feel bitter about the Olympic Games: I feel bitter about that which was done by the American Olympic Committee."

Source: sandiegojewishworld.com

Revisiting *Schindler's List*

Ian Schiffman ('11)

How can I properly praise *Schindler's List*? The movie was awarded 7 Academy Awards, 7 BAFTA awards, an Eddie, an Amanda, 3 Golden Globes, a Grammy, a Humanitas Prize, a PGA, a DGA, a WGA and a Hochi Film Award, and was ranked by the American Film Institute as the 8th Greatest Movie of All Time. I have no reason to praise this film any more than it has already been praised. But beyond its critical acclaim, *Schindler's List* represents the potency of film as a vehicle for exploring life, specifically the Holocaust. The fusion of artistry and technical brilliance in the movie creates a tour de force that remains current and haunting more than a decade after its release.

When dealing with the Holocaust, moviemakers face a tremendous obstacle: forming a true connection with the victims on screen can be overwhelming. The number of victims and the many ways in which they were tortured and murdered are so vast that one could get lost in the statistical facts without ever really understanding the plight of the individuals who suffered. Since it is easier for people to make connections on a personal level rather than an abstract level, filmmakers try to replace the vast numbers with specific faces and names. As such, they enable viewers to make personal connections with the characters in the film and thus begin to digest the events on a smaller scale.

Schindler's List is a profound example of personalized storytelling. Yet it differs from other Holocaust films in that it personalizes the Nazis in addition to the victims. Through the character of Amon Goeth, Spielberg allows the audience to access the mind of a Nazi officer corrupted by anti-Semitism. He presents Goeth as a complicated and conflicted man, rather than a one-dimensional representation of evil. Although Goeth kills without provocation or reason, he lusts after his Jewish maid, Helen Hirsch. Later, he beats Helen, accusing her of tricking him, despite her standing silently throughout the entire scene. He says he values her as a "wonderful cook and a well trained servant" yet he cannot see beyond her Judaism. As long as she is Jewish, she, by definition, means nothing to him. Goeth's tragic flaw is not his political beliefs but rather his failure to view Helen as an individual. Through this nuanced rendering of a Nazi officer, Spielberg showcases an individual corrupted by the nuanced nature of groupthink and tyranny.

Another unique aspect of *Schindler's List* is its brilliant usage of black-and-white and color cinematography. Black-and-white effectively evokes the World War II era; the contrast of the two colors mimics the contrast of the Nazi's brutal dehumanization and the innocence of the victims. For example, when the Jewish engineer is shot for being "an educated Jew," her blood, as black as night, dissolves the pure white snow. In addition, black-and-white enables the filmmaker to utilize color to highlight key scenes and signal shifts in time. When Schindler witnesses the liquidation of the Krakow ghetto, he notices a girl in a red dress —a dab of color in the Band scene— wandering around the ghetto. Red, obviously evoking the image of blood, represents the slaughter itself, which is largely ignored by the other nations of the world, including the U.S. and England who knew about the Holocaust. Furthermore, the opening full-color scene fades into the next scene in black and white. The shift plunges viewers into 1939, bringing them symbolically closer to the events and characters in the story. This technique works well because many people visualize World War II through the black-and-white images of documentary film footage.

Conversely, the closing scene of the recently freed Schindlerjuden heading to a nearby town fades from black-and-white to color footage of the real Schindlerjuden walking in the distance, effectively bringing the viewer back into the present. The real Schindlerjuden, many with their actor counterparts,

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blow up sides of mountains with dynamite we would break the rocks into manageable pieces and put them in mining carts after they were dynamited. Then the rocks were made into gravel. It was hard work and we couldn't stop or else we were beat.

Q. I read that you went on a death march for two weeks; where/how far did you travel?

It wasn't easy. They made us walk all day with little food. We ran at a fast pace or else we would get shot. Many people died. My cousin was right by my side. He said he couldn't take it anymore but I dragged him and I would not let him fall behind even when he begged me to let him stop.

Q. What was the first thing you thought about when you found out you were liberated?

I was happy the killing was going to stop but not ecstatic. I had been famished, I weighed only sixty-two pounds and I could barely even stand. I had nothing to be happy for for real. Nothing was left for me and the dying didn't stop. My cousin died in my arms the night of liberations. He passed out because he was overfed by troops. A Jesuit priest took me into the field hospital.

Q. Was there a point in time when you thought God didn't exist?

When I started feeling better in the hospital and I started asking myself this question, the priest told me, "Ben, you have paid the price for being Jewish, don't abandon your religion."

Q. Can you talk about being reunited with your sister, Lola, at St. Otillien?

It was pure ecstasy. Wonderful. We didn't know it but it turns out we were next to each other for two hours but we didn't recognize each other.

Q. What was it like returning to Poland for the March of the Living?

I was in Poland in 2006. After the war I vowed never to return. My grandchildren asked me and so I went.

Q. Should Nazis be forgiven?

No. I am asked this many times, I hate the perpetrators of the Holocaust, we can't forgive them. Most of them are gone now but I still hate them. But on that note, you can't fault the son for the father's sin. We are all humans. It's not the baby's fault the father was a murderer, I don't hate the Germans. We can't blame them, we must learn to tolerate each other, all the hatred has to stop. Zachor, yes but hatred has to stop. How can I be a good father if I am filled with this hate?

Birkenau crematoria

Why Grandparents Aren't Cute?

Danielle Sobol ('13)

Surely you have witnessed this scene: an artist, a thinker with a penchant for storytelling walks slowly across the street. Decades worth of experience and wisdom trail closely behind her. She means the world to many, has accomplished much. But the pack of kids on the sidewalk with their iPods and arrogance just see a set of wrinkles and sagging skin. They turn to each other and exclaim, "Look at that old lady. She is so cute!"

Ageism. Though it is not as well-known as others "isms"—racism and sexism, to name two—it is just as common and destructive. Indeed, according to Dr. Robert Butler, who coined the term "ageism," if you've ever discriminated against an individual based on their age, used age to define capability and roles, or stereotyped someone because of their age, you are an "ageist." Certainly, age is associated with the debilitation of mental and physical prowess in the elderly. However, that doesn't mean it's acceptable for the youth to diminish the wisdom and competence of older people. In this age of computers, Internet and ever-changing technology, ageism is especially rampant as teens look down on their less tech-savvy grandparents. The elderly may not know how to text, but they have much knowledge to offer. Sadly, these valuable lessons are being wasted by indifferent teens who think they know all there is to know. Gone is the respect once shown for the elderly of generations past.

Ageism negatively affects not only the perpetrators who lose out on all the opportunities to learn from their elders, but also those being targeted. Ageism can impact the elderly in healthcare and the workforce. In a survey of 84 people ages 60 and over conducted by the American Psychological Association, almost 80 percent of the participants felt that they had been affected by ageism in some way, shape, or form. This is especially upsetting for Holocaust survivors; everyone stands to gain from listening to their testimonies. Yet, many young people today write off Holocaust survivors and their stories as boring or antiquated and don't take the time to listen and internalize the messages that they are trying to convey. For many survivors who feel the reason they were saved from the horrors of the Holocaust is to raise awareness and perpetuate the memory of loves ones who perished, the apathy of today's teens is heartbreaking.

Dismissing survivors is not only disrespectful but dangerous. If we do not take the time to listen to the testimonies of Holocaust survivors, their stories will fade away and there will be nothing left of their legacies. Surely this will only fuel the fire of Holocaust deniers, who have the audacity to deny the Holocaust while survivors are still living! Teens must not view the Holocaust as an event far away from them and out of their reach. They must recognize the wisdom that comes with age and treat grandparents and Holocaust survivors with respect. After all, it is only a matter of time before the teenagers of today are the elderly of tomorrow.

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place stones on Schindler's grave. This scene shows that the characters in the film are real people and not merely invented figures. Spielberg sends the message to those who doubt the reality of the Holocaust that human proof of the tragedy exists and that what happened can never be erased. Witnesses to the horror are still alive to tell their tales and to make sure we never forget.

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