Holocaust Literature for Young Adults:
A Content Analysis of Disturbing Elements in Selected Memoirs

by

AVIVA R. ROSEMAN

B. MUS., The University of British Columbia, 1985
Professional Teaching Certificate, The University of British Columbia, 1987

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

In
THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
THE SCHOOL OF LIBRARY, ARCHIVAL AND INFORMATION STUDIES

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

August 2004

© Aviva R. Roseman, 2004
Library Authorization

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree at the University of British Columbia, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for reference and study. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the head of my department or by his or her representatives. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Name of Author (please print)

Aviva R. Roseman

Date (dd/mm/yyyy)

12/09/2004

Title of Thesis:

Holocaust Literature for Young Adults: A Content Analysis of Disturbing Elements in Selected Memoirs

Degree:

 Master of Arts in Library

Department of

The School of Library, Archival and Information Studies
Abstract

This thesis deals with the content analysis of ten Holocaust memoirs recommended for young adults, and which were written by ten Jewish Holocaust survivors. The content analysis used the elements of violence, hunger, rebellion, sense of loss and abandonment, loneliness, hope and redemption, spirituality, loss of emotional stability, and shame. Since the Holocaust is inherently, and therefore inevitably about violence, young people, for the reason of developing humaneness must learn about this aspect. Having Holocaust memoirs shed another light on people's capability of good and evil, the child is provided with a full range of human personality traits from which he will develop an identity for himself. By reading and discussing memoirs and books about the Holocaust, the memory of this dark period in history remains alive in people's minds which may prevent it from happening again.
# Table of Contents

Abstract .............................................................................................................. ii

A. Introduction ................................................................................................. 1
   1. Research Problem .................................................................................. 1
   2. Defining the Holocaust Survivor’s Memoir .......................................... 2
   3. Rationale ............................................................................................... 4

B. Literature Review ...................................................................................... 5
   1. Difference between Adult and Young Adult Holocaust Memoirs .......... 6
   2. Appropriateness of Holocaust memoirs for Young Adults ................. 8

C. Methodology ............................................................................................... 19
   1. Selection of Sample ............................................................................ 19
   2. Books to be Examined ........................................................................ 19
   3. Content Analysis ................................................................................. 26
   4. Coding System .................................................................................... 27

D. Results: Memoir Analysis ....................................................................... 32
   1. Violence .............................................................................................. 32
   2. Hunger ............................................................................................... 50
   3. Rebellion ............................................................................................ 56
   4. Sense of Loss and Abandonment ..................................................... 60
   5. Loneliness .......................................................................................... 63
   6. Hope and Redemption ...................................................................... 65
   7. Spirituality ......................................................................................... 69
   8. Loss of Emotional Stability ............................................................. 73
   9. Shame ............................................................................................... 77
  10. Summary of Elements .......................................................................... 80

E. Conclusion ................................................................................................... 82

F. Appendices ................................................................................................ 88
1. Appendix 1: The Ten Author's Memoirs ........................................... 88
2. Appendix 2: Elements ...................................................................... 89
3. Appendix 3: Ages of Authors in the Ghetto and the Camps ............... 90

G. Works Cited .................................................................................. 91
A. Introduction

With the end of the Second World War, Hitler's machiavellian plans for Jews living in Europe came into full perspective for the world. Close to six million Jewish men, women and children had been systematically murdered as part of his "Final Solution". All of Europe's Jews were the target, but with the intervention of the allied troops in 1945, mass-murder on an even larger scale was prevented and a number of Jews from Europe's vast Jewish population fortunately survived. Those people who experienced Hitler's attempt to annihilate the Jews from Europe (and who managed to survive) were left with haunting memories, questions and deep emotional scars for the remainder of their lives.

A. 1. Research Problem

The topic of this thesis is an examination of Holocaust memoirs written for young adults. This examination, through the methodology of content analysis, will determine how certain elements that could be deemed disturbing to young people are portrayed in these memoirs.

Many Holocaust memoirs were written to exorcise deeply buried, and often festering, memories of the Holocaust. Often, they were written to tell the world of barbaric practices the Nazis employed to carry out the "Final Solution" during the Second World War: the extermination of all European Jewry. In order for young adults to obtain a well-rounded education, they must be aware of the genocide that took so many lives during this time in history. Only then can they form educated opinions about intolerance, injustice and racism in later life. The Holocaust demands studying for that reason alone.

Certain elements, such as accounts of violence in Holocaust memoirs, are considered by some people as too overwhelming, shocking, or frightening to present
to young adults as material for study. In my research, I am examining whether Holocaust memoirs can educate and enrich young people without causing unnecessary fear or trauma to their developing minds.

"In the words of Holocaust survivor Lilian Boraks-Nemetz:

"Young people today live in a dangerous world, and it is better that they be gradually informed than kept unaware of what can happen in it. Young Canadian readers should learn about other children who have lived and suffered persecution and victimization in countries less fortunate and less free than Canada. Such education can only broaden their minds and shift them away from prejudice against a classmate whose cultural background is different. It would also be helpful if the public could be more educated and forthcoming on this subject, rather than viewing the stories about Holocaust survivors cynically: as yet more literature on a worked-to-death topic." (Boraks-Nemetz 1999: 164)

A. 2. Defining the Holocaust Survivor's Memoir

The word Holocaust means 'burnt offering' or "complete destruction by fire" (Shoah in Hebrew) and refers to the tragic events from 1939 -1945. In War and Peace: Literature for Children and Young Adults, Virginia A. Walter says that "we call it the Holocaust, although it is in fact unnameable. We say it is unimaginable, although it was imagined and implemented by real human beings as a matter of governments policy." (Walter 1993: 13)

In the 1950s, survivors of the Holocaust began to write their memories about the unspeakable horrors of the death camps and the ways in which they managed to stay alive. Another wave of Holocaust memoirs were written in the 1960s and 80s as motivated survivors decided to record their stories and memories on paper or film before they died. Even though the memories were painful, writing brought about a catharsis for some survivors. Many seemed to live a normal life and appeared mentally healthy from the outside “but their families knew of their private and largely concealed
suffering." (Kellerman 2001: 199) These memoirs are collectively known as Holocaust Memoirs and are written by those who, against all odds, miraculously survived extermination. Natan Kellerman defines the writer of a Jewish Holocaust Memoir as follows: "A 'Holocaust survivor' may be defined broadly as any persecuted Jew who lived under Nazi occupation during the Second World War and who was thus threatened by the policy of the 'final solution' but managed to stay alive." (Kellerman 2001: 199) Adrienne Kertzer writes that "memoir, like fiction is obviously constructed; the writer in retrospect gives shape to her experience; she recalls or gives emphasis to events that she now sees as significant." (Kertzer 1999: 239)
A. 3. Rationale

It is hoped that this thesis will provide useful information for teachers, librarians, and all those interested in Holocaust studies. Teachers and educators of young adults may wish to draw upon the research to facilitate the presentation of Holocaust memoirs by making them more accessible for their students. It may serve as a building block for students who are furthering their own studies on the subject of Holocaust memoirs for young adults. Beginning memoir readers could possibly identify with elements that are under discussion here, thereby feeling kinship with the survivors which could lead to better understanding of Holocaust material and a willingness to keep an open mind about this dark period in history.

Parents of young adult children have the option to read this thesis if they are interested in expanding their own and their children’s knowledge on the Holocaust. The elements emerging from the memoirs which are examined in this paper may aid in their gaining an understanding and insight into the depth of suffering as well as the human soul’s ability to withstand such atrocities and survive. Young adult students may identify with the elements and learn about humanity from reading the memoirs rather than be frightened and shocked by them.

Finally it is the conviction of this writer that the memory of the Holocaust must remain alive through continued writing in any form and discussion on any related subject, as we should never forget what has happened to the six million innocent men, women and children who were murdered because they were Jewish. This opinion is shared by many of the authors cited later in this thesis: Elizabeth Baer, Mary Engel, Ruth Fox, Adrienne Kertzer and Marcia Posner to name but a few.
B. Literature Review

With the writing of the Holocaust Memoirs came the writings and critiques of scholars and/or educators who addressed issues of violence and horror that had not been necessary to be addressed before: should children know and learn about the Holocaust and if so, at what age should they be exposed to the literature of this immensely dark period in human history? Some writers say the topic of the Holocaust is inappropriate for child readers, while others, often Holocaust survivors themselves, say that the topic is very appropriate and essential and needs to be taught from an early age.

It is of interest to mention here that while the controversy regarding whether to teach about the Holocaust takes place in North America, in Europe, particularly in Germany “society tries to protect children from a confrontation with its unpleasant aspects and believes that children should be spared the darker side of history.” (Shavit 1999: 115) The article by Zohar Shavit from which the above quote was taken, discusses the construction of the German past in some German historical novels for children and what German writers tell their children about the Holocaust. Zohar points out that during her research of at least 50 historical novels about the Second World War she found that Germans are generally portrayed as “nice” people who tried, in vain, to help their Jewish country men, and who themselves, were the victims of Hitler and the Nazis, an entity basically unrelated to the rest of the German people. She questions the morals German children learn from such a narrative -that there is no sense in trying to help people to struggle against a dictatorship: “Would it not be better to teach them a different lesson, that if more Germans had been willing to oppose dictatorship, history might have been different?” (1999: 115)

“If we want children to ‘fight against the darkness,’ we have to teach them what it is. Their response will be more complex than the Daily Mail would
have us believe: children are just as much individuals as adults are. It is up to us to ensure that the children in our lives are not overwhelmed by the dark corners of the real world, but not allowing them to read about it is the wrong way to protect them." (Curry 1997: 221)

It should also be mentioned here that young adults, generally, experience physical and emotional upheavals in preparation of adulthood. Though it is not in the scope of this thesis to deal with this topic extensively, it is, however, noted that the primary focus and goal of the victims was to survive the conditions of the camp they were in rather than being preoccupied with romance or sex. The starvation diets' lack of proper nourishment resulted in cessation of menstruation (though there were exceptions) in many of the women, and loss of normally emerging libido in both sexes soon after arrival in the camps. (Saidel 2004: 210) There is an occasional mention of interest in members of the opposite sex, sometimes about a person from the past and sometimes about another prisoner in the camps, but the latter is a rare occurrence as most of the camps had segregated living areas for men and women and meetings were nearly impossible.

B. 1. Difference between Adult and Young Adult Holocaust Memoirs

Elizabeth Baer writes that “with the creation of Young Adult literature, we seem to have come full circle: books about drugs, racism, teenage prostitution, and government intervention make clear what evil awaits the unwary. Yet books for children and young adults on the Holocaust seem to exist outside the boundaries of these categories, dealing with a special evil that is at once retrospective and, in the view of some, could happen again. That is perhaps the greatest motivation for writing about it.” (Baer 2000: 379) Apart from this fact, Baer touches on another significant point of why Holocaust memoirs need to be written. She points out that young adults have many other issues coming into their lives to deal with. Holocaust memoirs are
just as important to address as the other issues in young adults' lives. Baer continues to discuss how she began the research for her paper by creating a taxonomy of Holocaust books that were available, basing her research on a schema from noted children's author Eric Kimmel. "Kimmel categorizes Holocaust books from least to most effective in terms of presenting the profound evil of the Holocaust. He likens it to a set of concentric rings, much like described in Dante's Inferno. The outer ring presents the resistance/rescue novel while the middle and centre rings represent the gradually more autobiographical accounts in which atrocities and violence dominate the memoir." (Baer 2000: 383) Kimmel argues that one cannot grasp the total impact of the Holocaust without having knowledge of all these facets of the experience. Children and adults alike need to expose themselves to all the different novels and memoirs written in order to fully understand what happened during those dark years.

David Russell comments that a great deal of evidence suggests that children from the ages of ten or twelve and up are fully capable of dealing with the fundamental issues of the Holocaust. He asks "What is appropriate for young readers?" and responds with an emphatic "the truth!" (Russell 1997: 279)

In the conclusion of her paper, Elizabeth Baer writes:

"Almost all the books in the fiction category and certainly all in the autobiographical category are based on the actual memories of people who were children during the Holocaust, somehow survived and decided to write accounts of their experiences. They are at once invoking their own memories and creating memory for child readers. It is almost as if the publishers decided that if one wrote an autobiographical book about being a child during this era, then the book would be marketed for children; if one were an adult then one's book is marketed for adults." (Baer 2000: 393)

Baer indicates that Holocaust survivors do not often write their memories for a certain audience per se. The age appropriateness lies mostly with the readiness and maturity of the reader and the intentions of the publisher, and less so with the author of the
memoir her or himself. Author and critic John Rowe Townsend echoes Baer's comments when he says that "the line between literature for adults and literature for children is arbitrary, drawn largely for administrative or economic purposes in response to the expansion of school and public libraries for children as a new market for publishing companies." (Walter 1993: 36)

B. 2. Appropriateness of Holocaust Memoirs for Young Adults

Discussing the appropriateness of Holocaust memoirs for young adult readers evokes the question of what the criteria for establishing the nature of children's books are. "The question 'What is a children's book?' has yet to be conclusively answered" states Virginia Walter.

"It is a question of considerable interest to scholars who concern themselves with the genre and a question of more than academic interest to editors, publishers, writers, reviewers, parents, teachers, and librarians who work directly with the object in question. Most definitions have tried to show how literature for children differs from literature for adults... and having decided to publish and market a title as children's book, the publisher gives a number of clues that enable us to identify its potential readers. Children's books tend to be shorter and are often lavishly illustrated." (Walter 1993: 36)

Myles McDowell argues that "children's books tend to feature child protagonists... and that there is an emphasis on action and dialogue rather than introspection and description." (McDowell in Walter 1993: 37) Perry Nodelman points out that "children's literature has the need for individuals to create balance between what one wishes for and what one must accept, and that it suggests positive ways to address the tensions raised by these conflicts." (Nodelman in Walter 1993: 37) Walter suggests that "this is consistent with McDowell's notion of an optimistic world view." Peter Hunt notes that "the subject matter, language and allusion levels of a text all combine to indicate the level of readership that the author had in mind. He even emphasises that "the intended
reading audience is the only thing that dependably distinguishes children's literature from adult literature." (Hunt in Walter 1993: 37) When asked whether the vocabulary in his stories is too advanced for children because some experts believe in a prescribed vocabulary for children at various age levels, the great storyteller Isaac Bashevis Singer responded: "I would say that if you don't remember all the time that a child is a child and you treat him as an adult there is a good chance that the child will act like an adult... because of this I am not very careful about using words which people think that the child will not understand... a child does not throw away a book because there are a few words that he does not understand. The opposite - the child will be intrigued and will look into a dictionary or it will ask the mother or the teacher what the word means. A child will throw away a book only if there is no story, if it doesn't make sense and is boring." (Singer 1977: 14) Singer dispels the myth here that difficult vocabulary determines whether a children's book is successful or not. Marcia Posner writes: "1. the author must be true to his subject, yet he cannot be too violent, too depressing; 2. the story should end on a note of hope. 3. it should be written from within or just beyond the child's developmental level and frame of reference." (Posner 1988: 36) Posner's summary of common sense issues can be applied to most young adult books.

Returning to the question of whether or not Holocaust memoirs are appropriate for young minds we are confronted with the problem of defining a children's book in the context of a particular content area "that renders all definitions of children's literature problematic, the Holocaust of World War II." (Walter 1993: 38)

Rachel Meir asks "how can authors of Holocaust literature for children avoid violence, where violence prevails?" (Meir in Posner 1988: 36) Critics continuously try to answer this crucial question but as with the question of what precisely a children's book is, a conclusive answer has yet to be established.
Children's literature has a long tradition of wrestling with the question of presenting evil to children, according to Elizabeth Baer. (2000: 379) Do young adults have the skill to process information about their world that seems too incomprehensible to understand? “On what level of truth telling, then, can these [Holocaust] books function? How many disguises do the authors use to mask passivity, the indifference, and the calculated cruelty; the screams, the stench of burning bodies, the sight of smoke rising from the crematoriums, the humiliation and death? How far into the reaches of the rank and sinister in the human spirit do we choose to take our children?” (Harrison 1988: 43) “Is mass murder a subject for a children's book?” asked Eric Kimmel in 1977. (Kimmel in Zack 1991: 43) “Books or memoirs about the Holocaust demonstrate the range of human nature from the most depraved to the most noble. For children, as for adults, learning about the Holocaust is important to their humaneness.” (Posner 1988: 36) Posner implies that one cannot exist without the other. Since the Holocaust memoir is inherently, and therefore inevitably about violence, young people, for the reason of developing humaneness must learn about this aspect, she says.

Clinical psychologist Yael Danieli states in an interview “that children of three, four and five do not have the equipment to comprehend or make sense of the Holocaust in terms of their own world. A child should be at least seven, eight or nine... Knowledge about the Holocaust has to be addressed to the age group. Eleven is an important age to teach about the holocaust because eleven is the age of the identity crisis.” (Danieli in Posner 1988: 36) Danieli believes that “an eleven year old child's maturation process begins with questions of validity and soundness about the world and people around them. Having Holocaust memoirs shed another light on people's capability of good and evil, the child is provided with a full range of human personality traits from which he will develop an identity for himself.” (Danieli in Posner 1988: 36)
Virginia Walters notes that from a developmental point of view children from ages seven to eleven and up are able to summarize and categorize plots. From twelve to about fifteen children are able to analyse structure and character motivation and understand analogies. They are also able to identify their own involvement and reactions to the text (Walter 1993: 38). Rachel Meir, however, points out that "the writer of Holocaust literature has no analogies or frames of reference to build on. The Holocaust is an extreme. What analogy can explain it? Auschwitz is like what? Auschwitz is only Auschwitz." (Meir in Walter 1993: 39) Walter quotes Jeffrey Derevensky, a professor of educational psychology at McGill University who has related childhood development stages to the reading of Holocaust literature. He suggests that "Holocaust material is inappropriate for children age six and under, but that by ages seven to eleven they can begin to comprehend the objective events of the Holocaust." (Walter 1993: 40)

The majority of writers who have explored the area of Holocaust Literature for children have written on the subject of teaching Holocaust literature to young people within the educational system, notably in the article by Masha Rudman (professor of Education) and Susan P. Rosenberg (a doctoral candidate) which addresses the importance of starting Holocaust education at an early age. Deborah P. Britzman contends: "Educators are aware of the idea that knowledge of human cruelty can be depressing, debilitating, and defensively engaged. Indeed, this very worry is an implicit tension in discussions of Holocaust education and in the teaching of the Diary of Anne Frank. Can the study of genocide avoid a painful encounter?" (Britzman 1999: 126) Barbara Harrison questions in her Ph. D. dissertation whether mass murder (genocide) is a subject for a children's book (Harrison 2001: 43) Other writers have discussed their views by approaching the topic of Holocaust literature from their unique perspective. Psychology professor Mary Engel argues that during war time
teenagers are most likely to be able to cope and survive if they throw themselves headlong into the realities of war instead of sitting on the sidelines feeling victimized.

In “Up for Discussion, Echoes of the Shoah: Holocaust Literature--Part 1” (Posner 1988: 36-37) Marcia W Posner, a library consultant with the UJA Federation of N.Y. and JWB Jewish Book Council, N.Y., discusses strategies for explaining the Holocaust to children. Posner's contention is that "For children, as for adults, learning about the Holocaust is important to their humaneness...Understanding the Shoah sensitizes our inter-relationships." She is talking about relationships in connection to tragic events in the greater world such as news reports about racism in South Africa. She believes that "What child will exclude another who is different, or forget to offer help to the infirm and elderly, or take for granted the preciousness of an intact family after discussing these concepts in connection with a story about the Holocaust." (Posner 1988: 36)

Ruth Fox, a middle school librarian in Great Neck, New York, writes in her 1997 article “Exploring the Holocaust” (Fox 1997: 8-12) that it is important to recognise the universality of the Holocaust. She argues that studying Holocaust Literature "is a human study depicting the evil people can do, but it is also the story of people's triumph and their will to survive." She emphasises that "Holocaust literature reveals basic truths about human nature providing children with credible models of heroism and dignity as well as human capacity for evil." (Fox 1997: 9)

In her article "A New Algorithm in Evil: Children’s Literature in a Post-Holocaust World" (Baer 2000: 378-401) Elizabeth Baer's contention is (like that of Posner and Fox) that "children need to learn about the Holocaust by helping them to confront it, to warn them and provide a framework for consciousness, for making moral choices and for taking personal responsibility." (Baer 2000: 391) Baer calls upon the reader to recognize the seeming paradox of the Holocaust being at once unspeakable and yet
something that must be spoken about. Not necessarily to make it more meaningful, she stresses, but “to make its reality imaginatively possible so that the next generation is vigilant about the hatred inside all of us.” (Baer 2000: 391)

Vicki Zack, the daughter of Holocaust survivors, is a librarian in an elementary school. Although her parents could not tell her their story, Zack wanted to know, and yet at times could not bear to learn about the history of the Holocaust in Europe. In her article “It Was the Worst of Times: Learning about the Holocaust through Literature” (Zack 1991: 42-48), she questions “how one can make literature out of pain, the pain which was the Holocaust.” She reflects that “The paradox is: how can one write, read, tell about it? How can one not write, read, tell about it?” (Zack 1991: 46) Zack emphasises that the story must be told (as do Harold Foster and Kate Kessler), because if one does not talk and read and write about it, the lives that were lost with no one to mourn them will forever have no tombstones, no commemoration. Zack’s contention therefore is that we must read. We must write. We must talk. We must tell. “If not us, who? If not now, when?” (Yolen in Zack 1991: 48)

Harold M. Foster teaches English at the University of Akron (Ohio). In an article Foster reviews the Holocaust memoir Embracing All But My Life by Holocaust survivor Gerda Weismann Klein, which is also the article’s title. (Foster 1997: 56-59) He links her memoir to his specialty, novel reading in the high school classroom. Foster argues that we should keep much of the traditional literature which still works (the American and British classics) but expand that body of literature to make it more representative of our times and of students we teach. For that reason Foster advocates that Holocaust memoirs should be added to the high school curriculum.

Kate Kessler, an English teacher who moved with her family from the U.S. to Germany when she was 15, was shocked when she saw the former concentration camps. In her article “Teaching Holocaust Literature” (Kessler 1991: 29-32) Kessler
discusses how she involves her students in a social and emotional way for which she is criticized by her colleagues who prefer distance and objectivity. She argues that the students have displayed signs of consciousness about what they hear on the news and that they feel empathy for people who are different on the outside as they began to feel that they are all the same inside. Kessler contends that learning about the social issues surrounding Holocaust literature will serve both as a memorial to those who have suffered and perished, as well as a preventative lesson on the dangers of stereotyping and prejudging. (Kessler 1991: 32)

In "Confronting History: Holocaust Books for Children" (Rudman 1991: 163-177) Masha Kabakow Rudman and Susan P. Rosenberg reflect that "if our children learn about the Holocaust early, then perhaps they can think critically about these historical events, recognise the symptoms of despotism and fight against them." (Rudman 1991: 163) Rudman, a professor at the University of Massachusetts School of Education, and Rosenberg, then a doctoral candidate contend that "if we believe that people have choices, and that it is crucial to exercise this ability to choose, then the books on the Holocaust provide us with powerful material for today’s young people." (Rudman 1991: 174)

Mary Engel discusses the need for young people in war to be active participants. Mary Engel, a professor of psychology at the City University of New York, discusses coping strategies for children in war in her article "Children and War" (Engel 1982: 71-90) After examining various scenarios in which children, for example, actively helped adults in evacuating Jewish doctors from the Polish ghettos, and researching a memoir by teenage Holocaust survivor Samuel Pisar, she notes that the necessity for action (overtly or covertly) and strong bonding with peers increased the chance of survival tenfold. She states that "adolescence, as a developmental stage, makes full emotional participation more natural than assuming the attitude of
'observer.' (Engel 1982: 77) She contends that "activity in peril must be relevant to survival and that the combination of action and a passionately held bond, together with a sense of group support, is the most powerful ally of survival when in mortal danger." (1982: 89) Engel concludes that throwing oneself headlong into the realities of war was not inconsistent with successful coping.

The following two writers argue about the necessity of happy endings in young adult literature. "Do You Know What 'Auschwitz' Means?: Children's Literature and the Holocaust" (Kertzer 1999: 238-256) by Adrienne Kertzer examines her conviction that children need hope and happy endings in their stories. She believes that it is possible to tell children the truth about the Holocaust. "If not, there are those who would tell yet another fairy tale, one in which the mass murder of millions of people did not happen." (1999: 253) As the daughter of an Auschwitz survivor, she knows that it did happen and that we need to find ways and strategies to tell children that it did. Kertzer offers one strategy in this article on how to synthesize the opposites of hope, happy endings and truthful Holocaust experiences into appropriate reading material for young adults: use a double narrative as in Jane Yolen's *Briar Rose*.

Barbara Harrison asks "on what level of truth telling can Holocaust books function?" (1988: 43) She argues that literary tragedy requires heroic conflict and heroic possibility. "Though many individuals fought, many rebelled, many resisted, the Holocaust informs us that on some level all vestiges of heroic conflict and heroic possibility were stolen from the victim as they were rendered helpless." (Harrison 1988: 41) Harrison's contention is that because hope is synonymous with childhood, writing Holocaust literature requires great skill. She suspects that authors writing for young people about this despairing period are able to take hope by the hand and coax it back to life because "every time a child is born, the world is re-created." (Harrison 1988: 75)
David L. Russell, in his article “Reading the Shards and Fragments: Holocaust Literature for Young Readers” (Russell 1997: 267-280) addresses the topic of whether children are capable of dealing with fundamental issues of the Holocaust. He stresses that the Holocaust should not be viewed as merely a suitable topic for young readers but an important and necessary topic. He believes that “art of the Holocaust is necessarily didactic art and that the more we come to know about the Holocaust, the greater the possibility that we become sensitized to inhumanity and suffering whenever they occur.” (Russell 1997: 268) Russell passionately expresses his hope that in spite of all the suffering “we may hear the faint, persistent murmuring of the compassionate heart that will lead us out of the darkness and toward the light (Russell 1997: 279) On the topic of whether children are capable of dealing with Holocaust material he emphasises the importance that they need to hear the truth.

In an article in Library Professional Publications called “The Survival of the Spirit in Holocaust Literature for and about Children” writer Leonard M. Mendelsohn examines literature about a number of young people who were incarcerated in the Nazi death camps during the Second World War. Mendelsohn, (like Russell) argues that “because of the death camps one can expect to have seen all human behaviour possible.” (Mendelsohn 1986: 87) His contention is, however, that one has not seen all human behaviour possible because in spite of the deep despair that reigned over the victims, some could still remember and acknowledge that there was beauty in the world, though not in the camps. This confirms that the spirit could survive even in those unimaginably bleak circumstances, according to Mendelsohn.

Other authors who have written on the Holocaust offer a different yet unique perspective worth mentioning here. Yiddish author Isaac Bashevis Singer talks about the issue of what constitutes proper writing for children in “On Writing for Children,” an article based on a series of questions conducted by students of children’s literature at
the University of Connecticut. (Singer 1977: 9-16) Singer feels that children need a
good story first and foremost and that they are independent as readers and critics.
"You can not hypnotize a child to read a story because the author was a great man.
You can tell him that it was written by Shakespeare or by the Almighty himself, but the
child does not care about authority. If the child does not like the story, he will reject it
immediately." (Singer 1977: 12) Singer further argues that children are very sensitive
which is the reason why, he, Singer, gives his stories happy endings. He contends
"that if you tell a child that a murderer or thief was never punished or caught the child
might feel that there is no justice in the world altogether." (Singer 1977: 13) He doesn't
want children to come to this conclusion too soon.

In "Holocaust Survivors and Internal Strength" (Schwartz Lee 1988: 67-93)
Barbara Schwartz Lee, a psychoanalyst, psychotherapist and Nazi camp survivor,
attempts to explode the myth that survivors of the Holocaust and their children remain
non-functioning individuals. She focuses on, and presents evidence, for her belief
"that survivors endured their ordeal and fared better in their subsequent lives than has
been indicated by much of the psychoanalytic and psychological literature previously
published." (Schwartz Lee 1988: 68) She concludes that by and large survivors who
fared well had been blessed by nurturing home environments as children and that
evidence indicates that these positive childhood experiences were helpful to them for
their survival in the camps and in adjusting to the challenges of their later life.

In summary, most of the above mentioned writers agree that learning about the
Holocaust is essential for a child's education. The dilemma is that children want and
need to hear the truth about what happened during the Holocaust, while the subject
can not be too depressing or debilitating as young people can not as easily process
the information the way adults can. One writer contends that the Holocaust needs to be
taught at an early age, while another feels that older children, by about the age of
eleven, experience an identity crisis and are therefore mature enough to deal with Holocaust subject matter. Some of the reasons given for the study of this subject are that learning about the Holocaust is important for the humaneness of children and to warn them of (and be vigilant about) the hatred that is in all of us and the evil that people can do. One writer warns that educators should not view the Holocaust as merely a suitable topic for young readers, but as an important and necessary topic. A number of writers agree that learning about the Holocaust can provide children and young adults with a framework for making better moral choices in their lives, and that this may also serve as a preventative lesson on the danger of stereotyping and prejudging. One author emphasizes the need to talk and tell about the Holocaust, because “if not us, who? If not now, when?” (Yolen in Zack 1991: 48)
C. Methodology

C. 1. Selection of Sample

Ten Holocaust memoirs written by Jewish survivors of the Holocaust, who were teenagers or young adults during the war, form the study material for this thesis. These memoirs will be analysed using the method of Content Analysis.

The reason for choosing these particular ten memoirs, from among all Holocaust memoirs, is that the authors were incarcerated at some time during the war years in one of the extermination or death camps which were scattered throughout Europe. What they therefore have in common is that all the authors lived with fear of death under Nazi rule and all were abused by those who were in a position of power. Not chosen were memoirs of survivors who went into hiding, were hidden or were adopted by Christian families or religious institutions such as convents. Neither were the memoirs chosen in which a selection of prisoners were put to work in one of the many slave-labour camps or those who joined the Partisan groups and survived the war by living in the forests, fighting and sabotaging the Nazis. Yet another group, whose memoirs were not chosen, were those people who managed to remain undetected as Jews while living in mainstream Europe due to possessing Gentile or Aryan features such as blond hair and blue eyes. Memoirs of Jews who fled Europe have not been included.

C. 2. Books to be Examined

The ten young adult memoirs chosen for this thesis were discussed by critics, writers and educators who have in most cases summarized the content and designated a suitable age or grade level for intended readership:

Paul Kaplan, a Public Services Coordinator for the Lake Villa (II) District Library, writes in his article "Exploring the Holocaust" (Kaplan 1998: 40) about this memoir: "Told in compact but powerful episodes, Livia Bitton-Jackson's *I Have Lived a Thousand Years* is an autobiography of a Hungarian Jewish girl who was also taken to the concentration camps... Jackson finds that the presence of a parent provides motivation to fight for life." (Kaplan 1998: 40) Edward T. Sullivan is a Senior Project Librarian for the New York Public Library's Connecting Libraries and Schools projects. In his Holocaust resource book *The Holocaust in Literature for Youth*, he states that there are a vast number of true stories and memoirs about this barbaric period in history, but that teachers, in general, are inclined to educate their students about the Holocaust by having them read Anne Frank's Diary. He says that "...this book offers little insight into the catastrophic proportions of the Holocaust and does little to convey the unspeakable horrors people suffered." (Sullivan 1999: 6) On Bitton-Jackson's memoir he comments: "An awkward narrative at times but chillingly effective in depicting the horrors of the concentration camp." (Sullivan 1999: 17) Intended reader level is given as grade 5-10, but I believe that because of the graphic and shocking details of the violence she experienced as a prisoner, the memoir would be more appropriately designated for grade 7-12 readers.


This memoir was originally written for adults, but has become a young adult story due to the young adult age of the author while she was in the camps. This memoir recounts the story of a young adult Jewish woman who survives the Holocaust because she was selected as a singer for the female orchestra in Auschwitz. This saved her life. Arthur Miller wrote a full-length theatrical adaptation of her story and his
earlier television film, which is recommended for secondary school level by Elaine Stephens in *Learning About the Holocaust: Literature and Other Resources for Young People* (Stephens 1995: 117), a resource book compiled by Elaine Stephens, Jean E. Brown and Janet E. Rubin, professors of Teaching Education and Communication. The three authors reviewed approximately 300 titles in order to select titles for this book. Selection criteria included literary quality, historical authenticity, effectiveness in fostering an intellectual and emotional connection with the subject, and appropriateness for each age group. (1995: xi) Age level is for grade 7-12 readers.


In *We Were Children Then: Vancouver Survivors Remember*, a catalogue of resources compiled by the Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre (1995: 47), a summary of Geve’s book reads as follows: “The author arrived in Auschwitz in 1943 when he was 13 years old and spent 22 months in the Auschwitz and Buchenwald concentration camps. He made drawings while recuperating after liberation. Lively matter-of-tone, stirring. Geve is a pseudonym.” Designated for senior grades.


recounts the ordeal of holding her family together after their mother is killed in the camp. This slim volume is an eloquent account of survival in the midst of chaos and destruction. A glossary of camp language is a valuable addition. Leitner's story is continued in *Saving the Fragments*.


Sir Martin Gilbert (Gilbert was evacuated to Canada during the war with hundreds of English children, and is the author of *Messages and Memories: Reflections on Child Survivors of the Holocaust* and a biography of Sir Winston Churchill) critiques Mielnicki's memoir in an editorial on Amazon.com: "This is a story of the lives, qualities, enthusiasm and Jewish hearts that were destroyed in the twentieth century." A summary of the book by Amazon.com reads as follows: "A Holocaust memoir by Michel Mielnicki who survived the camps of Auschwitz-Birkenau, Buna, Mittelbaum, Dora and Bergen Belsen, Mielnicki takes us from the pleasures and charms of pre-war Polish Jewry (now entirely lost) into some of the darkest places of the 20th century." For senior grade levels.


Samuel Pisar, a Russian boy who grew up in Bialystok, was incarcerated in the Auschwitz death camp as a young teenager. He managed to survive because of a strong bond formed with his friends Ben and Nico. Mary Engel, who, in her article "Children and War" (Engel 1982: 74) reviews Pisar's memoir and discusses psychological survival of the horrors experienced on a daily basis by the prisoners of the camps. She examines Pisar's ability to come out of the camp alive. "Pisar's
instincts dictated hyper-alertness to danger and shrewd, quick judgment of possibilities for survival… Reports by Suhl (1967) and Engel (1982) show that throwing oneself headlong into the realities of war was not inconsistent with successful coping.”

Engel also quotes Pisar’s memoir in which he talks about hunger: “Hunger becomes psychological, hallucinating, obsessive, the first sensation on waking in the morning, the last before falling asleep at night. All other sensations, even the feeling of pain or fear of death, become secondary precluding any concentrated effort at thought. The animal instinct to eat, no matter what, no matter where, no matter when, remains the only predominant reality.” (Engel 1982: 74) For grade 9-12 readers.


Rabinovici’s memoir was recommended by Prof. Judith Saltman of the University of British Columbia, and is discussed in an article “Beyond Boundaries: Holocaust Survivors, Rescuers and Bystanders” by Hazel Rochman. Rochman’s summary of the memoir reads as follows: “Eight years old when the Nazis first occupied her city of Vilnius, Lithuania, in 1941, the author describes how she survived her time in the ghetto, on the forced marches, in the selections, and in several concentration camps. Always, her mother protected her, fed her, disguised her, under the most brutal conditions that broke many people down and annihilated millions.” (Rochman 1999: 57) Rochman designates the memoir for grade 9-12 students.


Teaching about the Holocaust : A Resource Book for Educators (25) by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum describes the account of Sender’s
experiences as follows: "One of the most graphic and dramatic in young people's literature. Her story begins just before the Nazi invasion of Poland and continues through life in the Lodz ghetto and finally at Auschwitz." Marcia Posner in her article "Echoes of the Shoah, Part 1," notes that Sender's mother's words "As long as there is life, there is hope" sustained Sender through devastation, the loss of her family, and internment at Auschwitz where she finds that her poetry stirs a spark of humanity in her captors. (Posner 1988: 31) Posner designates the memoir for grade 8-12 readers.


*Night*, originally written for adults, has become required reading on the subject of the Holocaust in high schools, and is therefore on this list of Holocaust memoirs for young adults. *Teaching about the Holocaust* (1982: 25) comments on this memoir as follows: "Wiesel is one of the most eloquent writers of the Holocaust, and this book is his best-known work. This compelling narrative describes his own experience in Auschwitz. His account of his entrance into Auschwitz and his first night in the camp is extraordinary. This narrative is often considered required reading for students of the Holocaust." The resource book designates *Night* for high school readers. Barbara Harrison writes in her Ph. D. dissertation "Moral Intensity and Heroic Possibility in the Postwar Children's Novel" about "the unrelenting intensity of Elie Wiesel's *Night*." (Harrison 1988: 68)


"Zyskind tells her own story of how, when she was eleven years old, the Nazis came and send her and her family to first the ghettos and then the death camps."

(Sullivan 1999: 38) Sullivan designates this memoir for grade 6-12 readers.

Masha Rudman and Susan P. Rosenberg write in "Confronting History: Holocaust
Books for Children": "Stolen Years by Sara Zyskind (1981) is an intimately detailed autobiographical account of a young girl’s experiences from 1939 to 1945... This compelling journey through the years of the Holocaust is unlike the other books mentioned in this article in that it is suitable only for the most mature readers.”
(Rudman 1991: 170)
C. 3. Content Analysis

The methodology chosen to conduct this research is Content Analysis. "Content analysis is a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication." (Berelson 1952: 18) Klaus Krippendorff defines content analysis as a research technique for "making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context." (Krippendorff 1980: 21) In "The Practice of Social Research," Earl Babbie explains that "content analysis methods may be applied to virtually any form of communication. Among the possible artifacts for study are books, magazines, poems, newspapers, songs..." (Babbie 1998: 309) Babbie also mentions that content analysis is essentially a coding operation. Bernard Berelson, under the heading "To Measure the 'Readability' of Communication Materials" writes: "...educators have endeavoured to determine the elements in communication content which make it easy or hard to read and comprehend." (Berelson 1952: 63) Content analysis, in this case, is essentially a way or system whereby the researcher codes incidences of elements from Holocaust camp experiences that appear in the text of a memoir, while attempting to code only the manifest content (what is actually there) by giving clear definitions of these elements beforehand. Adhering to these definitions during the process of coding will minimize the chance of personal interpretation (latent content or information that can be read between the lines) of the data which would invalidate the objectivity of the coding process.

Content analysis has been used by Helen Martin (1936) in her article "Nationalism and Children's Literature" (Berelson 1952: 203) and the Council on Inter-Racial Books for Children (1977) called "Stereotypes, Distortions and Omissions in U.s. History Textbooks." (Krippendorff 1980: 182)
C. 4. Coding System

What we are really looking for are those elements that some writers think are too frightening or shocking for young adults to read about, and determining how these elements are portrayed in the ten memoirs. The list of elements was adapted from lists obtained from previous researchers in this area. In Curry's article "Where is Judy Blume? Controversial Fiction for Older Children and Young Adults" (Curry 2001), she developed a list of ten reasons why certain young adult books had been challenged or censored. These elements included profanity, religion/witchcraft, violence/horror, rebellion, racism/sexism, suicide/death and depression/negative. In Fear of Words: Censorship and the Public Libraries of Canada by Alvin M. Schrader (1995: 68) a similar list of challenged elements was compiled. In addition to the ones mentioned above there were unsuitability for age groups, cruelty, scary, frightening to children, and anti-Semitic.

The elements for this discussion included Curry and Schrader's lists augmented by elements which emerged from articles in the literature review. The chosen elements are:

1. Violence

Two aspects of the crucial element of violence will be examined in the context of this thesis: the definition for physical violence will be an incidence where the author of the memoir describes being physically attacked or abused. For example, an incidence of slapping, clubbing or attack by dogs. Standing barefoot in snow for five hours at the time for roll-call also falls into this category, as does travelling for many days in cattle cars without food, water or toilets, pressed together with standing room only.

The definition for psychological violence will be an incidence such as making
prisoners believe that they will be gassed in the 'showers' while in fact water comes out of the shower heads and not cyclon-B gas. Living under the constant fear of being shot or clubbed to death when a small mistake is made or when physical exhaustion means not being able to follow the rules, also falls into this category. Demoralising and cruel games played by those in power and constant threats of death (in any form) which would add to the tensions of intolerable 'living' conditions of the prisoners, also fall into this category. In addition, any indication of suicide (violence against self) will be noted in the final analysis.

2. Hunger

The definition of hunger applies when the author clearly indicates extreme suffering because of lack of water and food. If the author describes someone else who is clearly suffering because of hunger and thirst, this will not be coded. If the author describes obtaining food in an illegitimate way for himself (such as taking a raw potato from the kitchen) this will be coded as the writer is taking this action because of feelings of hunger or starvation.

3. Rebellion

In spite of the harsh and inhumane rules imposed on the camp inmates, some people engaged in acts of defiance or rebellion. This could be done overtly or covertly. Overtly, for example, if a victim challenges the insane rules such as standing slouched during roll call which would almost always be punished by an instant severe beating or death; trying to obtain more food; lending others a helping hand, and other forms of going openly against the rules. Covertly, if one attempts to resist the overall dehumanisation in any way or form by inward rebellion such as clinging to thoughts of past freedom or putting a deity first regardless of how important and dominant the
Nazis wished to be regarded as. These instances will be coded as rebellion. Escape, being the ultimate form of rebellion, when unsuccessful, would be punished by torture, whip lashings and death yet was an action still attempted by a number of victims. If this is documented in the memoir, it will be coded as an act of rebellion.

4. **Sense of Loss and Abandonment**

Coding a memoir for this element will occur when the author indicates clearly that he/she suffers terribly from feelings of homesickness for members of their family or for the life lived before internment in the camps. If the author indicates intense feelings of abandonment whether it is by family members, friends or even nations or allies, this incident will also be coded as an incidence of loss and abandonment.

5. **Loneliness**

This element, experienced by many people in everyday life at one time or another, could be felt more intensely in the camps. Although people were consistently surrounded by hundreds or thousands of others, the harsh living conditions drove many to care only for their own survival and self preservation. Feelings of individuality were for some completely eliminated due to the intolerable existence forced upon them. The odd moment of self reflection could transform into feelings of despair and loneliness, and when this is described, or when an author suffers excessively from loneliness, this element will be coded as such.

6. **Hope and Redemption**

Any time there is mention of a feeling of hope and/or redemption, other than at the end of the war when all surviving victims were liberated by the allies, such as a moment when the victim is still imprisoned in a death camp but feels or experiences a
feeling of hope or something to look forward to or a sense of greater good regardless of all the suffering, this will then be coded as the element of Hope and Redemption.

7. Spirituality

If the author of the memoir believes in a higher power in which he/she tries to find consolation or support, what is this power? Does he/she believe in a higher power at first, and then abandons the belief once he/she experiences the death camps? Did the belief give him/her strength? When this topic comes up in the memoir it will be coded.

8. Loss of Emotional Stability

When memoir authors recount an incidence of losing their emotional bearings because of the horrible circumstances they find themselves in, this will coded. Tension, hunger and abuse, and loss of hope for some, could effect the victim in such a way that rational thinking and behaviour began to waver. If this is mentioned in the memoir it will be coded as loss of emotional stability.

9. Shame

Does the feeling of shame appear in the memoirs? Shame is defined in the dictionary (Oxford 1996: 837) as distress or humiliation caused by consciousness of one's guilt, dishonour, or folly. Does the victim have a feeling of being responsible somehow for what is happening? For being stripped of clothes and having to parade naked in front of the Nazis? If so, is it because the victim feels guilty even though he/she has done nothing wrong but has been forced into the situation? If a feeling of shame is described in the memoir by the victim, this will be coded as such.

Each memoir will be read carefully to determine whether any of the above
mentioned nine elements will appear. The data gathered will be quantitative -how many times an element appeared and qualitative -the context in which the element appeared, including direct quotes from the text. In addition to the elements above, the gender and age of the survivor will be noted and expressed in a time line. It is hoped that analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data will add enlightenment to the debate about whether the elements mentioned in each memoir are too frightening for young adults to learn about.
D. Results: Memoir Analysis

D. 1. Violence

D. 1. a. Summary

Analysing the ten above mentioned memoirs for disturbing elements revealed an astounding number of incidences of violence expressed by the ten authors. In total, the authors related incidences of some type of violence 408 times. Either the violence was directed towards themselves or as members of a group they found themselves amongst and to which they bore witness. Incidences of violence perpetrated towards others who did not belong to a prisoner's barrack (a place where prisoners slept) as well as watching victims getting sent to the crematoria, (up to 10,000 people a day in Birkenau, with new train loads arriving day after day) public hangings, or stories of evil doing by those in charge told by others, are considered “secondary” incidents and were therefore not counted among the 408 times.

The following discussion of the element of violence in the ten memoirs will focus on violence in general, how it is portrayed by the writers, and the type of violence that was used by the perpetrators, which includes physical, psychological and emotional abuse. The SS were not the only perpetrators of violence, although they certainly instigated it. Violence occurred among the prisoners themselves as well, though again, this was largely orchestrated by the Nazis. It appears from the tone and feeling expressed in the ten memoirs that victims were effected differently by the violence, partly due to age and partly due to personality. How do the authors (sometimes thirty years after their incarceration in the camps) communicate about incidences of violence in their memoirs? Were they terrified throughout their imprisonment and does the memoir convey this as a sense of terror throughout the book, or were there other factors that preoccupied their minds which instilled a greater fear?
D. 1. b. Mankind's Fragility and Strength

Most memoir authors were accustomed to freedom of choice and movement or how to live life the way they wished in their respective democratic societies. These were taken away by an oppressor who would control every movement or action a person thereafter made: first in the ghettos and later in the camps. Jewish people's freedom was systematically taken away until they were transported to camps in which they were systematically murdered. No effort was spared to bring about the total destruction of the so called “enemies” of the German Reich. The SS was given carte blanche to achieve this goal. This became one of the most diabolical periods of genocide against one particular group of people in history. Members of a cultivated and civilized society turned into monsters, who often delighted in committing unparalleled violence against defenceless fellow human beings. Dr. Lillian Glass in *Toxic People* writes:

“I have seen what devastating effects ugly words, ugly actions, and nasty people have on other people’s lives. I have discovered how incredibly fragile we human beings are. We are so emotionally tender that we not only remember ugly things that happened to us as children, but tend to live our lives based on words we heard and actions we saw in childhood.” (Glass 1995: 11)

Reflecting on these words written about people in a contemporary and free society, and considering the abuse that was unleashed upon the prisoners in the ghettos and camps fifty odd years ago, it is a true miracle that some people imprisoned during that time managed to survive and even prosper. All ten authors flourished after the war: most married, had children and/or became professionals and had successful careers. This is a testimony to mankind's extraordinary ability to positively cope under devastating conditions.

D. 1. c. Ghetto Life
Before the Second World War started, Jewish people were living in relative safety and peace in their respective communities. Incidences of violence against Jews began to occur more frequently, however, once Hitler came to power. Former Gentile friends and neighbours turned hostile, becoming enemies almost overnight. As one author recollects in his memoir *Bialystok to Birkenau: The Holocaust Journey of Michel Mielnicki*:

"Even if the overwhelming majority of Polish gentiles didn't like Jews, or even despised us (as seems more probably the case), I will never understand how they managed to objectify us so totally. They didn't have to help the Germans destroy the Jews." (Mielnicki 2000: 85)

Once Germany had invaded a country, the SS ordered the Jewish people out of their homes and generally into a ghetto. This act of force was accomplished in brutal ways with SS, and sometimes local police, whipping and hitting the victims to hurry. Isabella Leitner comments:

"The Germans were always in such a hurry. Death. was. .always. .urgent. . . with them--Jewish death. The earth had to be cleansed of Jews. We already knew that. We just didn't know that sharing the planet for another minute was more than this super-race could live with. The air for them was befouled by Jewish breath, and they must have fresh air." (Leitner 1978: 30)

Out of ten authors, eight began their imprisonment in a ghetto (when their families were still intact) before they were transported to the camps. Conditions in the ghettos were poor, (with increasing lack of food, and deplorable hygiene) growing gradually to the point of being unbearable as the Nazis stepped up their oppressive and violent ways. Livia Bitton-Jackson recounts observing the SS in the ghetto:

"The SS don't look human. Their faces aren't faces, they are grim masks. And their voices are angry barks." (Bitton-Jackson 1997: 68)

Schools were closed to Jewish children, who had to find other ways to keep themselves busy. Ruth Minsky Sender writes:
"Vacation is long over, but no schools are open for the children of the ghetto. They play a new game --escape from the Germans. They form two groups, Jews and Germans. The idea is not to get caught by the Germans trying to find and kill the Jews..." (Sender 1986: 25)

Of the ten authors only one, who was also confined to a ghetto before being transported to a camp, did not express a strong dislike for living there, perhaps because she was very young. One person came straight from a prison in Paris because she had helped people in the resistance at the start of the war and was captured. After the Jews were confined to ghettos and some were transported to labour camps, many Gentiles confiscated their houses after the SS had confiscated their possessions. Forced to live in the poorest section of a city or town many families lived in one modest house and more often together in one room. Nevertheless, people tried to settle into the ghetto and recreate a kind of normal life as best as they could. Living in a ghetto could last up to four years before the Nazis relocated the Jews to the camps for forced labour or to be murdered in the crematoria.

D. 1. d. Transportation by Cattle Cars

Once Hitler had his instruments for the Final Solution in place, which meant that the death camps and forced labour camps were ready to begin their macabre tasks, transportations of ghetto inhabitants of central and northern European countries began. Railways had been built to the major death camps, and the transports in cattle cars started. People were crammed into these cars with often standing room only, without air, water or food, and with the cattle car doors boarded up to prevent victims from jumping off and fleeing. Samuel Pisar remembers:

"By hundreds we were lined up in groups, facing the long train of cattle cars, their doors open to receive us...Suddenly it was my turn. I ran, hunched over, holding on to my small suitcase with one hand, shielding my head with the other. I felt the blows on my head and my hands, and smelled the blood on my face." (Pisar 1980: 52)
Another author, Fania Fenelon, writes:

"We'd been travelling for over fifty hours. The smell was frightful, the door hadn't been opened once. At first, under the supervision of the SS, the men in each carriage had taken out the buckets to empty them. Since then, our bucket had emptied itself by overturning. We were desperately thirsty. . . " (Fenelon 1979: 15)

Nine out of ten authors describe their train ride as completely inhumane and shocking with people dying from lack of air, water and food, and others going crazy being incarcerated in such a small space for many days. Only one author (Thomas Geve) did not have anything specific to say as he was fortunate to travel in a slightly more humane way: in his train car there was some straw on the floor, and buckets of water for drinking and washing were provided.

D. 1. e. In the Camps

Michel Mielnicki remembers in his memoir *Bialystok to Birkenau*:

"There were endless ways to get yourself murdered by the SS, and I'd been a witness to almost all of them." (Mielnicki 2000: 200)

Violence in the form of physical abuse the prisoners were subjected to (as well as the crematoria for the purpose of their death), which the ten authors consistently describe in their memoirs, ranged from having all body hair shaved off on arrival in the camps, making prisoners stand naked in front of SS during selections, getting daily beatings on the head and body with whips, truncheons, iron bars or rifle butts, getting kicks to any body part, having to wait in endless roll calls in freezing weather conditions or hot sun, and going on long, exhausting marches wearing ill fitting shoes (or sometimes no shoes at all) to and from the work place or eventually to other camps. Psychological and emotional abuse consisted of SS and Kapos ongoing swearing at and name calling of the victims, and perpetual humiliations and threats of getting shot, gassed
and burned in the crematoria. A wrong look or movement could mean that life could end the next instance. Samuel Pisar writes in *Of Blood and Hope*:

"The first rule is absolute submission. I found it hard at first, humiliating; anger mounted inside me. But after a while it became second nature for the slightest murmur or pause, look, or gesture that could be interpreted as lack of humility was seized on by the SS as sufficient reason for condemning a person on the spot." (Pisar 1980: 70)

Thus, as utmost humility and servitude were required from the victims, the perpetrators acted in an utmost insane and cruel way. It is, therefore, not surprising that the authors of the ten memoirs communicate their accounts of violence perpetrated in the camps with similar language and stories. Frequently shocking acts were committed against their person: "Blows continued to rain down." (Wiesel 1960: 33) or "She is kicking me in the face, in the chest, in the abdomen. She is kicking my head." (Bitton-Jackson 1997: 142)

**D. 1. f. Types of Violence Perpetrated against Ten Authors**

In general, the acts of violence employed by the Nazis mentioned by the ten authors throughout their memoirs consisted of whacks, slaps, use of whips, punches, kicks and use of truncheons and rifle butts for blows on the body and head. Transports of people to the camps in cattle cars lasted for days on end. (Without air, liquids and food with standing room only.) Once in the camps, people were subjected to long roll calls which could last from three to four hours and which were often accompanied by blows on the head and body. Livia Bitton-Jackson recounts:

"The zahlappell lasts almost three hours. This word, meaning roll call, becomes the dread and the lifestyle of Auschwitz. Twice daily we are lined up by fives in order to be counted. At 3 a.m. we would line up with lightning speed, and stand stiffly and silently for three or four hours until the official SS staff shows up to count our heads... The actual count is accomplished in a few minutes." (Bitton-Jackson 1997: 79)
Jackson continues to ask herself “Why are our wet, traumatized bodies, wearing only a single cotton cloak, hurled out into the cold for an endless, senseless wait?” (Bitton-Jackson 1997: 79) Standing in freezing rain or snow or under the hot sun with victims standing in ill-fitting shoes or shoe-less in rows of five, was a frequent occurrence. Long marches, to and from work or from one camp to the next, without breaks or rest periods in similar weather conditions for days and nights on end, often resulted in many people’s deaths from sheer exhaustion and lack of nourishment. Isabella Leitner talks about one such march to the Bergen-Belsen camp:

“Back in the line, the pitiful thousand, minus the few who did escape, the many who died, we are on our way to walk the infinite distance to Bergen-Belsen.” (Leitner 1978: 77)

Elie Wiesel remembers an incidence of forced marches:

“An icy wind blew in violent gusts. But we marched without faltering. The SS made us increase our pace. “Faster, you swine, you filthy sons of bitches!”... “Faster you filthy sons of bitches!” We were no longer marching; we were running. Like automatons.” (Wiesel 1982: 81)

The Nazis did not hesitate to loosen their dogs on the prisoners. Says Samuel Pisar in Of Blood and Hope:

“In the camps, the main problem was the German shepherds that the guards used to terrorize the prisoners. The dogs were trained to rip, on their masters’ orders, at the buttocks of anyone wearing a striped uniform. Some of the dogs were specially trained: on the first signal, they grabbed the victim by the collar and pulled him to the ground; on the second signal, they put their muzzle on the victim’s throat; on the third signal they bit. The guards would regularly engage in this sport, occasionally going as far as the third signal. (Pisar 1980: 82)

Medical experiments were done on either individuals or groups of prisoners by Nazi doctors (Joseph Mengele being one of the most notorious ones) or pharmaceutical companies, conveniently located near the camps for almost cost-free labour and an
ample supply of human guinea-pigs. Samuel Pisar quotes from excerpts from the I.G. Farben's correspondence with the SS at Auschwitz in 1943:

"For the purpose of our experiments with new sleeping pills we would like to be furnished with a certain number of women. . . .

We have duly received your offer, but feel that 200 marks per woman is an excessive price.

We do not intend to pay more than 170 marks per head. If this is agreeable, we are ready to enter into possession of the women. We require approximately one hundred and fifty of them. . . .

The shipment of the one hundred and fifty women has been duly received. Despite their emaciated state, we have found their condition adequate. We will keep you advised as our experiments continue. . . .

The experiments have been completed. All the subjects are dead. We will be in touch with you shortly regarding a further shipment. . . ." (Pisar 1980: 247)

It appears that eight out of the ten authors experienced violence from blows on the head and body with truncheons, rifle butts and other instruments of abuse. Two authors experienced both: blows on the head and body as well as kicks to the face, head and body, while two record getting kicked in the face, head and body. All ten authors recount incidences of the roll calls, and all ten recount having to march under inhumane conditions with a constant threat of getting hit or whipped if one was not fast enough.

D. 1. g. Psychological and Emotional Violence

The ten authors describe countless acts of psychological violence perpetrated against them by the SS and Kapos. Threats of punishment of any type such as going up in smoke in the ovens, getting shot and not surviving the camps at any cost, going to the showers and making victims think that they would be gassed were some of the
ways that those in power used to keep the prisoners "in line". Bitton-Jackson, a trusting thirteen year old when she arrived in the camp with her mother, talks about the abuse and terrifying threat she received when she was not fast enough:

"Didn't you hear? Take off your clothes. All your clothes!" I feel the slap of the whip on my shoulders, and meet a young SS soldier's glaring eyes. "Hurry! Strip fast. You'll be shot. In five minutes anyone with clothes on will be shot!" (Bitton-Jackson 1997: 76)

Calling people names, and humiliating victims were moment to moment occurrences. In her memoir *The Cage*, Ruth Minsky Sender gives frequent examples of the verbal abuse the prisoners had to endure:

"A whistle blows, sharp, shrill. "Out! Fast! Line up, you stupid cows!"
(Sender 1986: 138)

Or:

"Tola climbs into the truck. I move forward. "Stop, you idiot!" the guard calls, pushing me back. "Next truck. This truck is full." . . . "She grabs me suddenly, twisting my head toward her. "I told you, next truck, you cow!"
She pushes me away. (197)

All ten authors describe incidences of being sworn at and threatened, as this was the general manner by which the Nazis and Kapos communicated with their victims.

**D. 1. h. Selections**

The SS would make regular selections which meant that people who were nearly dead from exhaustion and lack of food were sent to the gas chamber and killed. Every prisoner was terrified of these selections as the eternal grind of being overworked and continuously starved eroded their physical appearance and strength, something they were unable to combat or change. For the SS it meant making room for the new prisoners of the daily transportations of Jewish citizens from all over Europe. Those of the newcomers who could work and be of use to the German Reich
were allowed to live. Most older women and younger children went directly to the gas chambers to be murdered. The ten authors recall experiencing utter fear when the selections were made, afraid they would not survive until the next day. In *Thanks to My Mother*, Schoschana Rabinovici remembers:

"Again and again, recently, women were taken from the camp. There was an “action” [selection] almost every day, and more and more bunks were empty in the blockhouses. It looked as though they wanted to make room for newcomers. (Rabinovici 1998: 153)

Cruel games such as making victims sit on their knees on gravel for 24 hours without food or water were an every day event. Thomas Geve writes in his memoir *Guns and Barbed Wire: A Child Survives the Holocaust*:

"There were four menaces we lived in constant dread of. They were the whip, the torture cell, disease and the gas chamber." (Geve 1987: 82)

Many other issues such as debilitating hunger and thirst, observing train loads of people (half alive after many days of travel in closed cattle-cars) being delivered to the death camps for instant gassing and burning in the ovens like animals going to slaughter, were additional assaults on the prisoners’ senses. Daily public hangings also contributed to a sense of constant dread. There seemed no limit to the SSs imagination in pursuit of humiliating, punishing, torturing and killing Jewish people whom they considered to be sub-humans.

D. 1. i. Kapos

In addition to recounting how the SS seized any perceived sign of lack of respect from the prisoners as sufficient reason to condemn a person on the spot, Samuel Pisar continues to write:

"The same was true of the Kapos, the trustees chosen from the ranks of the inmates, mostly for their brutal and sadistic qualities --which, needless to say, were developed to the full in the inhuman conditions
Many of the Kapos were petty thieves or criminals who languished in German prisons before the war started. Having new found power in the Nazi labour and death camps, many relished and exploited their positions. Under the watchful, but condoning, eyes of the SS (who were often amused by the Kapos' brutality committed against the prisoners) the Kapos frequently reigned over the captives with unimaginable ferociousness and hate. Sara Zyskind writes in her memoir *Stolen Years*:

“A group of SS officers soon appeared on the scene, and the Kapos shouted, “Strip! Everybody strip!” I hesitated. I had not yet overcome my shame at being seen naked by those of my own sex, let alone by all those German officers! “You deaf? Strip and be quick about it.” I heard the shrill voice before I felt the painful blow on my head.”

(Zyskind 1983: 163)

Sometimes, when a Kapo was chosen from among the Jewish captives because he or she showed leadership skills, the victims were usually treated more humanely. However, on occasion, Jewish Kapos would change into power-hungry monsters once they were in a position of power. Recalls Thomas Geve:

“Aggravating the general anarchy was the room doctor, a German Jew, overworked, ruthless and loathsome. When he thought it necessary he beat us, usually picking out those who did not understand German, the ones he called “dirty peasants.”

(Geve 1987: 104)

Well meaning Jewish Kapos had to put on a display of toughness and ruthlessness in front of the SS, but they relaxed their manner when the SS turned their backs. Sometimes, Jewish Kapos were able to put a family member or friend into one of the coveted positions in the camp such as working in the kitchen. The benefit for this person was having a chance to supplement the starvation diet with a carrot or potato. Nevertheless, discovery of “stealing” food would lead to severe punishment of the kitchen worker and demotion or degrading punishment for the Kapo. Working in the
receiving barracks (called Canada) where the possessions of the newly arrived and immediately murdered were processed, was another coveted position. Prisoners tried to steal items because they could sell it on the black market for bread. Thomas Geve recalls the punishment for getting caught with stolen property:

"If one was caught, it meant being brutally beaten and then for the rest of the evening having to stand between the fences, hemmed in by wire grids six feet apart, humming with dangerous charges of electricity." (Geve 1987: 122)

All ten authors recount terrifying stories about the maliciousness of the Kapos. In one memoir out of ten, the prisoner has a special relationship with her Kapo because she is instrumental in keeping the Kapo, as well as herself and her group, alive. Another author relates being (somewhat) watched over by his Kapo, possibly, because of his young age, and possibly because homosexual interest in youngsters was rampant in the camps. Most authors allude to homosexual activity in the camps while one author, Thomas Geve, who was very young at the time, was actually attacked for this purpose. Six out of ten memoir authors note that some SS or Kapos actually acted more humanely towards prisoners. These were people in a position of power who did not succumb to the temptation of acting in a ruthless and predatory manner. Nevertheless, the same six authors describe countless malicious acts from other, not so benevolent, SS members and Kapos in their camp.

D. 1. j. Violence at the Hands of Other Victims

In addition to being recipients of cruelty and rage at the hands of the SS and the Kapos, the captives were at times subjected to extreme indifference, jealousy and abuse from each other. Forcing prisoners to work exceptionally hard and subsist on a starvation diet of approximately 600 calories a day in the form of watery soup and a
piece of bread, (partly consisting of sawdust) was another strategy of the SS to annihilate the Jewish people. On this daily regimen, people would eventually die from sheer exhaustion and lack of nutrition. They would turn into Musulman, a term which is said to originate from the appearance of a praying Muslim man, and which in the camps became synonymous with being near death. Schoschana Rabinovici recalls her observations of Musulman:

"Musulman" was the word for those who had lost hope, stopped fighting, and were waiting indifferently for their end. Musulman lay down in the corners of the squares or blockhouses, gradually lost their senses, and died." (Rabinovici 1998:158)

The nearly expired person, who now weighed 60 or 70 pounds, pulled a cloth or blanket over his head, thus looking a little like a praying Muslim, and waited for death. If a person fell into this state he became indifferent to the ill treatment by those in charge or to the intake of food such as the daily cup of watery soup and a piece of bread. During selections, Musulman would be send to the left, which meant to the ovens, being of no further use to the German Reich. Thomas Geve writes about his feelings in the camp:

"I was a mere number no one cared about, a slave entitled to live only as long as I was useful" (Geve 1987: 162)

To prevent oneself from descending into the Musulman state, every crumb of bread or bit of food was of utmost importance. Because food was generally handed out once a day, some captives, in order to stave off severe hunger pangs the next day, would hide their piece of bread to be eaten the next morning. During the night, starving prisoners would try to steal the bread from those asleep and fights would break out that sometimes resulted in death. Michel Mielnicki recalls:

"We were still receiving our full bread ration after roll call in the evening. My practice was to eat half, and save half for the morning. The question was how to keep this staff of life safe overnight. My solution was to roll
my trousers carefully around it (thus protecting both my breakfast and my
appearance), and place this bundle under my head as a pillow. (Mielnicki
2000: 202)

Mielnicki continues to narrate how another prisoner stole this bundle from him one
early morning, waking him. He recalls his instant response as the thief was about to
swallow the bread:

"I quickly had him down on the floor with my hands locked on his throat. . .
I was on the brink of choking the final breath out of this man. . . " (202)

The issue of hunger will be discussed in the next chapter, but for the purpose of
clarifying these actions in regards to violence, every author of the ten memoirs gives
an example of having had their food stolen or witnessed this happening to someone
else. Coveting other essential items for survival could also result in fights among the
prisoners. Proper shoes or boots were imperative in the camps. It protected the wearer
from freezing feet during the four to five hour roll calls twice a day in sub-zero
temperatures, and prevented the feet from injuries such as walking on sharp stones,
pieces of glass and other dangerous materials. An infection meant almost certain
death because there were no medications available, and amputations without
anaesthetic were regularly carried out by the Nazi doctors and their students for
experimental purposes. If this happened, the patient was unable to work and would
soon be exterminated after the next selection. Memoir author Ruth Minsky Sender cut
her hand on a sharp metal bucket and the hand became infected. The infection was
spreading up her arm. She recalls:

"I open my eyes. I suddenly remember that when someone is dying,
the camp elder offers her bread and jam, so she will not die hungry.
"I am going to die." My voice sounds strange to me. "I am going to die.
I do not want to die." (Sender 1986: 160)

Three out of ten authors mention having an infection in their body from which they
miraculously survived. During the night, people without proper foot-wear might attempt
to pull the boots off another person who did. Sometimes, the wearer of the boots (for fear of getting their shoes or boots stolen, people slept with their shoes on) would not wake up when this happened because of utter exhaustion. If he or she did wake up a fight would ensue with sometimes dire consequences. Other forms of violence experienced among each other were hostility and indifference. Livia Bitton-Jackson writes in her memoir *I Have Lived a Thousand Years: Growing Up in the Holocaust*:

"I see Mommy pinned under a huge pile of wood in a most peculiar position. She is lying on her back but her head is bent forward in such a way that her face stares at me in a vertical pose. It is terrifying. Her eyes are wide open but she does not seem to see me. She keeps emitting that eerie, high-pitched wail: Yaaay...yaaay...The women are still sitting on top of the broken planks, some shrieking in pain. I begin to yell hysterically, "Get off! Get off this instant! There's someone right underneath you. You're crushing her to death!" (Bitton-Jackson 1997: 125)

Bitton-Jackson continues to recount how she asked the women to move, but they refused. They were simply beyond caring, she says, as they were surrounded by so much death and violence, severely undernourished, and alone in the world because parents and/or siblings had been murdered. Violence and tensions were the daily and even at times nightly assault on each captive and all ten memoir authors mention the presence of this element throughout their experiences in the camps many times.

**D. 1. k. Difference in How Violence was Tolerated by the Ten Memoir Writers**

In order to reveal whether some authors suffered more than others from the violence inflicted upon them, a careful study was done of the overall tone and mood of each memoir. First of all, the number of times that the element of violence was mentioned far exceeded any of the other disturbing elements mentioned in the books. This was consistently so in every memoir. Altogether, as noted before, violence was
mentioned 408 times. One can surmise that violence was on the mind of the authors first and foremost while writing their memories of the camps. One author expressed himself about the three major extermination camps in the following manner, and he appears to be speaking for the other nine authors:

"For sheer demented horror, Treblinka, Maidanek and Auschwitz were in a class of their own: the end of the world, the end of creation."
(Pisar 1980: 66)

No one who experienced these camps as a prisoner as the ten authors did would refute this statement, because their own accounts echo these words without fail. They all suffered severely, although some may have had better coping mechanisms than others. For example feeling anger, at least inwardly because outward anger meant instant punishment or death (as mentioned above), could ameliorate the feelings of suffering. It made one feel less helpless and more in control. Some of the authors express a sense of fury regardless of how many years after the camps they recorded their memories. Their books are suffused with anger or sarcasm and even swearing, which appear to be emotions that safely replace anger. Other authors convey a sense of terror even after all the years that have passed. Their books have an urgency that drives the author and his or her memories relentlessly, leaving the reader feeling even more empathetic and compassionate. The ten novels can, therefore, be roughly categorized in three groups: Two of the authors wrote their memoirs with a sense of anger or sarcasm. Five expressed a sense of terror that pervades their memoirs throughout. Two of these authors actually write with a mix of terror and anger. Three memoirs convey a neutral tone. In the group expressing mostly anger, one author is male and one is female, while in the group whose memoirs mostly convey a sense of terror one author is male, while four are female. Livia Bitton-Jackson, whose memoir / Have Lived a Thousand Years: Growing Up in the Holocaust conveys a strong sense
of fear and terror, writes:

"In these seven-and-a-half weeks I have changed. I have grown into a concentration camp inmate. I have learned to live with fear and hunger and abuse. I have learned to swallow dirt, and live worms. I have learned to endure cold, pain, and long hours of hard physical labor. I have learned to live with waning hope and cling to reality born of pretenses. I have learned to wait . . . and wait. . . . and wait." (Bitton-Jackson 1997: 115)

Whether anger and sarcasm actually helped the authors to cope better with violence while they were incarcerated compared to the authors whose memoir exudes a sense of terror, is something each individual author can explain best. Isabella Leitner, who wrote her memoir with a sense of terror as well as sarcasm recalls:

"It is a beautiful sunny Sunday. Summertime in Auschwitz. The crematoriums are taking a well-deserved rest." (Leitner 1978: 42)

Later on in the book, observing the SS she writes:

"We are pure and beautiful. We have nothing in common with them. They are Germans. We were both of mothers the smell of whose burning flesh permeates the air, but what were they born of? Who sired them?" (58)

As we have seen before, all ten authors accentuate the violent incidences in their memoirs.

D. 1. I. Was Age a Factor in Being Able to Tolerate Violence?

Were men, women or youth affected differently because of their age by the violence? In normal life people react differently to certain situations. One person can shrug off a blow while another feels fury over the same incident. Prisoners in the camps generally ranged in age from about fourteen to thirty five or forty. People who were older usually could not keep up with the gruelling pace in the camps, and were gassed as soon as they stopped providing manpower to the German war machine.
The age range of the ten authors was from thirteen to twenty-one by the time they escaped or were liberated from the camps. Prisoners themselves, and the odd Nazi or Kapo too, tended to be protective of the very young, providing a little extra nourishment if possible and shielding them from abuse if they could. For guidance and ways to survive, young victims relied heavily on the parent they were fortunate to be able to stay with. Schoschana Rabinovici writes in her memoir *Thanks to My Mother*:

"Then a door opened, and two German officers appeared, with billy clubs in their hands. They yelled, "Get out! Get out!" and pushed the women on so that they had to pass by them. My mother said, "Stand up straight, head high; you've got to look big!" (Rabinovici 1994: 112)

It appears that in the ten memoirs the younger victims were less concerned with the violence directed towards them, but more apprehensive about separation from the parent that guided and protected them. The authors who were liberated as very young teenagers, therefore, generally mention violence less than the authors who were older. As far as the ways the older teenage girls and boys or the people in their twenties tolerated the violence, there does not seem to be any difference.
D. 2. Hunger

The element of hunger is mentioned many times in the ten memoirs as well. In total it is mentioned 146 times. Keeping people undernourished, while extracting a maximum amount of work from them, was a device the Nazis used as part of the Final Solution. Spending little money or effort on food for the prisoners and being provided with virtually cost-free labor by them was beneficial to the German Reich. The prisoners were starving while the Nazi rulers, many living just outside the camp perimeters, overate. Thomas Geve summarizes in his memoir about the efforts the SS made to provide nourishment for the captives:

"Back in the room they lined up for whatever it is that acorns give up when boiled in water." (Geve 1987: 59)

There were quicker ways to kill the prisoners such as shooting, gassing and burning, beatings, dogs, and phenol injections into the heart. All these were liberally applied in the camps regardless, but young healthy males and females were of use to aid the German war effort, and sometimes, provided data for the medical experiments that were conducted on them before they expired the "natural" way.

A brief discussion will address the issue of psychological hunger at the end of the element of physical hunger.

D. 2. a. Hunger in the Ghettos

The first encounters Jewish people had with hunger and thirst were in the ghettos where food became scarcer as time wore on. Still, with resourcefulness people were able to buy their food or trade their jewelery or remaining valuables when they ran out of money. When restrictions and curfews prohibited the Jews from going out and obtaining their food rations, real hunger began. One author recalls:

"The food situation in the ghetto got steadily worse." (Rabinovici 1998: 59)
Another author remembers her time in the ghetto:

"Once again there was widespread hunger in the ghetto, and once again we youngsters at the workshop were counting the pieces of potato in our soup." (Zyskind 1983: 90)

Eventually the ghettos were empty and the inhabitants either killed or transported to the camps in cattle cars. Ghetto life, the train rides and the brutal treatment by the SS, already experienced in the ghetto and once people were locked inside the cattle cars, gave the prisoners an idea of how their future under Nazi rule in the camps would unfold. But by then it was too late to escape or flee. Of the ten authors, two mention the constant hunger while living in the ghetto.

D. 2. b. Hunger in the Cattle Cars

Having seemingly absolute power over the Jewish people without anyone of political stature offering help or protection, the SS proceeded to transport the Jews to the camps every day by the thousands. In the beginning only the SS knew what was going to happen in the camps. The prisoners were made to believe that they were going to a work camp! Without any concern or respect for life, the Nazis, who regarded their victims as subhuman, treated people worse than animals. Stuffed into cattle cars with doors and windows blocked off to prevent escape, and without water, food or toilet facilities, the prisoners suffered enormously. Many people died on these train transports. Others were so incapacitated on arrival, that they were sent straight to the crematoria being of no use to the Germans. Samuel Pisar recalls his train ride to Auschwitz:

"No air, no water, no food. How long we were inside these cattle cars I don't really know. I remember someone saying 72 hours. We were horribly dehydrated. I saw people with faces that were literally blue, licking their own sweat..." (Pisar 1980: 55)

Depending on where people had been living in Europe, the rides in the cattle cars
to the camps were often very long. With the doors of the cars being boarded up, air
was prevented of going in or out. During the three to five days inside the cars, the
doors were never opened and no water or food was handed out. Especially the lack of
water caused immense suffering among the victims. Elie Wiesel recalls:

"Lying down was out of the question, and we were only able to sit by
deciding to take turns. There was very little air. . . After two days of traveling,
we began to be tortured by thirst. Then the heat became unbearable."  
(Wiesel 1982: 21)

Another author, who had been on a number of cattle car rides going from one work or
death camp to another, describes the situation during the last train ride before
liberation:

"We have been in the cattle car a whole week, without food, without
water." (Bitton-Jackson 1997: 194)

All ten authors were transported by train to the camps. Eight authors suffered greatly
from lack of water and food on this trip. One author (Thomas Geve) describes his train
ride as uncomfortable, but it lasted only two days. Another author (Fania Fenelon) had
a less horrible ride because she was allowed to take provisions on the train, although
when these ran out she experienced discomfort for a while.

D. 2. c. Hunger in the Camps

One author sums up what hunger does to a person who has been deprived of
proper nutrition for a long time:

"The hunger becomes psychological, hallucinating, obsessive, the first
sensation on waking in the morning, the last before falling asleep at night.
All other sensations, even the feeling of pain or the fear of death, become
secondary, precluding any concentrated effort of thought. The animal instinct
to eat, no matter what, no matter where, no matter when, remains the only
predominant reality. (Pisar 1980: 59)
Once in the camps, prisoners were fed half a litre of watery soup with a few pieces of vegetables floating in it, and one or two slices of inferior bread per day, which some authors insist was partly made of sawdust. Victims were forced to work twelve to fourteen hour shifts every day on the 600 calories they received once they got back to the camp. Some would be too exhausted and did not bother to line up for their allocated food ration. This was a sure way to turn oneself into a Musulman and become "crematorium fodder," as one author describes it. (Isabella Leitner) One's life was expendable. New shipments of Jews came in every day by the thousands. People who were determined to survive did what they could to obtain extra food stuffs whether it was through stealing extra bits of potato pealings or by eating grass, insects or live worms if they happened to be in the soup that day. One author recalls "Eating grubs and bugs---German cockroaches when I could catch them" (Mielnicki 2000: 144)

Isabella Leitner recounts how she and her sisters would buy a little piece of bread on the black market and pretend that it was a lot of food, that the daily ration was bigger than they thought. She writes:

"The incredible hunger quickly reminded us of the lie. But lie we did. In our minds it was one more act of defiance. "You see, Hitler, we are smarter than you. This will keep Musulmanship away from us." "Hell, no, it didn't. Our eyes sank deeper. Our skin rotted. Our bones screamed out of our bodies. Indeed, there was barely a body to house the mind, yet the mind was still working, sending out the messages "Live! Live!" (Leitner 1978: 47)

Leitner also comments on what, in their extreme need, was substituted for the nourishment the victims were denied to receive, and how this diet affected their desire and right to remain dignified human beings:

"But we drank urine and ate sawdust. You can't do that for long and remain brave and human and upright." (Leitner 1978: 65)

All ten authors speak about the unbearable hunger and thirst they suffered in the
camps. Towards the end of the war, when it became apparent that Germany was going to lose the war, the Nazis did not further pretend to provide edible nourishment. They even neglected to feed the prisoners altogether at times. Fania Fenelon writes about feeling so hungry and yet revolted by the food offered:

“Our souls were weary and our bodies likewise. We were hungry; the soup was less and less solid and anything might turn up in it, bits of paper, cardboard, string. It was so revolting that we could hardly keep it down. The very smell of it turned the stomach.” (Fenelon 1979: 197)

D. 2. d. Hunger During the Marches

Trying to flee from the approaching allies, the Nazis took their work force, the emaciated Jews, with them. As train rails were bombed by the allies and sabotaged by the partisans, the only way to travel was on foot. Thus began the marches from all over Europe deep into Germany, where the SS still imagined to be safe. The prisoners were given a ration of bread for a few days, and when the rations were finished (many people could not refrain from eating it all at once because they were starving) they stopped eating but the marching continued. The winter of 1944-1945 was a particularly cold winter in Europe, and because the prisoners were wearing flimsy, pyjama-like cotton coverings, and there was nothing further to eat, conditions proved too severe for many and they died, either from exhaustion or from a bullet because they were lagging behind unable to go on. Michel Mielnicki recalls his last march to yet another camp:

“I know that we were without bread for six or seven days.” (Mielnicki 2000: 194)

Liberation came in time for the ten authors. Six of the ten authors were forced to go on a march to move away from the front towards the end of the war, and all six describe extreme hunger and thirst during that final march. Three of the four remaining authors
stayed behind in their block until liberation, and one author was on transport in a cattle car to another camp when she was liberated.

D. 2. e. Psychological Hunger

Generally, prisoners were too preoccupied with trying to survive to give much thought to enrichment of mind through cultural activities or conversations. One author mentions an encounter with a Gentile woman with whom she was able to go beyond the daily struggle of staying alive and talk about books:

"There had not been any need for intellectual utterances for a long while now. Only the language of survival was of import here. Yet with her, on occasion, we actually talked of books. Strange must be the ways of the hungry, for even while the body is starving, the mind may crave nourishment too." (Leitner 1978: 54)
D. 3. Rebellion

Hitler's Final Solution, which meant the extermination of all the Jewish people in Europe, and if possible Asia and the rest of the world too, was formulated during the middle and late 1930's. With calculated ingenuity the Third Reich prepared the instruments for destruction and annihilation of the Jews. Although the tell-tale signs of coming disaster were there, (Kristallnacht, having to wear the yellow Star of David, SS attacks on citizens) many Jewish people were determined to believe that nothing really bad would happen to them. However, those who stayed asked themselves how could these civilized and cultured Germans be the perpetrators of such horrific actions? But the stories were true, and the Jews found themselves in ghettos and labor or death camps before they truly understood what was happening to them. Even as late as 1944, Hungarian Jews, being torn from their homes and lives, were unsuspecting of the fate that awaited them. Without prior knowledge of what was about to happen, there would be little resistance from the victims (so the Nazis had planned), and they would cooperatively board the trains to resettle for the German work camps. Once in the camps, having been selected to remain alive because of one's ability to work, people were trapped and overpowered by rulers who would not hesitate to kill for the slightest insurrection. In spite of the hopeless situation people found themselves in, rebellion of some kind was one way to feel less helpless and fill the emptiness of despair. Every author recalls engaging in some act of rebellion, whether it was overt or covert, at a total of 47 times.

D. 3. a. Overt Rebellion

Dangers

Since the German plan was to murder all the Jews, it stood to reason to rebel and do everything one could to not let that happen. Through work and slaving, 'Arbeit
Macht Frei' (freedom through work) one had a chance to stay alive, but the Nazi's planned to work all those who were selected to live, to death. Isabella Leitner recalls in her memoir *Fragments of Isabella*:

"In that forest, the fire of resistance kept my frozen body alive. My mother had told me not to aid my enemy."... "I was a one-woman sabotage team. As soon as the Germans walked away, I would put down my shovel and stop digging. Digging to me symbolized digging my own grave. In reality that was what it was. And even in that place, I had selfrespect to preserve."

(Leitner 1978: 62)

This author was able to commit overt rebellion and not get caught, but as a rule, anyone rebelling or not complying would be severely punished or instantly killed. Another author decided to stop working too, but was caught and almost died from the punishment he received:

"I was pissed off that my boots were getting soaked. And I certainly had no intention of exhausting myself at hard labour. So I was pretending to work, bending over the shovel, moving it and my shoulders back and forth, without actually doing anything very much. Well, the Kapo, who happened to be the Lager Kapo (to whom all other Kapos in the camp answered), spotted me, and began to close in. . . I didn't see him coming until he kicked me as hard as he could in the chest with his big boot, right over my heart. I was probably dead for a second or two. . . (Mielnicki 2000: 179)

Nine authors engaged in overt rebellion at some time during their incarceration in the camps or while being oppressed in the ghettos. One author, Schoschana Rabinovici, who was very young at the time, just followed in the footsteps of her mother who engaged in overt rebellion whenever she could. The dangers of rebelling were many, but so were the gains.

**Gains**

Resisting the foe, as one author recounts, and not aiding the enemy were of vital importance. Although Europe was conquered and many people secretly or openly
agreed with Hitler's actions, the Jewish prisoners were left to their own devices for the time being. Rebellion, however, in any form, challenged the Nazis in their belief that they were ubermenschen, a superior race. As a prisoner, doing everything in one's power to stay alive was obviously the opposite of what the Nazis had in mind. Although it was not safe to do so, two authors (Elie Wiesel and Livia Bitton-Jackson) took the risk to go against the rules and save their own and a parent's life. Elie Wiesel remembers:

"I slipped in among the others. Several SS rushed to bring me back, creating such a confusion that many of the people from the left were able to come back to the right—and among them, my father and myself." (Wiesel 1982: 91)

Another author realized soon after imprisonment at Auschwitz that staying alive would take some clearheaded thinking. She writes:

"If I wanted to stay that way [alive], I would have to put up some kind of resistance, but how? I would learn that later, day by day." (Fenelon 1979: 21)

Some authors sometimes sang which was strictly forbidden. In Ruth Sender's moving account she remembers that someone started to sing a Hannukah song about the celebration of freedom from the oppressor in ancient times. The other prisoners joined in and a sense of freedom within Auschwitz was experienced, lifting people's spirits above the horrors of daily life in the camp. Punishments were handed out afterwards, but that one moment of victory could not be taken away by the SS. Three authors (Thomas Geve, Sara Zyskind and Ruth Minsky Sender) out of ten remember also singing at one point, always feeling spiritually uplifted afterwards. Other authors recount their adventures of "organizing" goods, a euphemism for stealing from the Germans. The goods were used to barter for extra food rations on the black market, thus keeping the prisoner alive a little longer. Thomas Geve recounts:

"... we woke up with an empty stomach urging us to spend the rest of
the day "organizing", to get things by all means possible." (Geve 1987: 70)

These were acts of rebellion that three out of ten authors engaged in. The ultimate form of overt rebellion was trying to escape. The gain, of course, was repossessing one's freedom. The danger was that escaping into a generally anti-Semitic Europe meant having little chance for remaining undetected of being a Jew and getting handed back to the SS or beaten to death by those who supported the Final Solution. Recapture meant being tortured for names of accomplices and getting publicly hanged to discourage others from considering doing the same. Two out of ten authors (Isabella Leitner and Samuel Pisar) managed to escape not long before liberation by the allies.

D. 3. b. Covert Rebellion

Inward rebellion was thinking in such a way that whatever the Nazis did would have little effect on the victim's determination to resist. Continuous swearing, put-downs and comments referring to their view of the uselessness of the Jewish people were meant to undermine captives emotionally. It was also meant to indoctrinate the prisoners' minds, to make them feel inferior to the German Aryans. If victims managed to hold on to their inner convictions and beliefs, to the ways they were and felt before the war, they rebelled in a covert way. As Isabella Leitner recounted earlier, holding on to one's dignity became difficult as everything in the camps was designed to take their dignity away. Recalls Fania Fenelon:

"I was beginning to accept the perpetual presence of horror, of death, the incoherence of the camp; my rebelliousness was weakening, it needed the whiplash to stir it to life." (Fenelon 1979: 193)

Five out of ten authors appear not to have rebelled covertly, while the other five did.
D. 4. Sense of Loss and Abandonment

The ten authors recount feeling a sense of loss and abandonment twenty-nine times altogether in their memoirs. Every author experienced this feeling at least once.

D. 4. 1. Having Family in the Camps

Four of the ten memoir authors managed to stay with a parent or sibling in the camps. Constant fear of losing this person, or persons, as in Isabella Leitner's case who was imprisoned with her three sisters, gave rise to many moments of feelings of loss and abandonment. The Nazis would murder people in an instant, or selections would mean their annihilation: every person in the camp was subjected to the same unpredictable treatment at a moment's notice. The resulting fear of abandonment, or the actual event of having lost loved ones, could lead to thoughts of giving up the struggle to live. Writes Livia Bitton-Jackson who was imprisoned with her mother:

"I will not live if mommy dies." (Bitton-Jackson 1997: 126)

Four authors (Michel Mielnicki, Samuel Pisar, Ruth Minsky Sender and Livia Bitton-Jackson) mention having thoughts of dying themselves. Writes Samuel Pisar:

"The conviction that my mother and sister were gone forever had settled on me again when I looked at the desolate expanse of Blizin, and now, at the age of fourteen, I wanted to join them, I wanted to die. Death seemed such a relief... What right, I asked Ben, did I have to live if my father, my mother, and my sister were all dead?" (Pisar 1980: 79)

D. 4. 2. Making Friends in the Camps

Some people made new friendships in the camps, but one had to be careful as prisoners needed to try to survive by looking after themselves only, and new friendships could endanger this. Others found someone or several people to create a relationship that substituted for lost family. Of the ten authors, four formed friendships
that lasted throughout their imprisonment, and sometimes even beyond liberation.

Ruth Minsky Sender recounts how she is almost separated from her friend, Karola, causing her to feel a sense of loss and abandonment:

"Karola, they are separating us again. First they took Mama. Then your mother. Our brothers. Now our friend. I put my head on Karola's shoulder. She puts her arm around me. (Sender 1986: 197)

D. 4. 3. Alone in the Camps

Some authors, like Fania Fenelon arrived alone in the camp. She did manage to make friends, but on arrival, after having been tattooed, shaven and beaten, she gained a clear insight into the true situation she found herself in. She recalls:

"I was alone, abandoned, consigned to the executioner. We had arrived at the journey's end: hell." (Fenelon 1979: 19)

D. 4. 4. Abandoned by Other Nations

The Nazis had been successful in keeping the existence of the death camps a secret to the outside world. Careful planning, promises of work camps with excellent living conditions and initial reasonably civilized treatment of the Jews kept panic and fear to a minimum. No one in the greater world was aware that people were murdered by the thousands every day. If the people who lived near the camps smelled the burning bodies, or saw the emaciated labour forces going to and from work, they did not reveal their knowledge to the rest of the world. Perhaps they did not care, or perhaps they would be shot if they told. In the camps, however, the prisoners began to ask themselves why the outside world was not coming to the rescue? Samuel Pisar writes:

"What was happening in the outside world? Did anyone out there know what was happening here to us? Did they care? Where was God? Where was the pope? Did anyone anywhere still think that we had the right to live? (Pisar 1980: 79)
One other prisoner, Thomas Geve, mentions asking himself that same question.
D. 5. Loneliness

The element of loneliness is mentioned twenty-six times in nine out of the ten memoirs. The only author who does not mention feeling completely alone is Livia Bitton-Jackson. She was very young at the time and was incarcerated together with her mother who guided her daughter expertly through the camp experiences.

D. 5. 1. Loneliness in the Ghetto

Most people who were driven out of their homes at the start of the war were forced to live in a ghetto. Many left their homes with their families still by their side, although soon the Nazis took the husbands, older sons or brothers away. The men were either taken to a work camp or murdered. The families remaining behind clung to the hope that their loved ones were only temporarily elsewhere, while in reality, many were murdered soon after being taken away. The women who were left tended to their children as well as they could. When eventually the Nazis evacuated the ghetto occupants to the concentration or death camps, the painful separation between mothers and children, or brothers and sisters began. The breaking up of the family unit caused prisoners to feel alone and desperate. Michel Mielnicki recalls his brother having to go into the hospital, which in Auschwitz often meant getting selected to go to the ovens:

"I went into a state of profound depression when Aleksei was taken to the hospital in Auschwitz." (Mielnicki 2000: 144)

As most survivors of the Holocaust were quite young while incarcerated in the ghettos and camps, many were still dependent on their families, or in close contact with them. Due to the miserable conditions in the ghettos, some people died because of lack of proper food or medicine and many people fell ill. One author recalls her father dying because of falling ill in the ghetto.
“The hours crawled by very slowly, and my loneliness began to depress me.” (Zyskind1983: 113)

Of the ten authors, three recount having feelings of pain and loneliness when a parent or sibling died or was taken from the ghetto.

D. 5. 2. Loneliness in the Camps

Although nine out of ten authors mention the horror of the train or cattle car rides to the camps, no one actually mentions feeling lonely during the ride. Circumstances were such that other issues such as fear and extreme discomfort dominate the narration of this gruesome part of their incarceration. Authors first mention feeling lonely in the camps when a parent or sibling is taken away, or when one came to the realization that one was truly alone and dependent on oneself. Sometimes, after the initial selections in the camp when children and parents were separated, a victim might think that he or she saw that parent in the people around them because all prisoners looked similar to each other with shaven heads and rags for clothing. This could provoke a feeling of utter loneliness. Perhaps every one else of the family had been killed? One was never told, and would only find out after the war ended. One author, who missed her mother very much, recalls:

"Several times I run after a woman --so sure it is mama-- but each time it is only a stranger who, like me, is searching." (Sender 1986: 131)

She continues on the next page in her memoir with:

"I am all alone. There is no one to live for. What difference does it make if I live or die? There is no one. I am alone. All alone." (Sender 1986: 133)

Another author sums up his feeling of profound loneliness:

"My eyes were open and I was alone--terribly alone in a world without God and without man." (Wiesel 1982: 65)

Nine out of ten authors talk about feeling alone while in the camps.
D. 6. Hope and Redemption

People in the camps had strong reasons for having hopes. While enduring the daily abuse and starvation, one could hope for kindness from a Kapo or for being passed over in the selection for the crematorium. Even hope for a tiny change such as wishing for a thicker soup that day was just as significant as hoping for a Sunday without work or a lighter work assignment. Each improvement in the conditions meant having a better chance of survival. Prisoners' hopes were often based on changes they had briefly experienced before. In their deviousness, the Nazis, fond of order and consistency in their own lives, would raise expectations in the prisoners by providing a better and nutritious soup one day, and then giving out the same coloured liquid from the other days on the following day. These and similar tactics undermined the morale of the prisoners even further. To adjust to a change in routine also took energy which was something the captives did not have in excess. Nothing was left undone to encourage prisoners' needs for consistency, yet at the same time, nothing was ever permanent in the camps. Rules and regulations could be changed at a whim. Of course, the ultimate form of hope and redemption was liberation and freedom.

Finding goodness in other prisoners or those in charge could provoke a feeling of hope or redemption too, as mankind had so miserably failed the people incarcerated in the camps. Isabella Leitner, moved by the goodness she found in other prisoners, writes:

"Tears are rolling down my cheeks. Not for the dead girl, but for the goodness that is still alive, that refuses to be buried, however hard the madman tries to still the voice of God in man." (Leitner 1978: 68)

Nine authors mention the element of hope and redemption in their memoirs at a total of thirty-one times. Samuel Pisar did not, but he mentions hope in the title of his memoir: *Of Blood and Hope.*
D. 6. 1. Hope and Redemption in the Ghetto

Author Ruth Minsky Sender writes about the last days she spent in the ghetto. She and her brothers had managed to hide and not be taken on transports to the camps yet. However, they've decided to volunteer to go on the transport to a better place where they thought there would be work and food. Although they felt an impending doom, they tried to keep up their spirits by recalling what their mother told them before she was taken away and killed:

“So, what do we take, Riva?” Moishele pulls me gently away from the window. “We cannot give in to despair. It will not help. Remember: If hope is lost, all is lost.” “If hope is lost, all is lost,” I repeat after him.” (Sender 1986: 103)

Another author who lived in the ghetto, mentions feeling hope when she makes an active decision to get her ailing father to the hospital:

“This idea gave me new hope, and I did my best to talk Father into agreeing with me.” (Zyskind 1983: 106)

Three of the ten authors recount about having hope while living in the ghetto. The other seven authors do not mention hope and redemption.

D. 6. 2. Hope and redemption in the Cattle Cars

Although much has been written by the ten authors about the unbearable cattle car rides, two remember that only a sense of hope would help them survive. Daring to have hope for the future in such a desolate place was a heroic feat. One author's mother who died two days after her remarkable words reminds her daughters not to give up hope because there is goodness out there. Isabella Leitner recalls this very moving, redemptive account of a mother's love for her children:

“Despite what you see here--and you are all young and impressionable--believe me, there is humanity out there, there is dignity. I will not share it with you, but it is there. . .I must leave you with what I see. My body is nearly dead, but my vision is throbbing with life--even here. I want you to live for the
very life that is yours. And wherever I'll be, in some mysterious way, my love will overcome my death and keep you alive. I love you.” (Leitner 1978: 29)

Again, author Ruth Minsky Sender recalls being comforted by remembering the importance of the words never to give up hope, this time uttered by a person in the cattle car she is riding in:

“We must have hope. We must not give up hope.” I hear a voice from the other end of the wagon. “Remember all the Hamans [a man who tried to destroy the Jews in ancient times] who tried to destroy our people. We survived. God will not abandon us now. He will not forsake us. Hope, people, hope!” (Sender 1986: 111)

Two of the ten authors recount trying to adhere to thoughts of hope and redemption during their ride in the cattle cars, while eight authors do not talk about this element during this time.

D. 6. 3. Hope and Redemption in the Camps

Having feelings of hope and redemption in the camps was a sign of wanting to live. Having hope in one's heart for change to take place could help keep a prisoner alive. Musulman did not feel hope. Nazis and Kapos had little reason to feel hope, and even less redemption, as most tried to flee from the liberating allies at war's end knowing what they had done wrong. The prisoners hoped for staying alive and/or finding their loved ones alive after the war. Women hoped for the return of their menstruation as they wanted to start families after Hitler fell from power. (A veritable victory over the Nazis' Final Solution.) People hoped for little miracles in the camp such as friendlier rulers or extra food rations. Elie Wiesel recalls being afraid of losing his leg, or worse, his life, when he went to the hospital for an operation on his foot:

“At ten o'clock in the morning, they took me into the operating room. “My” doctor [a Jew] was there. I took comfort from this. I felt that nothing serious could happen while he was there. There was balm in every word he spoke, and every glance he gave me held a message of hope.
Groups of prisoners of war were marched daily through the camps on their way to or back from the work they were forced to do. One author, Fania Fenelon, remembers watching the marching Russians:

"In their tatters the Russians came forward along the roadway and I feasted my eyes on them. I already saw my liberators superimposed upon them. For me, they were the red Army on the march!" (Fenelon 1979: 51)

Eight out of ten authors remember having a sense of hope and redemption during their incarceration in the camps.

**D. 6. 4. Hope and Redemption at the end of the War**

Towards the end of the war when the allies came closer, the prisoners noticed a change in the Nazis' behaviour. Writes author Sara Zyskind:

"Despite our suffering, we worked on with a sense of hope in our hearts, for we were well aware that the Germans were beginning to panic."

(Zyskind 1983: 196)

Whether forced to relocate by trains or marches, or left behind by the fleeing Germans, all ten authors indicate in their memoirs having hopes that the end of the war and liberation would come quickly.
D. 7. Spirituality

Because a Jewish person is not necessarily defined by his or her religious affiliation or need for a God, some prisoners prayed and relied on God, while others did not. People identified themselves as German, French, Dutch, Polish, or Hungarian first. Therefore, many Jews were shocked to find out that being Jewish was enough for Hitler to persecute them regardless of their nationality. A German Jew was in the mind of the Nazis just as despicable as a Dutch or Polish Jew. Although spirituality can be expressed or experienced in other ways than a traditional relationship with God, it appears that the authors of these memoirs either openly communicated with God in traditional ways or they admitted to not having any beliefs at all. However, prisoners from both groups questioned God’s lack of help and support all the same. All ten authors, who came from various religious or non-religious backgrounds, questioned or struggled with God at one time or another during their incarceration in the camps.

D. 7. 1. Spirituality among Religious Jews

Six of the ten authors came from a background where religious observance was a fact of life. Shabbat, Jewish Holidays and Bar Mitzvahs (the coming of age of a boy at age thirteen) were celebrated, and parents attended the synagogue on a regular basis. It appears that the authors coming from an observant religious family tended to call on, or discuss their conversations with God during their struggles in the camps more often than the authors who did not have a religious affiliation. Writes Sara Zyskind:

“Almighty God,” I whispered raising my eyes to heaven, “please help me!” (Zyskind 1983: 103)

If an author was in constant communion with God, she would have a running
dialogue with him and call on him for help in every difficult situation she was facing, thanking him when the situation was resolved. Writes Livia Bitton-Jackson:

“The tall, heavyset SS officer in gray uniform approaches our row. My throat tightens. My heart pounds so loud I am certain he can hear it. God, save us! But I can feel his gaze. We march on, stoically dragging our feet in a desperate effort at speed, not even glancing in his direction. His scrutinizing stare pierces my awareness.” (Bitton-Jackson 1997: 120)

Terrified of losing her mother, Bitton-Jackson continues to tell how the SS man picks her ill mother out of the row and questions whether she can work. In the end, the man lets the mother go and Bitton-Jackson recounts:

“For one awful moment time stands still. Then the officer swings back on his motorcycle and drives on. My legs tremble. Thank God. My dear God!” (120)

All ten authors of the ten memoirs recount having conversations with God, or questioning him why they have to endure and experience the hell they are in.

D. 7. 2. Anger among Religious Jews

If one was raised to bless and thank God for every aspect of living such as giving blessings for food or seeing a beautiful sunset, the shock of life in the camps could invoke tremendous anger. How was it possible that their God could let them down when they were in most need of his help? It is debatable whether this question has ever been answered satisfactorily, but most people incarcerated in the camps were in utter disbelief and some, like Samuel Pisar raised their voices up to the Creator in fury and pain:

“Choking with tears, I raised my fist to heaven in a blasphemous cry against the Almighty: "Gazlen! ---Monster! How dare you!" (Pisar 1980: 43)

Another author, Elie Wiesel writes:

“Why should I bless His name? The Eternal, Lord of the Universe, the All Powerful and Terrible, was silent. What I had to thank him for?” (Wiesel 1982: 31)
Four religious authors out of five, expressed profound disappointment or anger towards God in their memoirs.

D. 7. 3. Religious Jews Abandon God

Some authors wrote in their memoirs about how they continued to talk to God and invoke his name, regardless of the horrors they were exposed to. Others could no longer do so, because they believed that a just God would intervene and bring about their deliverance from all the evil. Those were the people who gave up on God and stopped believing in him because the evil continued and they were completely helpless. Michel Mielnicki recounts:

“A prisoner really needed a strength from I-don't-know-where to be able to cope with being treated as if he should have been gassed already. God was not the answer. We'd stopped believing in Him.” (Mielnicki 2000: 145)

Only one of the five authors who was an observant Jew before the war started mentions giving up on God while he was incarcerated in the camps.

D. 7. 4. Spirituality among Non-religious Jews

Even authors who came from less or non-religious backgrounds needed to communicate with God. Some (Thomas Geve, Isabella Leitner) would write that they were non-believers, and still talk with God in times of need. Thomas Geve recalls:

“I contemplated about God, the heavenly being I was not aware of.” (Geve 1987: 68)

Musician Fania Fenelon, feeling excited to be asked to become part of the Auschwitz orchestra so she could play piano again, recalls thinking as she touched the keys of the beautiful Bechstein:

“I who didn't believe in anything felt an obscure desire to thank God.” (Fenelon 1979: 28)
Among the authors who did not have a religious affiliation before the war, one person mentions finding strength in saying a Jewish prayer:

"Suddenly a woman began praying quietly. She was saying the Sh'ma Yisrael... It was the first time in my young life that I had heard that prayer. It encouraged us, it strengthened us, it comforted us, even if only for a short time." (Rabinovici 1998: 179)

Even when an author was not particularly religious, a spiritual need made him or her question God's actions or call on him when he or she was feeling particularly upset. Ruth Minsky Sender writes:

"So, where is God? Why does he not answer us? Have we not suffered enough? What is he waiting for?. . .Why did God allow this to happen?" (Sender 1986: 111)

All four authors, who were not religiously affiliated before the war, mention either addressing God or feeling uplifted saying a religious prayer.
D. 8. Loss of Emotional Stability

Six of the ten authors mention the element of loss of emotional stability in their memoirs. The element is mentioned a total of ten times by these six authors. Five of these times are mentioned by one author, while the other four times are mentioned once by the remaining five authors. The severe conditions in the camps such as physical and mental abuse, lack of food, and the lice which few prisoners could escape, contributed to a state of mind that deteriorated as time went on. Some prisoners, aware that they were losing solid mental ground, began to question generally what was happening. Others would become hysterical at the drop of a hat, and still others asked themselves specifically whether they were going mad. In two instances, authors talked about people who completely lost their mind.

D. 8. 1. Deteriorating Judgment

The behaviour of the captives began to change slowly after arrival in the camps. The irate way a person would have reacted to trauma before the war might change to no reaction at all, as Elie Wiesel, whose father had just been assaulted by a Kapo in front of his eyes, recalls:

"I did not move. What had happened to me? My father had just been struck, before my eyes, and I had not flickered an eyelid. I had looked on and said nothing. Yesterday, I should have sunk my nails into the criminal's flesh. Had I changed so much then? So quickly? (Wiesel 1982: 37)

The prisoners' judgment could change to the point where they were so indoctrinated and made dependent on the hated Nazis, that they would feel almost ecstatic when a particular SS man or woman came back into their lives after an absence. Writes Fania Fenelon:

"That was the state we were reduced to on learning that tenderhearted figures like Kramer and Mandel were back. When I grasped what had
happened I was deeply alarmed. It required incidents like this for me to realize that, gradually, my judgment was deteriorating. (Fenelon 1979: 193)

Two out of six memoir authors who write about loss of emotional stability recollect that their judgment started to deteriorate.

D. 8. 2. Responding Hysterically

The word "hysterical" is defined by the Oxford dictionary as wild, out of control, emotion. (Oxford 1996: 433) Pent up worry, anger and frustration in the prisoners was sometimes expressed as hysteria. Ruth Minsky Sender, who is feeling such agony because she cannot find her mother, is told by other prisoners that the woman has probably already been murdered by the SS:

“No! No! I scream hysterically. My mother is alive! She is alive! I must not stop searching for her!” (Sender 1986: 132)

Isabella Leitner, who recounts being tricked by the Nazis just before a selection will take place, writes:

“Caught in the trap we were all hysterical- 1000 prisoners locked hopelessly in Block 10.” (Leitner 1978: 75)

Four out of six memoir writers (Isabella Leitner, Livia Bitton-Jackson, Ruth Minsky Sender and Fania Fenelon) recall responding with hysteria.

D. 8. 3. Thinking They Are Going Insane

When the prisoners felt that their judgment was deteriorating or noticed that they were losing contact with reality, they wondered if they were going insane. They could barely understand their reactions to the dramatic events, and began to question their sanity. Livia Bitton-Jackson writes about barely being able to cope any longer when she and her mother have arrived in yet another camp:

“The maddening heat. The crowd. The thirst. . . My God, am I going
During the final two months of his incarceration, Michel Mielenick is brutally beaten and he reflects:

"I think it is fair to say that at this point I began slowly to lose my mind. I have only fragments of memory of my final two months of captivity." (Mielenicki 2000: 201)

Three authors (Bitton-Jackson, Michel Mielenicki and Fania Fenelon) out of six mention in their memoir that they wondered at some point whether they were going mad.

D. 8. 4. Insanity

Two authors recount being witnesses to actual insanity in prisoners during their incarceration. Elie Wiesel recalls riding in the cattle car to Auschwitz with a former neighbour, Madame Schachter, whose husband and two eldest sons were taken away on the first transport to Auschwitz. This had broken her, and she had gone out of her mind. Throughout the train ride she would scream about the chimneys and the flames she saw, shredding the other prisoners’ nerves. Just as they had settled down, she would scream over and over again, always pointing to a certain point in space where she saw the fire. Wiesel’s chilling account of this woman’s premonition of the camps of Auschwitz and Birkenau is frightful and shocking. Ruth Minsky Sender recounts a story that took place in the camps which involves two sisters, Faige and Chane. Chane has stolen a potato peel and the commandant raises her whip to punish her when the other sister tries to protect her sister by saying that she stole the peel because they were hungry:

"So you were hungry. Ha! So you think you can steal. Ha! I should not hurt her? Well, I won’t hurt her." She hands the whip to Faige. "Here, you do the punishing!" (Sender 1986: 149)

Sender continues that Faige is forced to beat her sister with the whip. The SS
admonishes Faige to beat her sister much harder still, at which point Faige loses her mind.
D. 9. Shame

Shame was not an emotion that was frequently felt in the camps. After all, the people had been put into a terrible situation by force where they were abused, starved and threatened with death on an hourly basis. Under these circumstances prisoners sometimes did or thought things they would not have indulged in under ordinary circumstances. The Nazis forced the Jews to wear the Star of David. Two of the authors mention feeling shame because they wore the Star but their narrations indicate that they felt they had done nothing wrong. People were forced to get undressed in the camps in front of many others causing one author (Sara Zyskind) to feel shame. Of the ten authors, five talk about feeling shame while incarcerated in the camps. Four of these five authors mention feeling shame for one particular incident only during which they were aware that they felt shame and the reason they felt this. One author, Sara Zyskind, a young teenager at the time, recalls feeling shame about many things even though she rarely understood why she felt that way. The four authors who recall one particular incident of feeling shame, and one author who discusses shame frequently, mention this element eleven times.

D. 9. 1. Shame Over Hunger

One author recalls feeling shame, many years later, of "selling" her freedom and moving toward the smell of food instead of staying in hiding. During the final days of the war, the SS, with the liberating armies on their heels, were determined to take all their prisoners with them to yet another camp away from the front. While on the march, the prisoners in Leitner's memoir had spent the previous night in a barn, digging themselves deep into the hay. In a hurry to move on, the SS lured prisoners back with another loathsome plan rather than trying to find them in the haystacks. Writes Isabella
Leitner:

"When the Germans were ready to move on, sure enough, they had no time to go looking separately for each prisoner who tried to escape. But they were not about to let their Jews go so easily. They were too diabolical. So they began to cook potatoes. Soon the smell of food began to fill the air, and a moment later, the stubborn will to live that we had nourished for so long evaporated completely." (Leitner 1978: 75)

Leitner continues to tell how she and her sisters came out of the haystack and moved into the food line, only to find the kettle empty by the time they got there. She recounts how "That time, that month, that day shames my soul now, because I no longer am hungry and I can't imagine how I could have sold my freedom for the smell of a potato." (75)

D. 9. 2. Shame Over Thoughts

As the prisoners came closer to death every day, their bodies emaciated and their minds almost destroyed, the basic instinct to survive at all cost meant that a person could only help or look after themselves. If one was in the camps with a family member who needed help to survive, that family member could become a burden on one's own chance of survival. Of the ten authors, one person mentions feeling shame about finding a parent a burden. In his memoir Night, Elie Wiesel first tells a story about a rabbi's son who appears to be burdened by his father's need for him, a situation Wiesel does not really understand. He then mentions his own struggle with his dying father during the final march to Buchenwald camp towards the end of the war:

"I had known that he was at the end, on the brink of death, and yet I had abandoned him. I went to look for him. But at that same moment this thought came into my mind." "Don't let me find him! If only I could use all my strength to struggle for my own survival, and only worry about myself." Immediately I felt ashamed of myself, ashamed forever." (Wiesel 1982: 101)
D. 9. 3. Shame Over Various Issues

As noted in the preface, one author felt shame for many things that happened while she was incarcerated in the camps. Sara Zyskind mentions feeling shame about her father dying. Zyskind (and Livia Bitton-Jackson) felt shame for having to wear a yellow Star of David which made them feel different from others. Zyskind felt shame due to having to stand naked in front of the SS, and also for begrudging her boyfriend for having his parents still alive while her parents have died. In another instance, she recalls feeling shame for meeting a woman who is clearly physically affected by the hunger and deprivation in the ghetto:

"I caught a glimpse of her bloated face with the puffy bags beneath the eyes before I ducked into a doorway. I didn't want Mrs. Rein to notice me. Her appearance shamed me deeply, though to this day I don't know why I should have felt such shame on her account when my heart was weeping for her. (Zyskind 1983: 60)"
D. 10. Summary of the Elements

The ten authors, together with millions of other Jews, experienced brutal abuse and starvation in the ghettos, labour or death camps. They were beaten on the head and body with whips, truncheons, iron bars, rifle butts and kicked on every part of their bodies. Six million Jews were murdered. Authors who were younger at the time talk about the violence slightly less than the authors who were older. Violence is mentioned 408 times. The element of Violence is mentioned most often in the ten memoirs.

Hunger and thirst caused the prisoners tremendous suffering. Some tried to supplement their inadequate diet by eating grubs and grass, or by "organizing" food from the black market. Hunger is mentioned 146 times.

Although tight control existed over every part of their lives, nine out of ten authors engaged in some form of Rebellion. They would sabotage the work they were forced to do if they could, run away from lineups in which prisoners were selected to be murdered, or escape from the death marches when the SS tried to flee from the Allies towards the end of the war while taking the Jewish labour forces with them. This element is mentioned forty-seven times.

The element of Loss and Abandonment was coded when the authors talk about suffering emotional pain because of the separation from their loved ones, as well as feeling abandoned by the rest of the world where nobody, except for the families of the prisoners, seemed to care whether the captives lived or died. When some authors were feeling this way, they had thoughts of giving up their struggle to survive. This element is mentioned twenty-nine times.

Loneliness would often come as a rude awakening for the captives. Some authors experienced a sudden excruciating realization that they were truly alone, that there was no one else out there for them to live for. When they were feeling this way
they would question what difference it would make whether they lived or died. The feeling of loneliness is mentioned twenty-six times in the memoirs.

The element of Hope and Redemption was coded in the memoirs when the authors talk about having a sense of hope for better things to come or happen: perhaps a message had come that a loved one was still alive, or the Germans were beginning to panic because the Allies were coming closer to the concentration camps. This element is mentioned thirty-one times.

Some authors who came from religious backgrounds either continued to communicate with God, or they stopped believing in him. The authors who were not affiliated with religion still had a need to call on or communicate with God whenever they felt completely exasperated, or even when they were moved to tears by the goodness or selflessness that still existed in the prisoners in spite of their own misery. Spirituality is mentioned fifty-six times in the memoirs.

When captives felt that their judgment was deteriorating, when they sensed that madness was gradually beginning to win out or they questioned whether they were going insane, this was coded as Loss of Emotional Stability. Two authors witnessed someone in their immediate surroundings completely losing their mind.

The element of Shame is mentioned only once for individual situations by four authors. They understood why they felt shame at that time. One author, who was a young teenager, mentions feeling shame seven times and indicates that she isn’t sure why she felt that way on a number of occasions. This element is mentioned eleven times in the ten memoirs.
E. Conclusion

In the beginning of this thesis I wrote in the Rationale that I hoped this material will help educators who are interested in Holocaust studies to present the memoirs to their students. Teachers, historians, parents and anyone who educates young people of today must ask themselves whether the Holocaust is a topic they can afford to ignore. After analysing the ten memoirs for disturbing elements, and reading about the suffering and pain (and murder) inflicted on innocent Jewish people, I believe that we must teach the Holocaust in its entirety to all children starting at a young age. There are picture books, memoirs, fictional (but based on truth) Holocaust stories, documentaries and films available for study. Some people question whether art can be made from the ashes? (to borrow Lawrence Langer’s Anthology title: Art from the Ashes: A Holocaust Anthology.) After my research I feel that yes- it can be. It has been done. I would say that Elie Wiesel’s Night is an example of this. The Germans hated the Jewish people so much that they took away their freedom, and more importantly their lives. This is a part of human history that every person needs to know and understand. This knowledge teaches us what discrimination and flawed judgment can do and how it can escalate into such hatred that almost an entire people was murdered. Livia Bitton-Jackson writes about the process of choosing female workers for a job assignment by a Nazi commandant:

“Tall, blonde, fair-skinned girls with blue or green eyes are commanded to step aside. There are eight of us. Now Herr Zerkubel adds somewhat shorter girls with blonde hair, blue or green eyes, and fair skin... Finally, he adds redheads, and even girls with light brown hair. But all have light eyes and fair skin... Herr Zerkubel determines superior intellect by the colours of hair, skin and eyes. The colours of the Aryan race. The next category consists of girls with brown hair and eyes, but fair skin. They are assigned less-complex, more routine metal work in the Dreherei. The black-haired, dark-eyed women, among them a noted physicist, a doctor, and a college professor, are assigned the most primitive task of polishing metal parts in the Lackiererei.” (Bitton-Jackson 1997: 151)
This thesis provides an insight into the actions and thinking processes of one group of people who felt superior to the rest of mankind with catastrophic results. Young people need to learn and think about this and understand that the depth of evil in human beings may be too horrible to contemplate, yet the survivors, the memoirs, the books and the films tell the world that it happened. It is up to educators to present this information to young people in the schools and colleges. They are conveyers of knowledge and they can introduce young people to the materials that are in school and public library collections and local Jewish Community Centres. Feeling apprehensive or not knowing how to approach the teaching of this subject, and therefore putting it aside hoping someone else will take on the responsibility, is passing up an opportunity to instruct young people in this deplorable part of human history. Advice and guidance on how to teach about the Holocaust are available from many sources, some of which are mentioned in this thesis.

I would like to mention here that among the disturbing elements that were chosen for coding the memoirs, are two elements that on the surface don't appear to be traumatic. They are Hope and Redemption and Spirituality. These are not elements experienced during ordinary life, however. They are experienced from, and come out of, extreme suffering and pain, by prisoners who were close to death of starvation, abuse and illness. To hope for a better cup of soup under these circumstances is to hope for something better in the context of agony, grief and despair. These small, sometimes irrational, expressions of hope in this environment can have a disturbing effect on a young reader. For the element of Spirituality it was found that one memoir author expressed extreme anger towards God, and another gave up on faith and God altogether. Reading this can potentially be very disturbing to some young adult readers.

Children and young adults need and want to hear the truth. Their natural
inquisitiveness drives them to ensure they learn about the world with all its wonders and failures. They may recognize and identify with some of the elements discussed in this thesis, which may give them an insight into their own being and feelings. If a young girl reads about Schoschana Rabinovici’s courage to face the terrible ordeals she was subjected to as a young person in the death camp, the young girl may find comfort in the author’s strength and discover the courage in herself to face her own difficult predicaments in life. Instead of asking, therefore, whether there is meaning in the events of the Holocaust (a conclusive answer to this question has yet to be given) young adults need to be presented with the truth.

In answer to the question of whether the history of the Holocaust is too grim a topic to present to children and young adults, I would say no- it is not too grim. Opponents of telling the truth to young people about this tragedy fear that the horrors of the Holocaust are too overwhelming and may frighten or traumatise them. But is it any more shocking than what children are watching on television, on films, or on the Internet these days? Are the games some children play today, which are full of violence and murder, any more disturbing than hearing about the atrocities the Nazis perpetrated on their victims? I believe that the importance in teaching Holocaust history without trauma lies in proper guidance educators or parents need to provide. Frightful details should not be presented to very young or emotionally less mature children, and the presence of an adult who can answer upsetting questions in a truthful and caring way will help prevent a child from feeling traumatised. Personally, I have shared Holocaust picture books with children as young as seven and eight in my class. In a trusting setting, the children were attentive, asked many questions and showed in subsequent lessons that they had thought about and understood what the books were trying to communicate. No one appeared to be traumatised by what they had learned.
In the beginning of the Literature Review the process of designating Holocaust literature for children, young adults or adults was discussed. It seemed that the publishers designate a new memoir or book based on the age of the author while in the camps. If an author was a child the book will be marketed for children and if the author was an adult, the book is marketed for adult readers, as if there is no age boundary between the readers. To my mind this is not right. A memoir of a young adult survivor is not necessarily appropriate reading material for a young adult in today's high school. Livia Bitton-Jackson's memoir is an example of this. Her book contains such graphic and gruesome details that only a mature sixteen year old (or older young adult) should read this memoir.

I believe that there are many reasons why Holocaust education is of utmost importance. One writer, quoted in the Literature Review of this thesis, points out: "Having Holocaust memoirs shed another light on people's capability of good and evil, the child is provided with a full range of human personality traits from which he will develop an identity for himself." (Danieli in Posner 1988: 36) Another writer states that "For children, as for adults, learning about the Holocaust is important to their humaneness." She continues with "Since the Holocaust memoir is inherently, and therefore inevitably about violence, young people, for the reason of developing humaneness must learn about this aspect." (Posner 1988: 36) In another article, Ann Curry quotes: "If we want children to 'fight against the darkness' we have to teach them what it is...It is up to us to ensure that the children in our lives are not overwhelmed by the dark corners of the real world,' but not allowing them to read about it is the wrong way to protect them." (Curry 1997: 221) I strongly agree with these statements that advocate the need for teaching about the Holocaust and truth telling even though it is painful material to be introduced to. If young people are told the truth about what happened during the 1930s and 40s, they have an opportunity to learn what
discrimination and prejudice can lead to and what mankind is capable of doing in its
darkest heart. Philosopher John Stuart Mill in On Liberty (first published in 1859)
vehemently defends the rights of the individual to hear about and speak the truth. He
summarized his thoughts on freedom of opinion, and freedom of the expression of
opinion on four grounds, of which the fourth one is quoted below:

"...the meaning of the doctrine itself will be in danger of being lost or
enfeebled, and deprived of its vital effect on the character and conduct:
the dogma becoming a mere formal profession, inefficacious for good,
but cumbering the ground and preventing the growth of any real and
heartfelt conviction from reason or personal experience." (Mill 1985: 116)

Young adults have an absolute right to be as informed on the subject of the
Holocaust as any other topic taught in the schools. If a similar scenario were to occur
such as another Depression with many people being out of work, and a manipulative,
upcoming political leader at the helm who incites the masses by blaming one
particular people for all misfortunes, the informed young adult, the adult of tomorrow,
who has not been deprived of this vital information about the Jewish Holocaust can
make the difference between rational thinking for the good of mankind or blind
obedience and genocide. Without proper and truthful education the Holocaust could
happen again. As Mill stated 150 years ago, all the details about an event must be
known, debated and discussed if that event is to remain "alive" in our memories.

Is it a concern that young adults would not be interested in reading about the
accounts of deep pain caused by separation from parents or siblings by the memoir
authors, while they themselves, the young adults of today, are doing just that; trying to
grow up by creating distance between their families and themselves? I don't believe
so. It is normal and healthy to separate from the family, but in times of trouble, the
young adult comes back to the family home for love and support he knows will be
there for him.
In conclusion, I believe that education about the Holocaust should be on every parent and educator's agenda so that it will never be forgotten. I am quoting a deeply profound statement from a Holocaust survivor who has every reason to warn educators of the need to make education a tool to serve humanity:

"Dear Teacher, I am the survivor of a concentration camp. My eyes saw what no man should witness: gas chambers built by learned engineers, children poisoned by educated physicians, infants killed by trained nurses and women and babies shot and burned by high school graduates. So I am suspicious of education. My request is: help your students to become more human. Your efforts must never produce learned monsters, skilled psychopaths, educated Eichmanns. Reading, writing and arithmetic are important only if they serve to make our children more human." (Quote in Ginott 1972: 317)
Appendix 1

The Ten Authors' Memoirs

1. *Fragments of Isabella* by Isabella Leitner
2. *Night* by Elie Wiesel
3. *I Have Lived a Thousand Years: Growing Up in the Holocaust* by Livia Bitton-Jackson
4. *The Cage* by Ruth Minsky Sender
5. *Guns and Barbed Wire: A Child Survives the Holocaust* by Thomas Geve
6. *Thanks to my Mother* by Schoschana Rabinovici
7. *Stolen Years* by Sara Zyskind
8. *Bialystok to Birkenau: The Holocaust Journey of Michel Mielnicki* as told to John Munro
9. *Playing for Time* by Fania Fenelon
10. *Of Blood and Hope* by Samuel Pisar
## Appendix 2

### Elements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Fragments of Isabella</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 later in life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Night</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I Have Lived a Thousand Years</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The Cage</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Guns and Barbed Wire</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Thanks to My Mother</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Stolen Years</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Bialystok to Birkenau</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Playing for Time</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Of Blood and Hope</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>408</strong></td>
<td><strong>146</strong></td>
<td><strong>47</strong></td>
<td><strong>29</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>31</strong></td>
<td><strong>56</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3

Ages of Authors in the Ghetto and the Camps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUTHORS</th>
<th>GENDER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Leitner</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Wiesel</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Bittan-Jackson</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Sender</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Geve</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Rabinovici</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Zyskind</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Mielnicki</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Fenelon</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Pisar</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend
Blue = Ghetto
Red = Camps
Works Cited


Saltman, Judith (conversation March 10, 2000) recommended reading Thanks to My Mother by Schoschana Rabinovici.


Sullivan, Edward T. 1999. The Holocaust in Literature for Youth: A Guide and


