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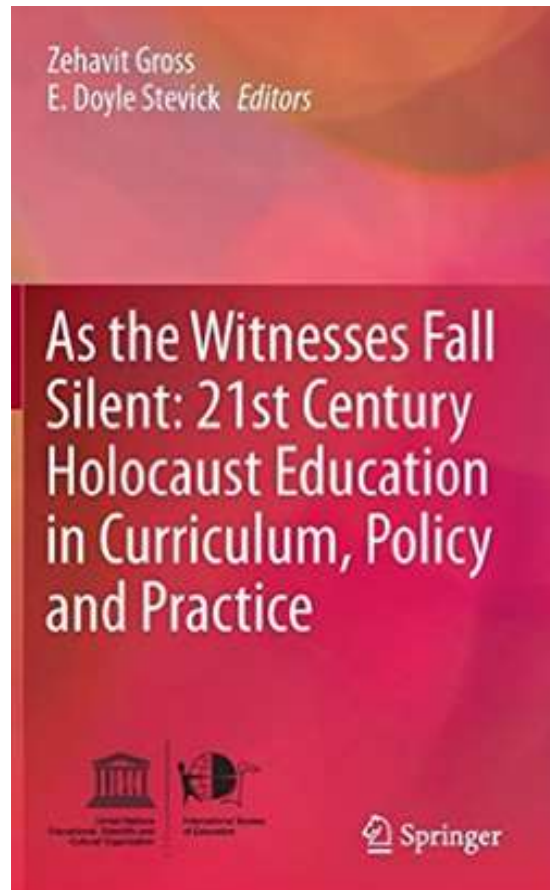
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The Holocaust continues to raise important educational questions. To many it may seem like the bystander effect writ large and ugly, and we ask: Why did the Holocaust occur, what conditions or human traits allowed it to occur, and why wasn't it stopped? This rich, lengthy, and international volume presents an assessment of Holocaust education at the beginning of the century. This book is doubly on a cusp; that of the last remaining survivors of the Holocaust who are now leaving us and growing silent, as the title alludes, and that of the burgeoning amount and quality of research about particulars of Holocaust education.

The editors aim to establish a foundation of evidence about the Holocaust that goes beyond the anecdotal:

We share the conviction that teaching the Shoah effectively can contribute to making a better world, to protecting human rights and strengthening democracy, and even to preventing genocide. Yet this conviction derives



more from anecdotal evidence, eloquent as it is, than from empirical research. That foundation does not yet exist, but we hope this volume establishes a cornerstone (p. 3).

Empirical studies of classroom practice are combined with textbook review, cross cultural comparisons, first person reflections, and philosophical framing chapters. Reports on current research come from countries affected directly by Nazism (Germany, the Nordic countries), as well as nations affected more indirectly (United States, Scotland). The editors include a chapter about the epistemological aspects of the Holocaust that helps to frame the entire venture. Themes of memory and remembrance pervade this book. The editors draw attention to memory from the title, “as the witnesses fall silent,” and implicitly ask: Who will keep the memory of this event in all its complexity alive?

The book begins with perhaps the best known literary witness to the Holocaust, Elie Wiesel, who sets the tone for the volume with his powerful stories of “bright young men, superbly educated, from fine families...seduced by Evil to the point of devoting their genius...to the torture and the killing of Jewish men, women and children whom they had never seen” (p. 20). The Holocaust brings into sharp relief how indeed humans can inflict evil upon their own. Recently, with the crisis in Syria hardening attitudes toward settling refugees, many of us were reminded how we thought similarly about Jewish refugees in the 1930s. Anne Frank was denied admission to the USA, and thus we helped to seal her fate.

The volume chronicles the fecundity of the research about the Holocaust that goes on around the world. One example helps to make the point. Scotland is a leading hotbed of Holocaust education research. One might think, Scotland? Two of the researchers who have continued this work in Scotland, Paula Cowan and Henry Maitles, show how work done in Scotland could happen anywhere.

Scotland provides an interesting example of how Holocaust education can be improvised. Scotland had a history of providing safe haven for persecuted populations, but it does not have the institutionalized examples, such as museums, that neighboring England has to commemorate the Holocaust. In 2005 the former Scottish secretary of state began trips to Auschwitz for school children who had not heard of it, or the Holocaust.

As a critical educator who does not teach the Holocaust *per se*, I thought more deeply about Holocaust education after reading this book. A strength of the volume for a critical educator is how often the focus is upon near miss or even failure. The chapter on Scotland, while narrating several initiatives, ends with concern about Scotland falling behind in Holocaust education, while the chapter by Geoffrey Short enumerates ways that Holocaust education can fail.

Another important aspect of Holocaust education, according to the editors, is its connections with other areas of social and educational research, such as anti-racism, education for democracy, and peace education, to name a few (p. 5). The book offers a high altitude view of Holocaust education around the world through textbook analysis and comparison. While texts used in Holocaust education are important to review, as done thoroughly in the chapter by Peter Carrier, Eckhardt Fuchs, and Torben Messinger, teaching strategies get at the heart of the learning experience for students. The editors note that there has not been enough research done on assessment of the effectiveness of various ways of teaching.

My earliest acquaintance with teaching and learning about the Holocaust was at a teaching center that I helped to establish in North Carolina 30 years ago, where a colleague developed a seminar for teachers, capped by a trip to the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C. The seminar itself was too short to develop and test teaching strategies, but many of the teachers who attended shared how they used their new found or developed

awareness of the issues with their students. We pondered what Louise Jennings in this volume discusses, namely, where you most effectively place Holocaust education. Too often it is a “unit” like Black History month, where it is not developmentally situated for students. Jennings worked over a period of years to study Holocaust education within the context of community, tolerance, and rights, and to help situate the teaching of it in that context.

One can ask about the efficacy of Holocaust education, given the genocide that has occurred since World War II. But such a query would need to focus on any sort of education, and its effectiveness in combating this. Smaller and less destructive holocausts routinely occur. Hitler made it obvious what he wanted to do; he declared such, and did it. Our current Holocaust peddlers are not as candid. But can we say that Holocaust education has failed? This seems to freight teaching and learning with more social efficacy than is realistic to expect of these human endeavors.

Nonetheless, it is important to address shortcomings and even failure as we move forward with interpreting, teaching, and learning the Holocaust. Geoffrey Short’s chapter addresses failings to learn. Citing Gordon Allport, he makes the important point that racism encompasses more than one “out” group: “One of the facts of which we are most certain is that people who reject one out-group will tend to reject other out-groups. If a person is anti-Jewish, he is likely to be anti-Catholic, anti-Negro, anti-any out-group” (Allport, 1954, p. 68, cited by Short on p. 457). This, along with the recognition that racism “does not arise in a vacuum” (p. 457), helps to normalize the study of the Holocaust as part of virulent racism, though this itself has a danger as Short notes because the specific nature of antisemitism can be lost. Of course the Holocaust too is not just an historical event, but is related to racism and especially state-sponsored racism and “ethnic

cleansing” in Europe and elsewhere after the Holocaust. Short also discusses the need for age-appropriate instruction about the Holocaust, citing evidence that very young children may not know what Jew or Jewish means, and reading to students aged 5-7 about Anne Frank can be incomprehensible.

I had initially thought that the chapter by the editors at the end about epistemology should be at the beginning, but its placement at the end beckons us to think about how complicated the issues are, and how Holocaust education prompts us to think about the complexity of history, remembrance, and memory, and how such factors work in a state of developing mind. The editors help us to situate all that goes before and make a commentary on the book itself.

Zehavit Gross and E. Doyle Stevick make a strong case for including discussion of epistemology in Holocaust education, starting with the politics of knowledge that draws upon Michael Apple’s inquiries. The Holocaust is a particularly rich case, because memory, remembrance, and historical/political aspects of it make it so complex. Teaching the Holocaust demands pedagogical sophistication and passion. Gross and Stevick point out that knowledge is not neutral, and we must always question where it comes from, and who is proposing it. That the Holocaust occurred can be seen as a particularly ugly nexus of knowledge and power. The Reich determined what should be enacted in society, and who should do it, and decided that Jews, gypsies, and others were not worthy, and needed to be removed permanently for the “Lebensraum” for the Aryan race. The Holocaust becomes even more crucial for this kind of interpretation; the editors cite Michael Apple: “Apple’s questions about whose knowledge is included and legitimated are particularly important for Holocaust education, in which the complex interrelationships between history and memory are compounded by the fact that not

only the many millions of victims, but also those survivors behind the Iron Curtain, were rendered unable to share their stories” (p. 490).

The Holocaust challenges us epistemologically because of our tendency to simplify and look for a reason, such as blaming it on Hitler, rather than asking what gave rise to Hitler, and the suppression of memory and record in the Soviet Union during and after the war. Do we see the Holocaust as a challenge to our way of thinking about the world and how we know it? Many of us shrug in horror over what happened in Nazi Germany, and may relate it to Rwanda, or Syria, but may not relate it to genocide of indigenous populations, or consider the slaughter of entire species of animals, or the processing of billions of animals for food at all comparable.

This remarkable volume has occasioned for me a need to dig further into my own work on human-animal interaction, eco education, and social justice education. I want it to go further, to plumb the depths of why, and how we can change attitudes, policies, and behaviors toward othering and oppression that can result in such catastrophes as the Holocaust. I fear that we cannot do so without a fundamental alteration of the way we are in the world, in our behavior to other creatures, to other living things, to the biosphere we all inhabit. I see that this engagement in Othering and fear of the Other are pervasive. And finally, to consider just the human suffering, as horrible and extensive it is, is still speciesism, when in fact there is an enormous amount of suffering

and cruelty to other living creatures. It seems like a human centric way of thinking that equated the victims of the Holocaust as no more than animals that we all routinely exploit, kill, eat, harness for our own benefit. Speciesism challenges the basis of this way of thinking about how humans see themselves and how we regard our place on the planet. Why is it so remarkable that some people feel they can slaughter others when in fact humans have done this for centuries to other living beings? There is a disregard for life here on the planet. The Holocaust is a particularly egregious episode of such inhumanity and othering.

As a university educator and philosopher of education, I can see how I can use this volume in discussions of racism and how it develops, as well as many of the deeper issues regarding antisemitism, globalization, peace studies, ecojustice education, and other areas of social justice education. The empirical studies of the classroom show how beliefs and values develop, and give the reader a broad and comprehensive view of just how difficult and challenging social justice education is and will continue to be. Looking at the entire effort through lenses of power/knowledge enables the reader, and the learner, to not only interpret the specific history of 1933-1945 but also its aftermath in the Soviet Union, and in the way that Holocaust remembrance has developed into a frame of study and an educational venture. This volume will remain in my memory and thought, and in my teaching, for a very long time. I highly recommend it.

About the Reviewer


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A. G. Rud teaches in the Cultural Studies and Social Thought in Education doctoral program at Washington State University. He is interested in the moral dimensions of teaching, learning, and leading. Rud is president-elect of the John Dewey Society. Most recently he is author of *Albert Schweitzer's Legacy for Education* (2011), and co-edited *John Dewey at 150: Reflections for a New Century* (2009), *Teaching with Reverence: Reviving an Ancient Virtue for Today's Schools* (2012), and *The Educational Significance of Human and Non-Human Animal Interactions: Blurring the Species Line* (2016).



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