

Toolkit for Young Educators



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Foreword

Humanity in Action and the Foundation "Remembrance, Responsibility and Future" (EVZ) share a common conviction – that we can learn from history, from the history of injustice and violence too. What can we learn? For example, that all people have equal rights, wherever they live and whatever their identity. Formulating human rights, guaranteeing them in law and institutionalising them was a response to cruel experiences of injustice. Consequently human rights themselves are something that have developed as a result of history and are progressing further. Human rights need our commitment to breathe life into them. Where they are called into question, they need defenders. There are impressive examples of this in history, for instance Irena Sendler and Jan Karski who appear in this publication.

With the "Toolkit for Young Educators", Humanity in Action provides many stimulating suggestions for implementing projects. The content of the toolkit focuses on injustice in history and human rights, especially the rights of minorities who are discriminated or persecuted. Roma, Jews, people with disabilities and LGBTQ persons are exposed to humiliations, disadvantaging and violence right up to the present day. They were all persecuted already by the National Socialists. Are there stereotypes that are perpetuated? What can we do against this?

These are serious questions that require serious commitment. And that is exactly what the projects of the Fellows of Humanity in Action deliver. But why is such serious commitment so attractive? The participants can do something meaningful in the projects. Even more, they can experience how concrete matters change through their actions. They can discover and develop their capabilities – capabilities which they did not know they possessed. They can shape something themselves, something that really interests them, instead of performing tasks set by others. They get to know Fellows from other countries, make friends with them. In this way international exchange develops. And they find recognition for what they have done. They experience that in working for others they can also gain and achieve a lot for themselves.

The Foundation EVZ has been funding and supporting the work of Humanity in Action Poland since its start in the year 2006. Since then the programme in Poland has developed consistently and refined its professionalism. This is due above all to the project managers Monika Mazur-Rafał and Magda Szarota, to whom my appreciation and gratitude go for their expert and committed work.

I wish this brochure many interested readers and hope that they will be infected with the committed spirit of Humanity in Action and find inspirations for their own projects.

Dr. Martin Salm | Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Foundation "Remembrance, Responsibility and Future"

"The Toolkit for Young Educators"

What is it all about?

21 people in their 20ies have a dream. It might sound a bit corny, but they *do* hope the world will become a better place. When? Well, asap! While they are still on the 'young side' and are fun-loving people. There are three things they all are dead-serious about. These are (in no particular order): human rights, activism & leadership! So, you might call them dreamers but in actuality each and every one of them already has done something for *real*. Like: served homeless communities in a home-country, worked in humanitarian charity in a far-away place, initiated projects on diversity, equality and empowerment, managed volunteer activities, used arts and media to raise awareness and the like. No doubt, they are busy people with a cause.

Yet, as experience shows in order to be a truly innovative and effective change-maker/social entrepreneur, one has to, from time to time, press the pause button. Freeze. Stop doing, making, initiating, activating in the real world. Instead one should enter into a 'laboratory' like environment, ideally, not alone, but with other passionate activists/leaders, who also want to step out of the comfort zone (even if that zone is not comfortable at all by normal standards) to take a different perspective on: activism, human rights and leadership. Needless to say, but real (self) development takes place when concepts, which are taken for granted are being challenged and critically analysed. As a result, a deeper understanding of the concepts as well as fresh ideas on taking action, even more fervently, can be obtained to be put into practice.

Actually, this is exactly what happened thanks to Humanity in Action Poland (HIA Poland)! Those 21 young activists and leaders hailing from Germany, Poland, Ukraine and the U.S.A. received an invitation from us to press the pause button and take part in a month-long academy of human rights in Warsaw, Poland (June, 2013), which consisted of the 2-weeks so called input phase devoted to obtaining knowledge and critical analysis of human rights problems, and 2-weeks so called output phase focused on enhancing leadership skill-sets and creating workshop scenarios. Thanks to immense support and fantastic cooperation with the Foundation "Remembrance, Responsibility and Future" (EVZ) we have been able successfully to run those intense academies annually since 2006.

The Humanity in Action educational model is simple, yet, effective: to educate, connect a network and inspire action! And all that, in a rich intellectual setting. In the Humanity in Action model human rights education is linked with historical teaching. In the case of the Warsaw program (Humanity in Action operates in six other countries as well), Poland serves as a case study to contextualise the issues and problems by taking into consideration all sorts of important factors: historic, political, economic or cultural. Such an approach is



Photo: Benjamin Overton

important because counteracting discrimination or fighting for human rights always takes place in a certain context. That is why any activist/leader in order to become a successful and sensitive change-maker ought to take all these dimensions into account.

We believe, that while the particular histories, cultures etc. differ from country to country, there are also some universal patterns and mechanisms that rule how society operates and influence individuals within those communities. For instance, the mechanisms of stigmatization, 'othering', identity-formation are similar across cultures or nations. Similarly, the impact of a national history (or historical narratives) on positioning certain groups within a society turns out to be a crucial factor regardless of geographical location. Surprisingly enough (or perhaps not surprisingly at all) it seems

that indifference and passivity have always been one of the greatest allies of evil. Yet, it has been proven that it might sometimes be enough for one upstander to start the positive domino effect, by inspiring the bystanders to take action. To do something! And this is exactly our belief - activists/leaders can do phenomenal things - but they will not achieve much by being alone, they need other people (followers). The relationship between leaders and followers needs to give a lot of space for 'back and forth' learning and experimenting.

As much as bringing change is about people it can also take different shapes and forms. Sometimes a given issue requires a particular 'tool' to be taken care of effectively. Over the years, we have tested different types of tools such as: social campaigns, educational games, journalistic writing etc. The choice for a given tool

depended also on the target group (followers of the cause). In the case of the Humanity in Action Poland's 2013 academy its participants were focussed on finding rationales and ways how best to inspire pupils of high school age not to be indifferent to issues of discrimination and marginalisation of various minority groups (such as: Roma, People with Disabilities, LGBTQ, Jews, Refugees). Additionally, two great upstanders Irena Sendler and Jan Karski were brought into the spotlight as a way of showing young people how 'ordinary' people can do extraordinary things and how, they, the pupils, might try not to turn a blind eye to injustices they witness in their everyday life e.g. bullying. As for the method of reaching out to those potential 'followers of the cause' it was decided that it should take form of a workshop, which would be conducted in their everyday environment - schools and among the people they spent most time with - their peers. The aspect of everydayness is important because becoming an upstander (for smaller and greater causes) means actually being on the alert not only from time to time, but in fact, on every day basis.

In practice it meant that the participants of the HIA Poland academy during the output phase worked in 7 international and interdisciplinary teams on 7 different workshops scenarios. While, Poland, its past and present - remained the main reference point just like in the input phase and case study for the workshops - the biggest task was to stress the universal patterns and mechanisms, underlying discrimination/marginalization and injustice, as well as those underlying the positive approaches. The academy's participants, with the help of experienced facilitators and experts did their best to 'translate' sometimes abstract or 'distant' issues into the reality of young Polish pupils.



Photo: Benjamin Overton

Especially challenging for workshop authors was an attempt to make the past more relevant, less-distant and meaningful. Thus, for instance, sometimes the past events/histories, such as Second World War and the Holocaust are referred to in workshops in order to be juxtaposed but not compared with some contemporary realities of nowadays Poland. This is meant to provide food for thought on the importance of 'being on the alert' and being ready to stop wrong-doing and discrimination in their early stages, if needed.

Those examples from the past are also meant to showcase certain universal patterns across time and space that underpin scapegoating and processes of exclusion as well as to illustrate why individual actions can be equally important as collective actions (and vice-versa). Those and similar issues are explained in-depth in essays which accompany the workshop scenarios. The authors of the workshop scenarios use that space to talk about the motives and rationales behind their workshop ideas. They try to contextualise the scenarios and give some background knowledge on the topics themselves.

Each of the teams took a highly individualised approach to their creative tasks - by using their diverse academic and activists' experience. That is why, some of the essays might come across as more philosophical other more sociological and some mostly historical. The same goes for the format of the workshop scenarios - they are diverse and unlike one another. What is a unifying factor for all of them is the fact that they are interactive and give pupils an opportunity to press the pause button and truly explore the topics and as a result become drawn towards 'doing the right thing' on a daily basis. The authors of the workshop scenarios tried also to give flexibility and room for adaptations to the workshop facilitators/instructors.

The product of all this work is "The Toolkit for Young Educators". We hope it will be used as a creative work in progress. It's natural that some ideas might work better than others, and that the original ideas might inspire some new takes on the issues. That is why, we encourage to share feedback with us (poland@humanityinaction.org)! Let's use this publication as process of mutual inspiration.

Firstly, however, let us introduce the **21 PEOPLE IN THEIR 20ies WHO HAVE A DREAM** 😊



HIA Poland Fellows



Elorm Avakame graduated from Rutgers University in 2012 with a Bachelor's of Science in Public Health. During college, Elorm spent his summers researching and publishing on faculty diversity in United States medical schools (2011) and working with the Urban Nutrition Initiative to promote issues of social justice, healthy cooking, and nutrition among West Philadelphia teenagers (2012). After graduation, Elorm spent the 2012-2013 academic year working as an undergraduate academic advisor through the Rutgers University Office for Diversity and Academic Success in the Sciences to support students from underrepresented and economically disadvantaged backgrounds in their pursuit of careers in health sciences. An aspiring physician, Elorm will begin studying to earn a Doctor of Medicine in August 2013. His professional ambitions involve improving access to quality health care in underserved communities in American inner cities and creating interventions to combat the social pathologies present in many such communities.

Cariad Chester graduated from Swarthmore College in 2013 with a dual degree in Neuroscience and Religion. While at Swarthmore, he was a leader of the Global Health Forum and helped launch the "Give a Net, Get a Vote" campaign combining political advocacy and fundraising initiatives to secure insecticide-treated bed nets for distribution in Sierra Leone. During the summers, Cariad has conducted neuroscience research on the epigenetic modification of long-term memory in *Drosophila* (2011) and studied vaccinology at the Vaccine Education Center of the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (2012). While at the Vaccine Education Center, Cariad also helped produce a short film advocating for wider immunization among college students.



Gosia Darmas graduated from Warsaw University in 2011 with a Master Degree in Law. At the same time she was studying Spanish culture and language. She then continued her education with postgraduate studies in International Relations and Diplomacy at Collegium Civitas. From the beginning of her studies she focused on foreign policy, human rights, especially women's rights and discrimination issues and penal law. She published, among other things, a thesis on abortion in Poland and Spain and on Human Trafficking in Spain. Gosia completed an internship with the Helsinki Foundation of Human Rights and is still working as a lawyer volunteer in the Center of Women's Rights, where she provides legal services. She is also focusing on international affairs, with which she combines her professional future. That is why she completed an internship with the Embassy of Poland in Madrid, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland in Warsaw (in the Department of United Nations and Human Rights) and participated in the Summer Diplomatic School. Gosia is keen on Spanish and Spanish-speaking countries, she has travelled to Venezuela and Mexico, where she worked as a volunteer helping children and elderly people. Her passion and love is sports- she likes snowboarding, windsurfing and she is a bokwa instructor and she has been working for many years on camps, teaching both children and adults.



Sarah Deal from Charlottesville, Virginia, Sarah graduated from the University of Virginia in Charlottesville in 2013 with a B.A. in Political Philosophy, Policy, and Law and a minor in Religious Studies, concentrating in Islam. During her time at the University of Virginia, Sarah studied five languages, was involved in two university choirs and an acappella group, and volunteered with the University chapter of International Justice Mission – an organization involved in the fight to end human trafficking. In the summer after her second year, Sarah worked as a case manager and social services intern for the non-profit Miriam's Kitchen, an organization that serves the homeless community in Washington, D.C. In the Spring of 2012, Sarah participated in an exchange program through in South Africa, studying human rights and multiculturalism and completing a thesis on customary marriage practices as they relate to human rights law. Following her studies in South Africa, Sarah helped lead a high school group to Freiburg, Germany. Besides her love for languages and cross-cultural experiences, Sarah enjoys photography, playing the piano, and outdoor adventures.





Ankur Doshi is a recent graduate from Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee. Originally from Atlanta, Georgia, he double majored in Neuroscience and Economics. During his time in college, Ankur was involved in many diversity, service, and community-building activities. He was a Resident Advisor for three years, co-president of the university's Habitat for Humanity chapter, and co-chair of MOSAIC, an organization that works with admissions counselors to increase campus diversity. He spent many of his breaks volunteering in various social issues, from homelessness in California to special needs children in New Hampshire. As someone who is interested in economic development and healthcare, he spent a summer in Zambia working at a nonprofit global health organization. He hopes to use his skills and experiences from college to improve healthcare in communities around the world. His hobbies include dancing, playing sports, reading, and visiting friendly people and places. In Fall 2013, Ankur will be attending medical school.

Hannah Gardenswartz completed her sophomore year at Scripps College in May, 2013. She majored in Politics and International Relations with an emphasis in EU/European Politics and she has made the Dean's list for the past 2 semesters. Hannah plans to minor in Theater. At Scripps, Hannah was selected as a student panelist for the Malott Public Affairs Speaker Program and participated in the Claremont-UC Undergraduate Research Conference on the EU presenting her research regarding the historical and cultural roots of the naming dispute between Greece and Macedonia. She also is very active in the theatre program and has been involved in numerous productions as an assistant master electrician, lighting board operator, and lighting assistant. In addition, Hannah volunteers as a campus tour guide for Scripps, a member of 'It Ends Here,' a campus organization for the discussion of the culture surrounding sexual violence and working to create a sustainable solution, an officer for the Fine Cheese Club, and works as French tutor. Hannah was born and raised in Aspen, Colorado. During her free time, Hannah enjoys swimming, hiking, skiing and reading.



Krzysztof Jankowski is a final year student of law at University of Wrocław, Poland. He is an alumni of the federal Benjamin Franklin Transatlantic Fellows Initiative program (2008) and a member of State Alumni Association. He used to work for a legal aid clinic and law firms. Krzysztof speaks Polish, English and Italian. In 2010, while studying for a year at Università degli Studi di Verona in Italy he deepened his understanding of constitutionalism, regionalism and human rights. In his sphere of academic interests there are also European Union law, commercial law, practice and theory of law & justice, arbitration and mediation. His special focus on 'soft justice' and alternative dispute resolutions led him to participation in FDI International Moot Court Competition in 2011 and ICC International Commercial Mediation Competition in 2012. Krzysztof graduated from Winter School of Tertio Millennio Institute in 2010, a program focused on Catholic social teaching. Currently he develops his speech craft in Toastmasters International Association. Krzysztof is also an ordinary member of Amnesty International. He plans to begin PhD studies and start working in a field of mediation services. In his private life Krzysztof has two great passions: theatre and travelling via couchsurfing and hitchhiking.

Clara Kent is a student at Wheaton College, graduating in 2014 with a degree in Cultural Anthropology and a certificate in Global Development. In her studies she focuses on issues of development, race and ethnicity, and social justice globally and in the US. Clara has spent summers organizing development projects with a rural church in Nicaragua (2009), doing community research in Indonesia (2011), and teaching and mentoring a group of first-generation college-bound high school students from Chicago (2012). In the Summer and Fall 2013, Clara will intern with a humanitarian charity NGO in Amman, Jordan working with and researching Syrian and Iraqi refugees. At Wheaton, Clara is a part of a student group that plans events for the campus to learn and talk about racial issues in the US. After graduation, Clara would like to study public policy and work internationally.



Katarzyna Klimowicz graduated from University of Warsaw in 2012 with a degree in Philosophy, focusing on Philosophy of Being, Cognition and Value. During her studies she was mainly focused on ethics in media, human rights, global politics, intercultural conflicts and interhuman dialogue. Katarzyna was an Erasmus student at the University of Bologna for two semesters (2009/2010) and she came back to Bologna several times in order to do her Erasmus Placement internship (2011) and European Volunteering Service (2012/2013) for YouNet Association - an NGO specializing in sending and hosting participants of international youth exchanges, promoting volunteering and organizing intercultural events. Katarzyna usually spends her holidays going on workcamps organized by Service Civil International and together with international groups of volunteers she works for peace, supporting alternative theater and music festivals for local communities all around Europe. After graduation, Katarzyna started to collaborate with a local SCI volunteering group which organized an Action Week Against Racism 2013 in Warsaw. Recently, Katarzyna worked as a cultural animator and a coordinator of volunteering in one of Warsaw's cultural centres. Katarzyna is currently developing her own foundation supporting youth initiatives and she is working on her PhD interdisciplinary project in social and political sciences elaborating on the subject of participatory and direct democracy.

Katarzyna Kotula holds a Master's degree in History and started a PhD in the same major. Her interests are World War II, the Holocaust and Polish-Jewish relations in the twentieth century. Her current research project focus on the illegal Jewish immigration to Palestine 1938-1946. She has participated in numerous international research projects, workshops and conferences. She's presently working as a volunteer in the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum. She pins her hopes on working with youth in the future as a memorial places teacher.





Elżbieta Kwiecińska graduated in 2011 with a B.A. degree in International Relations at University of Warsaw, where she is currently pursuing a Masters degree in History, Law and Sociology. In 2010 she did an internship at the Department of International Relations at the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage in Poland. Since 2012 she has worked as a trainer for an NGO, Forum for Dialogue Among Nations, doing workshops for teenagers about Jewish history and culture. In March 2012 she represented her university at Model United Nations - Human Rights Council. In September 2012 Ela took part in an international seminar held by the Kreisau Foundation, "Once Upon Today: Questioning national stores of Ukraine, Poland, Israel and Germany". On the scientific field, Ela focuses on the history of Polish/Jewish/Ukrainian realations, collective memory and national narratives in South East Europe and human rights. Ela constantly takes part in scientific projects, conferences and debates all over Europe. This summer she will spend two weeks in Western Ukraine on a scientific trip searching for traces of past multiculturalism there.

Immanuel Lokwei comes from the arid northwestern region of Kenya. Despite facing the challenges of ethnic violence, illiteracy and entrenchment of traditional and nomadic lifestyles in this region, he was able to attend school in Kenya and Wesleyan University in the United States, through the help of his guardians in Kenya and a U.S.-based organization called Kenya Scholar Athlete Project. He graduated from Wesleyan in 2012 with a degree in Philosophy. His philosophical endeavors culminated in a senior thesis entitled "Moral Beauty as An Overriding Imperative in Confucianism" which was awarded the Wise Prize by the Philosophy Department at Wesleyan. After graduation, Lokwei was offered an internship with University Relations at Wesleyan, and he has extended the fundraising skills he has honed in this position to his organization, Kapseret Soccer Club, which he founded in 2009. Lokwei is also an avid writer and songwriter; some of his work, mainly fictional anecdotes and political commentaries, can be found at the Long Mouth Social Commune website that he also founded in 2010. He also founded a reggae band called Men With Bad Manners in 2010, and ever since he has stuck with the role of lead composer.



Anastasiia Mykhailova is an alumna of FLEX Programme (Future Leaders Exchange) of 2007, having been an exchange student in the United States in 2006-2007. Anastasiia holds a B.A. in Classical Philology (Ancient Greek, Latin, and French) from Kiev National Taras Shevchenko University and has experience in students' council's activities, having been a head of Students' Councils during 4 years at the University. She has also worked with a number of NGOs dealing with issues of healthcare and patients' safety. In 2011, Anastasiya decided to pursue a path in human rights' protection, and questions of female empowerment in particular. She is about to obtain her Masters degree in Human Rights and Democratization in the Eastern Partnership region. Anastasiia has also been chosen as one of the Alumni Network representatives in her current M.A. programme.



Nara Narimanova graduated from the History and Philology Department with a focus on English and Crimean Tatar language and literature in 2008. She worked at the UNDP Sub-Office in Crimea (SRDC Project) and worked as an editor (2012) and as a journalist at the Crimean News Agency (2009). Nara is from the Crimean Tatar ethnic minority group, which are indigenous to the Crimean peninsula in Ukraine. Starting in 2009, Nara has been in advocacy of Human Rights Protection and Minority Rights Protection. She has participated in different international and local conferences, trainings and study-sessions on human rights and minority rights protection. She participated in the School of Youth Politician, where she was awarded a Youth Politician Diploma (2008); the UNITED Conference: 'Europe All Inclusive? Minorities on the Edge of Society' (2010); and in the international conference "Engaging youth in learning about the Holocaust and Human Rights in the 21st century", organized by the Anne Frank House (Amsterdam) and Anne Frank Zentrum (Berlin) in Berlin.

Justyna Politańska graduated from the University of Warsaw in 2011 with a degree in Political Science. During her studies she spent one year at Complutense University in Madrid and conducted a research on the political participation of women at the University of Konstanz, Germany. Her interests focus on women rights, their political and public engagement and on account management, project management, change management. She leads the Youth Forum Lewiatan since 2011 and she is a member of the Congress of Women Association where she initiated and led the "Kino Kobiet" (Women in Documentary Films) project. She spent the last two years working at Ogilvy, an international advertising agency.



Mariana Pryven received a B.A. in Philology from Kyiv National Linguistic University, Ukraine (2009). In 2011, she was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to complete a Master's degree in Comparative Literature at Washington University, Saint Louis where she focused on Cultural Critical Theory, Post-1945 Literature, and European Intellectual History. Since completion of her M.A., she continued her graduate education at the Paideia Institute for Jewish Studies in Sweden. During and after her studies, she initiated and contributed to a number of projects exploring religious and ethnic identities. Upon her arrival to Ukraine, she began working for the NGO "Dukh i Litera" Research and Publishing Association in Kyiv in the capacity of the editor and researcher. She also is a member of the All-Ukrainian Union of Translators, the only organization in Ukraine that advocates for interests of translators in Ukraine and abroad.



Jeffrey Treisbach graduated in 2008 from The George Washington University with a B.A. in International Affairs. In the summer of 2009, he began volunteering with Balkan Sunflowers in Kosovo working with Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities there. After a brief internship in Macedonia, Jeff returned to Kosovo in 2010 to coordinate volunteers for Balkan Sunflowers. He then began his Masters studies and recently completed his M.A. in Intercultural Conflict Management from Alice Salomon University of Applied Sciences in Berlin with a thesis about the reintegration of forced returnees in Kosovo.

Jan Świątek graduated from the University of Science and Technology in Krakow in 2010 with a degree in Finance and Management. His master thesis deals with salary discrepancies. Jan's main interests are poverty, economic growth, economic inequalities and globalization. During his studies, Jan was a member of various student associations and NGO's. Jan also spent four months in Brazil as a fundraiser in an NGO helping children from poor families. In 2011, Jan created and coordinated "Projekt Huxley" – a series of documentary movies concerning political and social issues. He likes cycling and promotes the bike as a healthy and environmentally-friendly means of transport in the city.



Vera Wedekind received her Master's degree in Violence, Conflict and Development with a concentration in post-conflict reconstruction and gender from the London School of Oriental and African Studies in mid-2013. After volunteering for six months as a primary school teacher in a Guatemalan non-profit after high school, she pursued her BA in International Relations at the University of Dresden. She focused on conflict, development and Latin America, and studied abroad in Mexico for a semester. After graduation, Vera spent a year in Washington D.C. as a Fulbright and Rotary Scholar where she focused on Monitoring and Evaluation. Her professional experience includes work for the development committee of the German Parliament (2007), a Member of Parliament in Brussels (2008), the German Embassy in Honduras (2009), the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ) in New Delhi (2010), and the Monitoring and Evaluation team of the D.C.-based NGO 'Search for Common Ground' (2011). Last summer, Vera spent three months in Guatemala to conduct an evaluation of an education and social project. Having travelled extensively in Central America, she now plans a trip to Eastern Europe, the Balkans, Turkey and Israel.



Tomasz Pyszko graduated in 2008 with a B.A. degree in International Relations at Krakow University. In 2010 he studied at the International People's College in Denmark where, he focused on human rights and environment protection. From 2011 to 2012, he worked at the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Poland as a logistic expert during Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union. He organized ministerial conferences in the United Kingdom, Kazakhstan, Indonesia, Canada, RPA and Poland. During the summer 2012, Tomasz participated in the Peace Caravan project where he was raising awareness about human rights. During the project he organized street actions in Scotland and Austria, provided workshops in Serbia, Croatia, Kosovo, gave lectures in Bulgaria, created a movie about minorities in Romania and visited refugees and asylum seekers centers in Finland, Bulgaria and Belgium. In October 2012, Tomasz began the European Voluntary Service in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain, at the Youth Information Center CIIC. Tomasz recently participated in trainings organized by the Council of Europe and was involved in two long-term projects – Climate Justice, focusing on human rights from environmental perspective, and YALLA project which promotes cooperation among European Union countries with Euro-Mediterranean partners (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, and Tunisia). In February 2013, he graduated from Collegium Civitas with an M.A. degree in Public Policy and Administration.





Jan Karski

Little "Karski" and The Double-Meaning of Freedom

Elorm Avakame, Immanuel Lokwei, Tomasz Pyszko

At the end of this article we hope you will understand, assuming you hold fast to the last word, why we affectionately refer to you as a Little "Karski." You are a Little "Jan Karski" in every symbolic sense of this reference, though you may never even have heard of the life of Jan Karski, told not through the grapevine but factually and effectively. The main objective of this essay is to more stress *your* likeness to Jan Karski (this likeness may now exist in you *in potentia*) than it is to explicate his biography extensively - many of the admirers of our Jan Karski have done a terrific job of this already.¹ For now we are not just interested, however tempted we may be at the moment, to re-narrate the sweet edifying "bronze-like" heroism of Jan Karski. Indeed for now, truly against our steep inclination, put that temptation to sleep (emphasis on now). We ought rather to relate Jan Karski's mystifying heroism to our very own life's mission, and include our current and past experiences. How we can make Karski's life our own? Failing to do this would be repaying Jan Karski's humanitarian errand poorly. Our failure would amount to a mockery of Jan Karski's resilience in advocating for a universal humanitarianism, which we are all very indebted to. To underscore my pleas in the foregoing sentences, let me quote Jaspers, for perhaps you might heed more the wise words of an authority far greater than my feeble voice. Jaspers says, "*The content of truth depends upon our appropriating the historical foundation... My own being can be judged by the depths I reach in making these historical origins my own.*"² And "the study of past philosophers [or case in point historical figures like Jan Karski] is of little use unless our own reality enters into it."³ Well then, we have to confront this urgency and ask ourselves, "How can we appropriate Jan Karski's heroism to perfectly fit our yet evolving life programs?" The immediacy of Jan Karski's life cannot be overlooked in this modern time.

If now you think we are sort of gods or Gods, this will only be because Jan Karski enables this appearance. What do we mean? That if you would appropriate Karski's life as your own, then in so doing you bestow my (me the protagonist and author of this essay) godly Being the power to recreate your reality: to make you see the side of you that is Little "Karski." It is only through this reorientation of our perceptions that our hopes to attain Good Freedom can materialize. *Good Freedom*, I must reiterate.

On the gates of the German Nazis' Auschwitz concentration camp hangs a sign that reads, *Arbeit Macht Frei* (Work Will Set You Free). We can picture a detainee of this camp wondering about the ironic meaning of this message. Work that kills, as millions of Jewish detainees did actually die here; work levied against one's will; how is this work supposed to liberate, perhaps through death? We are now battling with the is-

¹ For an elaborate and extensive account of Jan Karski's life, please visit Jan Karski Educational Institute US, <http://jankarskiinstituteus.org/biography.htm>

² Karl Theodor Jaspers, *Existenzphilosophie...*, Kaufmann, Walter. *Existentialism From Dostoevsky to Sartre* (p.160) NAL Penguin Inc.

³ Jaspers, *Existenzphilosophie...* Kaufmann, Walter. *Existentialism From Dostoevsky to Sartre* (p. 163) NAL Penguin Inc..

sues of Freedom and Human Nature. The barbarism of German Nazi actions and ideology found meaning and joy in the annihilation and suffering of the non-Aryan Other - precisely the Jew, the Roma, the homosexuals, etc. But we are also confronting a double meaning of Freedom: first, the freedom of the German Nazi, that is the freedom expressed in unleashing terror, suffering and death to whoever the dehumanized object is, and second, the freedom sought through actions based on a sympathetic relating with or identifying with the Other⁴ as an equal Other, the human Other.



Photo: HIA Poland archive

Jan Karski recognizes these irreconcilable expressions of freedom. At the end of one of Karski's interviews, *The Wertheim Mission*, where he describes how he pretended to be a "szmalcownik" (blackmailer) in order to rescue a Jewish family from an individual who wanted to turn the Jewish family in to the Gestapo, Karski says: *"All of us probably, we have infinite power to do good and infinite power to follow evil... that's how I see our nature... we can chose to be robbers or we can choose to do good...."* Aah human nature! That's a juicy one. We'll come back to it via Dostoyevsky's and Ortega's way, with the path embellished by other authors like Nietzsche and Žižek, not for vanity's sake but to add more weight to the argument embedded in this essay. But to highlight Karski's ideological evolution, and that acting either way, that is, for the benefit or to the disadvantage of the Jews, was actually within the scope of his choices and that he freely exercised his will, we have a certain enchanting Karski anecdote:

Karski admitted that he once failed to stand up for the persecuted and discriminated against Jewish students while at the university, for fear of ruining his personal ambitions and for fear of having his face charred like one of his Polish colleagues who had courageously stood up against anti-Semitism and persecution of fellow Jewish students. But Karski's later sacrifice as the voice of the Jewish people and the mortal risks he accepted in this service, for instance he was secretly smuggled into the Warsaw Ghetto not only once but twice in order to have an eyewitness account of the Nazis' "Final Solution" to the Jewish Question and the plight of the Jews, portrays a Karski who had not only matured ideologically but one who identified with the persecuted Other – the Jew or and by that paid his earlier humanitarian debts.

The answer to the question of why Karski and his type were able to act contrary to the mainstream complicity in the German Nazi era can be fully fathomed by posing another question: the question of human nature. Did Karski and his courageous type have a special biological composition, psychic (superior rationality) ability or even economic privilege that would have given them an advantage over the rest, the less likely agents of humanity? But to presuppose this manner of thinking risks eliminating or ameliorating the burden of responsibility that the ruthlessness of the Nazis and the cowardice of the accomplices justly deserves; it is to claim that the Nazis and their accomplices were immoral since they were irrational, and hence mistook their genuine interests or acted the way they did due to a sort of biological determinism or unintentional error.

⁴ Jan Karski: "The Lord assigned me a role to speak and write during the war, when - as it seemed to me - it might help. It did not. When the war came to its end, I learned that the governments, the leaders, the scholars, the writers did not know what had been happening to the Jews. They were taken by surprise. The murder of six million innocents was a secret, a 'terrible secret'. ... Then I became a Jew. But I am a Christian Jew. I am a practising Catholic. ... My faith tells me the second Original Sin has been committed by humanity: through commission, or omission, or self-imposed ignorance, or insensitivity, or self-interest, or hypocrisy, or heartless rationalisation. This sin will haunt humanity to the end of time. It does haunt me. And I want it to be so." Source: <http://www.holocaustforgotten.com/karski2.htm>

Dostoyevsky corrects this misguided thinking. He argues,

*"What is to be done with the millions of facts that bear witness that men, consciously, that is fully understanding their real interests, have left them in the background and have rushed headlong on another path, to meet peril and danger, compelled to this course by nobody and by nothing, but, as it were, simply disliking the beaten track, and have obstinately, willfully, struck out another difficult, absurd way, seeking it almost in the darkness. So, I suppose this obstinacy and perversity were pleasanter to them than any advantage."*⁵

Just like Karski, the masses that sucked up to Nazi fascism or that ignored the plight of the Jews, the disabled, the Roma people, the homosexuals, and everyone else who suffered under this Nazism, all had a choice to make: to collaborate, to ignore or stand up for the victimized individuals. Arguing for social determinism (danger) or biological determinism or/and rational inabilities, that the historical contexts that the accomplices found themselves in were overwhelming and so we should judge them based on the context, is both pitifully narrow and lacks an accurate perception of what capabilities human beings are endowed with.



Photo: HIA Poland Archive

Human nature is not an endowment but a project, a creation of man. Ortega argues persuasively that man is an ontological centaur, half immersed in nature and half transcending it.

*"He is given the abstract possibility of existing but not the reality... What is natural in man is realized by itself; it presents no problem. That is precisely why man does not consider it his true being. His extranatural part, on the other hand, is not there from the outset and of itself; it is but an aspiration, a project of life... an entity whose being consists not in what it is already, but in what is not yet, a being that consists in not-yet-being."*⁶

Since man is not a fixed composition, he is therefore in a perpetual mode of inventing and re-inventing what he is, his "program in life."⁷ Dostoyevsky says,

*"What man wants is simply independent choice, whatever that independence may cost and wherever it may lead... for the whole work of man really seems to consist in nothing but proving to himself every minute that he is a man and not a piano-key..."*⁸

In pursuit of this work and his meaning, man therefore lacks a constitutive identity and all depends on the choices he makes... *"Man is a substantial emigrant on the pilgrimage of being, and it is accordingly meaningless to set limits to what he is capable of being."*⁹ Even complicity, so to speak, does not show the limitations of man but rather the possibility of choice. This strong moral principle is reflected in the writings of Karski co-author and confidante Zofia Kossak-Szczucka:

⁵ Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoyevsky, Notes From Underground. Kaufmann, Walter. Existentialism From Dostoevsky to Satre (p. 67) NAL Penguin Inc.

⁶ Jose Ortega, "Man Has No Nature." Kaufmann, Walter. Existentialism From Dostoevsky to Satre (p. 153) NAL Penguin Inc.

⁷ Ortega, "Man Has No Nature." Kaufmann, Walter. Existentialism From Dostoevsky to Satre (p. 156) NAL Penguin Inc.

⁸ Dostoyevsky, Notes From Underground... Kaufmann, Walter. Existentialism From Dostoevsky to Satre (p. 71) NAL Penguin Inc.

⁹ Ortega, "Man Has No Nature." Kaufmann, Walter. Existentialism From Dostoevsky to Satre (p. 157) NAL Penguin Inc.

"The world looks at this atrocity, more horrible than anything ever seen in the annals – and stays silent... This silence cannot be tolerated any longer. Whatever its motives, they are despicable. In the face of crime, one cannot remain passive. Who remains silent in the face of slaughter – becomes an enabler of the murderer. Who does not condemn – then consents."¹⁰

Those who acquiesced to Nazi philosophy cannot be excused for whatever reason, simply because there was always something positive that they could have done. These choices were within their powers.

This group of accomplices was perhaps in even a better position to help than Karski was. They are the Last Men in the Nietzschean sense of the word, "...the Last Man, an apathetic creature with no great passion or commitment. Unable to dream, tired of life, he takes no risks, seeking only comfort and security..."¹¹ If the context of complicity really mattered much, Karski, a contemporary of the time, who was much conversant with the situation and dynamics of the time, and who had suffered much, to the point of attempting suicide¹² and yet nonetheless never relented, he would have noted the determinism of that context and would have argued that his contemporaries at most had a limited scope of freedom. But instead, Karski unreservedly believes in the infinite amount of freedom that each of us in the history of humanity has. Karski was no different from the rest.

So what then, now that freedom can be expressed in actions for Evil or Good and even in inaction? Shall we now just let the history of the world, as irrational as it is, play out its course while we stand aside and watch - which really means conforming to the mainstream ideologies/culture, if there is no such thing as "bystander" neutrality? The later choice is practically easy and tempting and the majority falls for it. Nietzsche argues that,

"A traveler who had seen many countries and peoples and several continents was asked what human traits he had found everywhere; and he answered: men are inclined to laziness. Some will feel that he might have said with greater justice: they are all timorous. They hide behind customs and opinions. At bottom a human beings knows very well that he is in this world just once, as something unique, and that no accident, however strange, will throw together a second time into a unity such a curious and diffuse plurality: he knows it, but hides it like a bad conscience – why? From fear of his neighbor who insists on convention and veils himself with it. But what is it that compels the individual human being to fear his neighbor, to think and act herd-fashion, and not to be glad of himself? A sense of shame, perhaps, in a few rare cases. In the vast majority it is the desire for comfort, inertia – in short, that inclination to laziness of which the traveler spoke. He is right: men are even lazier than they are timorous, and what they fear most is the troubles with which any unconventional honesty and nudity would burden them."¹³

Need we say more? Both Dostoyevsky and Leo Tolstoy recognize these tendencies toward inertia in men: Dostoyevsky calls it the "*luxurious inertia*"¹⁴ while Tolstoy describes it as the "*law of inertia*." Tolstoy argues, "*This law consists in this, that the majority of men do not think in order to know the truth, but in order to assure*

¹⁰ Zofia Kossak-Szczucka, "Protest," Cultural Institute, Google.

¹¹ Slavoj Žižek (2008-07-22). Violence (BIG IDEAS//small books) (p. 28). Picador. Kindle Edition.

¹² "Karski set off on foot across the Tatra Mountains on a third mission back to Angers in June 1940, with information gathered from key Underground leaders. The weather was vicious, so he stopped for the night in the Slovakian village of Demjata, where a bribed host turned him in to the Gestapo. Arrested and tortured, Karski attempted suicide in order not to betray secrets, but was saved and transported to a hospital in Nowy Sącz, Poland. Jan Słowikowski, a young physician involved with the resistance, and a group of co-conspirators, organised a daring escape."Source: http://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/exhibit/jan-karski-humanity-s-hero/QR_UaCtP?hl=en

¹³ Friedrich Nietzsche, "Live Dangerously," The Will to Power. Kaufmann, Walter. Existentialism From Dostoevsky to Sartre (p. 122) NAL Penguin Inc.

¹⁴ Dostoyevsky, Notes From Underground... Kaufmann, Walter. Existentialism From Dostoevsky to Sartre (p. 62) NAL Penguin Inc.

themselves that the life which they lead, and which is agreeable and habitual to them, is the one which coincides with the truth."¹⁵ Whoever is lazy to recreate his own laws, adapts conventional opinions and habits as his "own program of life" and calls this "happiness" and blinks just like the Last Man does. Frantz Fanon aptly captures this timorous tendency in his statement in his very significant book called *The Wretched of the Earth*. He says,

*"In capitalist societies, education, whether secular or religious, the teaching of moral reflexes handed down from father to son, the exemplary integrity of workers decorated after fifty years of loyal and faithful service, the fostering of love for harmony and wisdom, those aesthetic forms of respect for the status quo, instill in the exploited a mood of submission and inhibition..."*¹⁶

Dostoyevsky identifies another aspect of human behavior that could explain the difference between Karski's action and the complicity of the majority of his generation. Though we have argued that freedom can be expressed in infinite possibilities, the infinity of choice though should not be confused with the shortsighted aspiration, particularly of liberal capitalism: that is, the autonomy of the individual. Our freedom does not in any way enable us to transcend the fabric of interdependency that sustains our social world. Many in pursuit of their own freedom (their most often narcissist and egoistic glory), case in point the German Nazis, emphasize in overblown proportions the distinctions between Us and Them, We and the Others and hence downplay the interdependency that exists within, not only in our social world, but also in the whole ecosystem. Freedom through Evil hence arises when we are, as Dostoyevsky would put it, "*phenomenally ungrateful*"¹⁷ to the interdependency that is manifest in the entirety of humanity. The evil man consequently fits Dostoyevsky's definition of man as "*ungrateful biped*."¹⁸

Standing under the gates of Auschwitz concentration camp, we wondered whether the message above targeted the Jews (to mock them?) or whether it was meant to inspire the German Nazi guards to keep up the "Good" work, the cleansing of the Aryan race, the pursuit of Aryan Superiority and Freedom?

The freedom we aspire to is Karski's freedom. And our aspirations are to seek out ways we can always be grateful to humanity, "phenomenally grateful bipeds," and minimize irrational tendencies to comply to any floating opinion, a.k.a., ideologies.

Our aim is to appropriate Karski's life as our own. Karski said, "*I was an insignificant little man. But my mission was important.*"¹⁹ We cannot fool ourselves that this mission we are adopting is an easy one. But we want to be set free by our work, our service to humanity and nothing more, nothing less. For in pursuing the Infinite Good to the end, and in avoiding the Infinite Evil, is to be good – the embodiment of Infinite Good. The last African emperor of Ethiopia once said, "*Throughout history, it has been the inaction of those who could have acted; the indifference of those who should have known better; the silence of the voice of justice when it mattered most; that has made it possible for evil to triumph.*"²⁰ Karski's story²¹ bears enormous witness to this.

¹⁵ Leo Tolstoy. *The Kingdom of God is Within You* (p. 138). Kindle Edition.

¹⁶ Frantz Fanon (2007-12-01). *The Wretched of the Earth* (pp. 3-4). Grove Press. Kindle Edition.

¹⁷ Dostoyevsky, *Notes From Underground...* Kaufmann, Walter. *Existentialism From Dostoevsky to Sartre* (p. 74) NAL Penguin Inc.

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¹⁹ Jan Karski in his interview with Claude Lanzmann/1978, Cultural Institute, Google

²⁰ Emperor Haile Selassie, *The Conscious Journal*. Source: <http://theconsciousjournal.com/his-imperial-majesty-haile-selassie-i-emperor-of-ethiopia-biography/>

²¹ For an elaborate and extensive account of Jan Karski's life, please visit Jan Karski Educational Foundation.

Maybe we could have titled this essay Dostoyevsky and Karski. But it shall be dedicated to Karski solely because Jan Karski, we believe, is the practical actuality of Dostoyevsky's philosophy. Another reason why we shunned the mention of Dostoyevsky in the title is that it is also so easy to see hope for humanity in Karski's actions, his heroism and his sacrifice – unlike Dostoyevsky's philosophy, which can easily be misconstrued as a pessimistic approach to humanity. However, regardless of their subtle and probably some obvious differences, let's rise oh you little "Karskis" to action orientated towards a universal humanitarianism for Jan Karski has already set an exemplary precedent for us to emulate. He, Jan Karski, is the guiding principle and an inexhaustible source where we draw continuously our inspiration and substance for action. Arise all thee little "Karskis" and become, as Frantz Fanon tirelessly urges, "figures of instruction for our global century." Arise my dear brothers and sisters and take your positive (Good Freedom) stand in the world history. Arise for thou art unstoppable force! Arise for your time is now! Arise!!!

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JAN KARSKI – HOW TO BE AN (EXTRA)ORDINARY PERSON?

An Interactive Workshop Scenario

Objective

This workshop is intended to engage Polish high school pupils (approximate age 16 – 18) in meaningful discussions about issues of injustice and taking action. These issues will be studied through the example of Jan Karski who was a member of the Polish Underground during World War II, a prisoner of war in Soviet and German prison camps, a survivor who managed to escape from both camps. He is most famous for being a courier in the Polish Underground resistance to German Nazi occupation and became one of the organization's most invaluable members. He toiled endlessly and under constant risk of assassination. He was a survivor of Gestapo torture, and one of few non-Jewish men to have ever entered the Warsaw Ghetto and the German Nazi death camp for the purpose of reporting the plight of the Polish Jews to the world, including to the President of the United States. There may be no clearer exemplar of heroism.

Generally speaking extremely courageous people who did extraordinary things in difficult times are commonly mythologized as heroes, this can have the unintended side effect of making their example inaccessible to the learner. That is why this workshop will reposition Jan Karski as an (extra)ordinary man who chose to take action against injustice when presented with the opportunity. The intent of this repositioning is to empower pupils to choose action when they are presented with opportunities to do so and at all not to diminish the impact of Jan Karski's extraordinary deeds and actions.

The workshop has three principal aims: (1) to educate Polish youth about the life and wartime achievements of Jan Karski, (2) to help youth identify instance of injustice that they observe or experience, and (3) to mobilize youth to act against observed injustice.

Required resources:

- Colored markers
- Large paper easel with detachable sheets
- Jan Karski-themed illustrations (one for each pupil)

Who is a hero? What are the characteristics of heroism? Is heroism inherent or can it be learned? Does the potential for heroism exist within some of us? Within all of us? Why should we study heroes? Is there anything to be learned from their example? What if there isn't? These are the questions we grappled with as a group upon learning that we'd been commissioned to illuminate the life and legacy of Jan Karski for the education of youth. (...) We decided to reposition Jan Karski an ordinary man who chose to act in the face of the injustice that he observed around him – a choice that each of us can make every day of our lives. This fundamental repositioning is our way of making him more approachable to the young people. The workshop that we have created salutes Karski, and rightfully so. However, by looking at his life through a different lens, we are able to connect his experience to the experience of the learner.

- Visit images.google.com, search "Jan Karski" and choose a portrait of Mr. Karski
- Illustrations should be printed on an 8.5" x 11" computer paper

"Who Are Your Heroes?" PowerPoint presentation link

Informational Video: Jan Karski – "An Unsung Polish Hero"

Source: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j7uyXFFBaUg>

PHASE I: The Life and Legacy of Jan Karski

Objective: To provide a broad overview of the life and legacy of Jan Karski and to lead pupils to examine the motivations for his actions.

Introduction (2 minutes)

Discussion leader(s) will introduce the topic to be discussed in this workshop, which is Jan Karski's life and legacy.^{1 2 3}

Activity #1: "Who Are Your Heroes?" (5 minutes)

At the beginning students will have about 1 minute to think about their own heroes. After that discussion leader(s) will show the "Who Are Your Heroes" PowerPoint presentation, which will consist of images of popular figures among contemporary Polish youth such as: athletes, actresses, artists, etc. Contemporary figures will be chosen because it will be an easy way to grab students' attention and engagement, which is vitally important at the beginning of the workshop. With each slide, pupils will be asked whether or not the individual depicted is a hero to them, and if so, to describe the qualities that make each person a hero.

The last slide in the presentation will show a photo of Jan Karski, which students will likely be unable to identify. Discussion leader(s) will explain that the photo is Karski's, and that pupils will have an opportunity to determine whether or not he was a hero by the end of the workshop.

Activity #2: Jan Karski Informational Video – "An Unsung Polish Hero" (approx. 12 minutes)

Discussion leader(s) will play a "Jan Karski – An Unsung Polish Hero", a video shortly describing Jan Karski's achievements during World War II. A video is the most concise and engaging way for pupils to gain an overview of Karski's wartime mission.

Activity #3: Jan Karski Mind Map (20 minutes)

Pupils will be separated into four groups. Each group will be issued a sheet of easel paper and a few colored markers. Groups will be tasked with creating a Mind Map describing the video's content. Using this Mind Map, students will explore three themes: (1) Karski's context (the injustice he was responding to), (2) the risks/potential consequences Karski faced, and (3) the actions Karski took.

Through this exploration, pupils will reflect on Jan Karski's wartime mission. Pupils should investigate each of the three aforementioned themes and provide facts/ideas related to each of the three ("examples"). For instance, an potential "example" for the theme of "Karski's context" is that during World War II, millions of

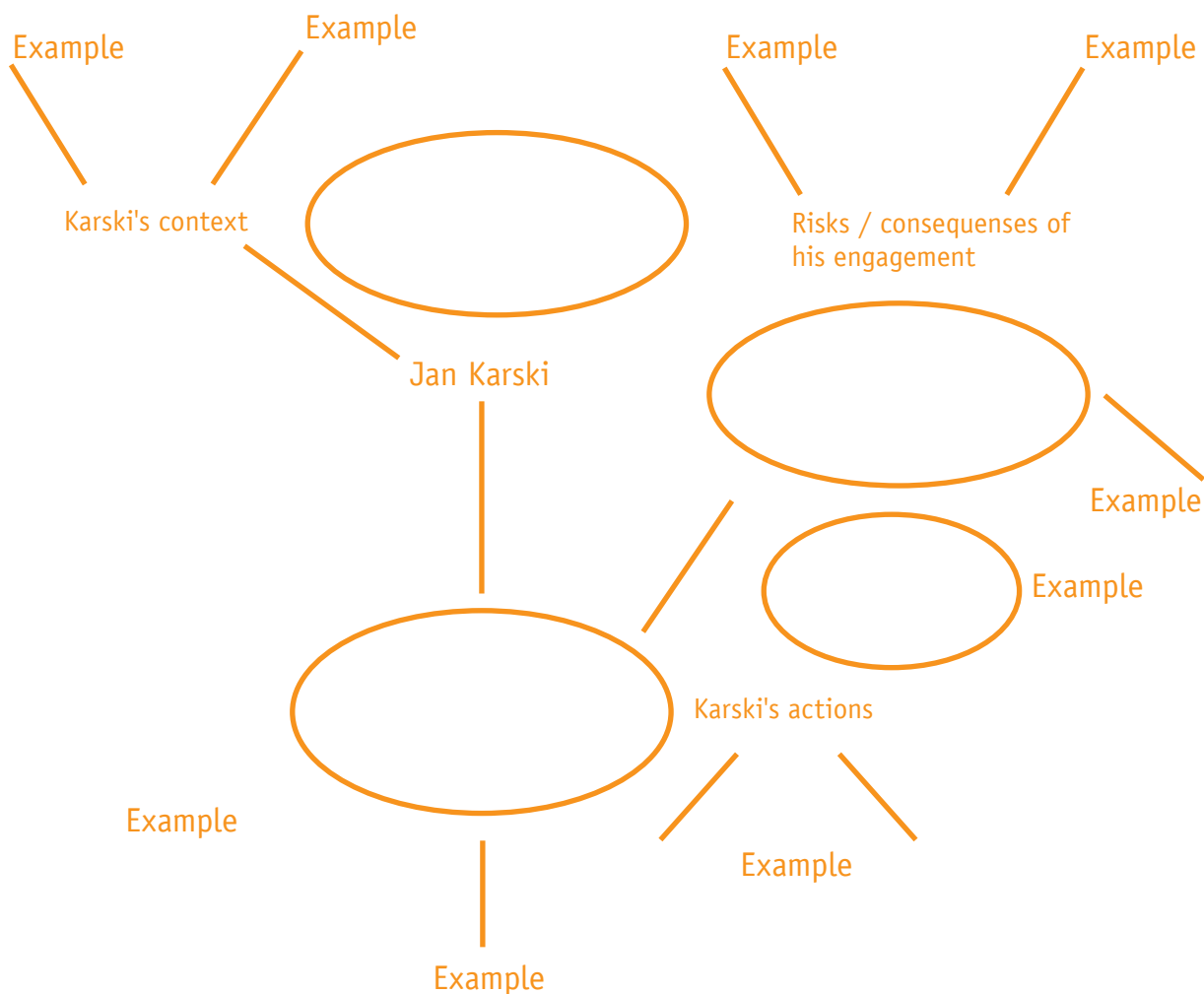
¹ <http://www.jankarski.net/en>

² https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/exhibit/jan-karski-humanity-s-hero/QR_UaCtP?hl=en

³ <http://www.jankarski.org/en/>

Jews were being exterminated without intervention from the rest of the world. The small group discussion model allows each individual to be more engaged than traditional large group discussions as it is easier for pupils to be excluded from discussion in a large group.

In case pupils and/or "discussion leaders" are unfamiliar with the Mind Map format, a template is provided below:



PHASE II: Identifying Injustice and Obstacles to Action

Objective: To encourage pupils to identify examples of injustice that they observe or experience in their personal lives and to identify the obstacles that keep them from choosing to act against injustice when they have the opportunity to do so.

Activity #4: Identifying Injustice (20 minutes)

Part I – Pupil will be separated into four groups. Each group will be issued a sheet of easel paper and a few colored markers. Each group will be tasked with listing as many examples of injustice that they observe or experience. Students should specifically list examples of the following types of injustice: (a) injustice against a person

or group of people (b), injustice against the natural environment/climate and (c) injustice against animals. This activity will be a competition, and the group that is able to list the most examples will be declared the "winner". Groups will have 8 minutes to complete Part I.

DISCUSSION LEADER NOTES:

- Separating pupils into the same groups in which they completed the Mind Map activity will minimize confusion and save time in the activity.
- It may be helpful to suggest a few examples of injustice to spark the pupils' thought processes, for example:
 - Making fun of a Roma child because of his/her culture
 - Watching a group of friends paint racist graffiti on the wall of a building
 - Throwing trash on the ground instead of putting it in a trash can
- It may be helpful to offer a small prize for the "winning" group as an incentive for participation.

Part II – The four groups will come back together to make one large group and each of the four groups will select three of the examples that they identified to present to the group. The rest of the pupils are encouraged to briefly discuss each group's examples after the group has presented.

Discussion of individual examples can include an analysis of whether or not the example is commonly seen, whether or not the example is preventable, and what the impacts of the example are.

Groups will have 12 minutes to complete Part II.

Activity #5: Identifying Obstacles to Action (15 minutes)

Pupils will remain together as one large group. Discussion leader(s) will select one student as the courier for the group. The courier will draw a vertical line down the middle of a sheet of easel paper at the front of the room.

Part I – Discussion leader(s) will ask the large group to (1) consider moments in which they have had opportunities to act against injustice but chose not to act and (2) identify the reason why they chose not to act. The courier will list the first five "obstacles to action" on the left-hand side of the vertical line.

Examples of "obstacles to action" may include:

- Fear of social sanctions – "Negative peer pressure"
- Laziness
- Rationality – Considering all options and making a conscious decision not to act
- Lack of concept of how to act
- Indifference
- Being preoccupied with something else

Pupils should take approximately 5-7 minutes to complete Part I.

Part II – Discussion leader(s) will ask the large group to offer solutions to each of the "obstacles to action". During this period, discussion leader(s) will challenge students to consider whether the positive impact of action outweighs whatever potential negative consequences they may perceive.

Pupils should take approximately 8-10 minutes to complete Part II.

PHASE III: Forming Action Goals

Objective: To encourage pupils to identify specific opportunities for action in their individual lives and pledge to choose action in those scenarios.

Activity #6: Go for the Goal (10 minutes)

Group leader(s) will distribute Jan Karski-themed illustrations to each pupil in the class. Pupils will have 5 minutes of individual reflection, during which they are to form an action goal. Action goals may be personal, so students will not be required to share them with the class. This need not be a lofty goal; emphasis should be placed on forming a simple, actionable goal. At the end of individual reflection, students will write their "action goal" on the back of their illustration. Goals should follow the following prompt: "From [insert date] forward, my goal is to _____".

Examples of poor goals:

- My goal is to end all bullying in Warsaw (not specific)
- My goal is to end bullying of all Roma children (not actionable)

Examples of sound goals:

- My goal is to stop painting graffiti on public spaces (specific & actionable)
- My goal to intervene when I see my friends bullying a Roma child (specific & actionable)

After illustrations have been properly filled out, they should be collected and returned to discussion leader(s).

DISCUSSION LEADER NOTES:

While the illustrations are being distributed, tell the short following story to the pupils:

While Jan Karski was in university in Lwów, there was a group of Polish students that were harassing and abusing Jewish students. Karski recognized this example of injustice and felt a responsibility to act, but chose not to act in the end. Even though he missed that opportunity, he later became of a man of great action. We can use this example to remind pupils that they should not feel discouraged if they have missed opportunities to act in the past. Every instance of injustice is another opportunity to choose action.

FOLLOW-UP

It is imperative that pupils have an opportunity to follow up and reflect on the progress they've made concerning their respective pledges. For this reason, this workshop should be led by a discussion leader(s) who will remain with the group for more than a month (such as a school teacher) rather than a discussion leader who will only be with the group to carry out this workshop (such as guest educator).

In one month's time, pupils will have a 30-45 minute reflection and discussion session. At the beginning of this session, discussion leader(s) will distribute each pupil's illustration to him/her. Students will have the opportunity to reflect on the progress they've made in meeting their goal. Students will then be invited to share and discuss their successes and shortcomings, and to discuss any best practices that they have learned.

Activity #7: Reminder and self-assessment (20 minutes)

Discussion leader will remind information from the previous session and outcomes (previous material could be used) to stimulate the pupils reflection. After that each pupil will get back his/her illustration with the pledges.

Pupils will have 10 minutes for assessing their actions or inactions during the previous month. They will have time to compare their illustrations and pledges with the real situations from their life. They can also share their illustration with other students.

Activity #8: Open discussion (25 minutes)

Discussion leader(s) will start the open discussion. During that time students will have a chance to exchange their experience from the previous month. Examples of questions that can be used to stimulate discussion are:

- "What was the injustice which you observed?"
- "How did you react?"
- "How did you feel/how do you feel now"?
- "Do they have any advice for other students?"

Optional: During the discussion the Karski's Mind Map could be showed. Students can describe their action based on their own Mind Map.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this workshop aims to introduce students to the life and wartime legacy of Jan Karski, who is hailed as a Polish hero. However, rather than concentrating on the mythology of his heroism, this workshop intends to focus students' attention on the fact that Karski was an ordinary man who was extraordinary because he chose to act against injustice when most would have chosen otherwise. By helping pupils identify examples of injustice that they experience or observe and the obstacles that prevent students from choosing to act, pupils will be able to connect Karski's context to their own personal contexts. Then, by helping pupils form concrete action goals to which they will be held accountable by their own written words, this workshop helps them apply the lessons learned from Jan Karski's example to their own lives.

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refuges/migrants

Refugees In Poland: We Don't Care Enough

Małgorzata Darmas, Krzysztof Jankowski, Jeffrey Treisbach

Introduction

Based on the general knowledge of the group members and the discussions we had during the fellowship, we realized that the topics of immigrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers are not widely discussed in Polish schools and therefore an extracurricular workshop would be very beneficial to students. By educating students on these topics, we can at least signalize the existence of this important topic, which would potentially constitute a tiny step towards more knowledgeable and potentially more culturally-aware civil society in the future. Thus, the aim of the workshop is to raise basic awareness about this issue.

In our opinion, of immigrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers, we believe refugees face the most serious human rights challenges. In choosing this specific subject, the team will still address a broad theme of indifference that affects (most often negatively) all migrants in Polish society. The theme of indifference has been visible throughout history and the workshop will focus on some specific instances of how indifference in history led to negative outcomes. Finally, the workshops hopefully will empower students to take action and fight indifference in the future. The instructors do not seek to provide specific direction in this regard, however, as they find it is overall better for the students to conceive methods of taking action with their peers. Taking this approach will give the students more confidence to carry out realistic actions to fight indifference toward refugees in Polish society.

Aims

In addressing the issue of refugees in Poland and the indifference toward them, we decided to focus on three main aims:

1. To bring basic knowledge and awareness about the characteristics of refugees in Poland.
2. To bring reflection about indifference toward the violations of migrants' rights.
3. To empower students to take first steps towards overcoming indifference in their day-to-day life.

The first aim is vital as the knowledge base of the students is very limited. It is important to give them a base of information so that they will be able to understand the somewhat more complex issue of indifference. The second aim is important as it seeks to provide some emotional connection between the students and the refugees. This emotional connection will hopefully manifest itself in the course of one or two of the workshop activities which will be described in detail later. Finally, we hope to empower the students to take action against indifference. This concept may seem abstract to them in the beginning but through the course of the workshop they will be

encouraged to think of feasible ideas for action that they can take in and around their community. While we hope that their action against indifference will result in a more positive outcome especially for refugees, we are aware of the limits of small-scale action so the students will be encouraged to think even more broadly about indifference.



The 2013 HIA Poland
Fellows with Professor
Anna Giza-Poleszczuk

Historical Context and Indifference

Poland has an interesting history when it comes to migration, as it has been both a destination for refugees and other immigrants as well as a source of outward migration. During the Reformation times, Poland was welcoming to people from other parts of Europe which helped create a very multicultural society. On the other hand, during the 19th Century and again during the Martial Law period in the early-1980s, Poles were migrating abroad in massive numbers mainly because of political and economic reasons. In the time in between, however, Poland became much more homogenous as a result of the state's shifting borders which was followed by resettlement of large parts of populations, atrophy of regional culture, communist ideology resulting in policy of no acceptance for diversity (as nation should act as one) and in large part of the German Nazi Holocaust in the 1940s. Prior to the Holocaust, Poland had a Jewish population of around 30% which almost completely disappeared by 1945. The resulting homogenous society struggles today with how to react to an increasing inflow of immigrants from all over the world.

There are many reasons that a society would struggle with dealing with immigrants. The most common one is xenophobia, resulting from, among others, the so-called "communist freezer" in which Poland was for several decades. Although this could be considered an overall generalization, it does best describe the situation of acceptance of refugees. They fear what is different. Unfortunately in some cases this fear could manifest itself in violence. This is becoming increasingly common with the upsurge of involvement in neo-Nazi groups and radical far-right groups in Central and Eastern Europe. Such violence is loud and public but a much quieter problem – in fact a silent problem – is that of indifference. We have seen throughout history people and societies standing idly-by as groups are persecuted or even killed. It happened in the lead-up to the Holocaust when people kept quiet as Jews were facing increasingly harsh persecution. It happened even more recently in the wars in the former Yugoslavia when 8000 people were massacred in Srebrenica as United Nations Protection Force represented by the Dutch peacekeepers watched on. People always have their reasons for indifference but that does not make it right as it most often leads to bad consequences. Before the Holocaust, people probably would say they never expected it to get as bad as it did. The Dutch peacekeepers in Srebrenica had a mandate as observers so they did not act. It may seem like a large gap between the Holocaust, Srebrenica, and refugees coming to Poland but in fact indifference – the underlying common denominator – is the same throughout history, as it underscores the people's behavior towards others. It determines people's behavior not only in such extreme situations like those mentioned above, but it is visible in day-to-day life. The difference could be an intensity of this feeling/approach, but as to the principle – it remains the same. Controversial as it may sound, we argue that the lack of action against genocides of World War II has some commonality with the general attitude towards refugees in contemporary Poland. In any case, our responsibility is to tackle the indifference.

Current Context of Refugees in Poland

Following the transformation in 1989, Poland became bound by international agreements to begin aiding refugees (specifically the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, adopted on July 28, 1951 in Geneva – hereinafter the "Geneva Convention") – and the Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees of 31 January 1967 – hereinafter the "New York Protocol", amending the Convention. The country currently has a scheme in place to provide refugee status, subsidiary protection, tolerated stay, temporary protection, and asylum to people who apply and fulfill the rigorous requirements. Poland also houses people seeking refugee status in refugee centers around the country. It is a very complicated system adopted as a result of transposition of so-called *acquis communautaire* – the law of European Union together with its well-grounded interpretation, practices etc. – to the Polish state's legal system, but the fact of the matter is that the number of people who attain refugee status in Poland is very small. According to data from the Office for Foreigners, of the 10,073 individuals who applied for refugee status last year only 87 had their applications approved. The vast majority of the applications were from Russia (57%) and Georgia (30%).

There are constant challenges for refugees and asylum-seekers in Poland. As described above, the procedures developed by European Union are complicated and in practice often take far too long. There are individual integration programs but they are too short and as a result not very effective. Language barriers are a daily challenge to all foreigners in Poland. Because of the language barrier, dealing with administration and bureaucracy is yet another difficulty. Access to healthcare and the job market are particularly difficult to those residing in the refugee centers as their freedom of movement is very limited. Finally, because Polish society does not adequately address the issue of refugees, the biggest problem faced by this group is indifference. We see that indifference can lead to violence and therefore should be stopped at an early stage. Education students about indifference – using the situation of refugees – will be a start to create a more welcoming society.

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Refugees

Workshop Scenario

The main purpose of this workshop is to make accessible to high school students the issue of refugees in Poland and indifference toward them. Indifference by its very definition means people do not care about a certain topic or issue and we feel that by bringing this issue to students in an interesting and interactive way, we can grab their attention and empower them to become more active citizens in the future.

One of the first tools that we propose using to get the attention of the student is a short energizer entitled "Try On Someone Else's Shoes." In this exercise, students will be encouraged to think about a scenario dealing with refugees that is presented to them in small groups. The students will be prompted to think about the scenario given and try to put themselves in the shoes of the refugees. It is certainly a difficult exercise as the vast majority of young people in Poland live relatively comfortable lives compared to the refugees that they will be asked to think about but that is the point: to take the students out of their comfort zone and to begin to think critically.

We also propose to include a quiz during the first part of the workshop to test general knowledge about the topics to be discussed. Over the course of some time students will become aware that they do not know much about refugees in general and specifically about refugees in Poland. After discovering their lack of knowledge (and perhaps their indifference), students will be presented with data about the current situation of refugees in Poland and historical trends of Poland as a refuge.

One of the useful tools used throughout the workshop will be facilitated discussions. After several of the activities, students will be encouraged to share their thoughts on what it means to be a refugee in Poland and how they might feel if they had to be in a similar situation. This technique will be most useful during the empowerment phase of the workshop when the students are encouraged to think of ways that they can get involved in combating indifference toward refugees and in their day-to-day lives. We believe it is far more important for the students to come up with feasible ideas on their own rather than be presented them, so the students will work in small groups and create a mind-map of how they think they can take action. They will then present their ideas to the class.

During another one of the group discussions, the students will read and discuss stories of real refugees in Poland. Thanks to information provided by UNHCR, we chose four case studies that the students can think about. Each subject comes from a different part of the world but they all face similar challenges - most specifically indifference.

We realized that one of our primary goals should be delivering knowledge. Topics we tried to address were all quite new to students. We are of view that people tend to be indifferent to issues that do not involve them personally. While discussing possible topics we discovered that there is something common for all them – the attitude people generally have towards migrants and asylum seekers. This attitude can be shortly described as indifference. And that was it. Bingo! We found something relevant from human rights' perspective and something being close enough to students' every day. But is indifference a problem? We are deeply convinced that it is indeed. Indifference means ignorance. It's lack of knowledge. People often fear things they do not understand. Fear might have further implications, e.g. violence. Even though it is obviously not as easy as we describe it, indifference still remains the attitude underlying people's behaviour towards others and in this case – towards migrants.

We are confident that this workshop offers a clear and concise plan for educators to discuss a very important human rights issue with their students. The data provided has been thoroughly researched and the activities should provide an engaging and interactive way for the students to think about the issue of refugees and leave the workshop empowered to combat the indifference in Poland.

Time	Activity	Description	Aim
0:00-0:05	Introduction	Trainer gives brief introduction to workshop; keeping it brief so as to have as strong an impact as possible.	Students become aware of goals of the upcoming workshop.
0:05-0:15	Energizer – Try On Someone Else's Shoes	Students will be encouraged to take a few moments to think outside the box and put themselves in someone else's shoes. In three small groups, students will discuss a generic refugee story and the emotions that they feel about it. Although it might be difficult for them, they should try to think what they would be feeling if they themselves were in the situation of the refugees described. Students will write about their emotions in brief on a small piece of paper that will be displayed for the group. Some students may volunteer to tell the rest of the class how they feel.	Students attempt to think about the difficulties refugees face everyday.
0:15-0:30	Refugee Quiz and Presentation of Data/History	Short quiz of knowledge about refugee migration to Poland. Who is a refugee? How many refugees are there in Poland? From where do most of them come? Can they count on protection and assistance from Polish institutions? Students will then be provided answers to the questions from the previous exercise in a short presentation. The information provided will cover data and characteristics of refugee migration to Poland. Additionally some historical context will be provided.	Make students aware about their knowledge gap on the topic of refugees in order to raise their curiosity. Additionally to bring specific knowledge and awareness about the characteristics of refugee migration to Poland as well as some historical trends.
0:30-0:45	Small Group Discussions	Distribute stories about actual refugees in Poland. In small groups of 5-7 students, the students will discuss stories trying to answer three main questions: (1) What are the underlying reasons of refugees coming to Poland? How are these reasons rooted in history? (2) What kind of problems did the characters from the stories experience? (Identify problems and obstacles of refugees coming to Poland might experience.) (3) How do you feel when you hear that people who were at risk have to experience other obstacles generated by the EU law? (This question is about what kind of human rights and their violation can be observed in the stories, however students should not be asked directly about it. The exercise should stimulate them intellectually in order to let them come with their own understanding of what are human rights about).	To reflect on the stories of actual refugees in Poland and begin to consider the difficult situation in which these individuals find themselves.
		BREAK (think about the stories)	
0:00-0:05	Energizer ("Knots")	Students will take part in a quick team-building activity such as "Knots" which can be found in the Council of Europe's <i>COMPASS: A Manual on Human Rights Education with Young People</i> (page 60).	To energize the students and get them excited to work together for the second part of the workshop.
0:05-0:15	Transition to Indifference	Trainer will introduce the empowerment phase by talking about how indifference often leads to negative outcomes. To inspire students, trainer will read a quote from Martin Luther King: <i>"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter"</i> and then begin asking students some questions: Do you agree with the statement? Can we be indifferent about refugees? Can you think of other historical examples of indifference? The trainer will then display a World War II-era photo showing people indifferent to Nazi atrocities and discuss how indifference played a role.	To introduce the empowerment phase and make students aware that indifference is common and can lead to negative outcomes.



0:15-0:25	Mind-Mapping	Back in their small groups, students will recall their case studies and discuss what they could do to confront the indifference first in the stories and then toward refugees in general. Students create mind-maps that include tools and possible solutions for addressing problems that immigrants can experience in Poland. It is important that the students take ownership for their ideas meaning that they focus not necessarily on steps that the state can take but rather things they can in their own communities.	To empower students to take meaningful steps in their day-to-day lives that will help to confront indifference toward refugees in Poland.
0:25-0:40	Discussion	Representatives of small groups will present their mind-maps. Full class discusses what they've learned during the previous session. Trainer will encourage them to continue to think about ways they can feel empowered to take further steps with the goal of influencing their local societies.	Students will gain confidence to do their part to combat indifference toward refugees in Poland.
0:40-0:42	Video	Finish the session with a quick video about indifference toward refugees.	Students leave with not just knowledge but also an image of how they can fight indifference, acknowledging the problems that need to be addressed and armed with the tools necessary to address them.
0:42-0:45	Evaluation	Simple evaluation with each student writing what they liked, didn't like, and what they learned.	For the trainer to learn from the students and for students to recall something significant that they learned during the workshop.

Introduction

Time Allotted:

5 minutes

Aim:

Students become aware of goals of the upcoming workshop.

Instructions:

The trainers should introduce themselves and the workshop. The trainers should keep the introduction to the workshop general (saying that the class will be talking about refugees) without going into detail about the topic of indifference as this will be introduced later in the workshop.

Materials: None

Energizer - Try On Someone Else's Shoes

Time Allotted:

10 minutes

Aim:

Students attempt to think about the difficulties refugees face everyday.

Instructions:

Read the following brief text and try to put themselves in this situation:

"Imagine that you are living comfortably with your family in a small town just outside the capital of the major country in Europe. Your father is a journalist and your mother is a professor. They're well-known and seem to have some people who don't like them because of the things that your father writes in his newspaper. Twice in the past month, the front window of your home has been shattered by someone who threw a brick through it and earlier this week people started protesting outside of your father's office. At school, you have been made fun of because of what is happening to your parents. Finally, last night at dinner, your parents told you that you will be leaving the country because it's no longer safe to stay here in your country."



Now distribute a "shoe" for each student, ask them to get into small groups of 5-7 students and talk to each other how they would feel if they were in this situation. The students should write a word or phrase onto the shoe and post it to a designated area of at the front of the room. After all the students post their "shoes," ask for a few of them to share their thoughts with the group.

Tell the students that, while it seems hard to believe, this could be the reality for a lot of kids their age, not specifically in Poland, but all around the world in general. Often times, the violence is far worse than this and it is not easy to find refuge somewhere else.

Materials:

- "Shoe" for every student



Refugee Quiz and Presentation of Data/History

Time Allotted:

15 minutes

Aim:

Make students aware about their knowledge gap on the topic of refugees in order to raise their curiosity. Additionally to bring specific knowledge and awareness about the characteristics of refugee migration to Poland as well as some historical trends.

Instructions:

Begin this session with a short quiz of the students:

- Who is a refugee?
- How many refugees are there in Poland?
- From where do most of them come?
- Where they can find help? Are there any institutions in Poland, which aim to provide help to refugees? What kind of specific help do refugees need?



Students will discover that they don't know much about refugees, so proceed to present them with basic data about refugees and data specific to Poland. Students will become acquainted both with the historical and current contexts. Consider using the PowerPoint presentation.

Materials:

- PowerPoint presentation (http://www.humanityinaction.org/files/624-RefugeesinPoland_PPT.pdf)

Small Group Discussions

Time Allotted:

15 minutes

Aim:

To reflect on the story of actual refugees in Poland and begin to consider the difficult situation in which these individuals find themselves.

Instructions:

Organize small groups of 5-7 students. Distribute the stories found below to each group (one story per group). Have the students in the groups read the stories and begin discussing them amongst each other. Suggest the following discussion questions:

- What are the underlying reasons of refugees coming to Poland? How are these reasons rooted in history?
- What kind of problems did the characters from the stories experience? (Identify problems and obstacles of refugees coming to Poland might experience.)
- How do you feel, is this right that they experience such obstacles? Why do you think so?

With a few minutes of the allotted time left, ask the groups to share what human rights they felt could have been violated in their stories.

Materials:

- Refugee stories cards (see below)

Mehmet

arrived to Poland in 2007 from Chechnya. The village in which his cousin lived was attacked by rebels. One of them died in the firefight and the others vowed revenge. The cousin being threatened with death decided to flee. In Chechnya revenge concerns an entire family, so Mehmet had to flee with his cousin too. Despite the danger his father decided to stay in Chechnya. 15-year-old Mehmet and his cousin went by train to Moscow, then to Brest and further to Terespol on the Polish-Belarusian border. They wanted to get to France. Unfortunately for them, when the border guards realized that Mehmet was still a minor, he was placed in an orphanage. His cousin managed to illegally get to France, where he has lived since then. He sent his friend to Poland to bring Mehmet to Paris, but on their way to France, just after crossing the German-Polish border they were stopped by the police and sent back to Poland. Refugees cannot benefit from freedom of movement within the European Union and must remain in the country in which they were granted refugee status. Mehmet learned Polish language at school at the orphanage. He speaks without a foreign accent. He works as a salesman of AGD goods. He wants to be an actor. He says he wants to stay in Poland.

Mawuegan

arrived to Poland from Togo in 2006. He had to flee from Togo. He took part in a political demonstration and was to be arrested. "I had the choice to be severely beaten and put into prison or to escape abroad. I applied for asylum in many countries. I received an affirmative decision from Poland," says Mawuegan Koami. He lives in Warsaw. He got a job with the help of a foundation supporting refugees. Searching job was not easy. When Mawuegan was calling to potential employers he immediately was being refused. "An offer was suddenly becoming obsolete. But when my Polish friends were calling in order to ask for the same job offer it was still up to date and the employer was ready to give job to someone," comments Koami. He believes that this is his Polish language that causes such situations. "When employers hear that they are dealing with a foreigner, they just brush me off," he adds. In the end, he got a job in a car factory – thanks to his friend, not by searching in newspapers for a job offer.



Energizer - "Knots"

Time Allotted:

5 minutes

Aim:

To energize the students and get them ready to work together for the second part of the workshop.

Instructions:

Tell everyone to stand shoulder to shoulder in a circle with their arms stretched out in front of them.

- They should now reach out and grab hands across the circle, so that each person holds hands with two other people. No one may hold the hand of someone immediately beside them. The result is what looks like a big knot of hands.
- Now tell people to untangle the knot without letting go of the hands.
- Note: They will have to climb under and over each other's arms. It takes a little patience, but the surprising result will be one or two big circles.

(from COMPASS page 60)

Materials: None

Mohad

was a fish vendor in Kismayo, in southern Somalia. He is married and has four children. He was frequently visited in his house by the rebels Al-Shabab. The rebels were asking him who he supported – them or the government forces. Mohamed did not want to make a choice on either side. Since he was not safe in his own home, he decided to escape from Somalia. He left his wife and children and headed across the Sahara Desert and the Mediterranean Sea arrived by sea to Malta. The transportation cost him (by the Somali standards) a small fortune – only for sea transport he paid \$1,200. Each of the 27 other passengers paid a similar amount. The journey lasted four days. After two days they ran out of water and food. After landing in Malta Mohad asked for help in finding a place where he could get a residence permit for himself and for his family. Shortly thereafter, Mohad was transported to Poland. He started learning the Polish language and rented an apartment. His main goal now is to reunite with his family and bring them to Poland, where they could live normally. To achieve it, beyond the administrative problems (travel papers, tickets, etc.), Mohad must bear the cost of bringing his family to Poland which is estimated to be several thousand U.S. dollars. This is a very high sum for an unemployed refugee who does not fluently speak a language of the country in which he lives. Mohad shares a small apartment with six other refugees; he leaves the apartment very rarely. Each month he gets PLN 750 of financial help of which he spends PLN 450 on the rent. Mohad calls his wife once a month. He still hopes that even though the war split up his family, he will see them once again.

Zelimchan

Murbajew arrived from Chechnya with his wife and three children. He lives in a center for refugees in Poland. In theory he should not, because he was covered by the so-called subsidiary protection. Any person granted such status must, within two months, move out, find their own lodgings, work and submit an application to participate in the one-year integration program. Zelimchan did not manage to complete this. He wanted so, but he did not succeed. "I was late with the application, because I appealed at that time from the previous decision I received. I felt that I should get a refugee status instead of the subsidiary protection. I did not know that I have only two months. I do not know Polish law. I did not know that by being late I would lose the right to the social assistance," explains Murbajew. Neither he nor his family is entitled to such help at this moment. The center for refugees provides him with only a small room which is six square meters. A foreigner who comes to Poland and requests for a refugee status has a right to stay in the center for refugees for the first half of a year, but he cannot take a job. After half a year he theoretically is allowed to work, but for someone who speaks little Polish and lives in the center it is often impossible to find any job. Within two months after receiving the affirmative decision on his subsidiary protection, an individual who has lived in the complex must leave and apply to the social assistance center to take part in the so-called Individual Integration Programme. The beneficiary of this program receives from PLN 531 to 1260 for living including the costs of learning Polish, as well as access to free medical services. The program lasts one year and the assumption is that it is sufficient to ensure that one can really start living a normal life and is able to take care for his own affairs. "It is impossible to learn the Polish language well. At the same time work and housing issues are a vicious circle. To get regular work I have to be registered (zameldowany). And how I can register myself while being unemployed all the time?" says Zelimchan Murbajew.

Transition to Indifference

Time Allotted:

10 minutes

Aim:

To introduce the empowerment phase and make students aware that indifference is a widely spread attitude and can lead to negative outcomes.

Instructions:

Begin a short discussion with the students about indifference by reading the following quote from Martin Luther King, Jr: "Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter" and then ask students the following questions:

- Do you agree with the statement?
- What kind of attitudes do your community take towards refugees? Which attitude do you think is best?
- Can you think of other historical examples of indifference?



After some discussion of the above questions, display the photo below and ask the students what they see. After listening to some answers address the indifference being shown by the people looking on.

Materials:

- Photograph (Source: <http://filipspagnoli.files.wordpress.com/2010/12/victim-of-famine-in-warsaw-ghetto.jpeg>)



Mind-Mapping

Time Allotted:

10 minutes

Aim:

To empower students to take meaningful steps in their day-to-day lives that will help to confront indifference toward refugees in Poland.

Instructions:

Organize small groups of 5-7 students. Ask each group to consider the issue of indifference that was just discussed and think about how Polish society is indifferent toward refugees. Can we do something about it? Yes! Have the students think of two innovative ways that they can fight indifference and ask them to put their plan into a mind-map. The students should think creatively but also remember to come up with feasible ideas. They should be encouraged to think specifically about their local societies and what change they can bring there.

Materials:

- Flipchart paper (one or two sheets per group)

Discussion

Time Allotted:

15 minutes

**Aim:**

Students will gain confidence to do their part to combat indifference toward refugees in Poland.

Instructions:

Ask students to present their mind-maps to the class. Each small group can choose a representative to speak for the group. Then begin a discussion by asking what the students learned and what opportunities they see in the future to fight indifference toward refugees in Polish society. Specifically, try to focus on actions possible to be taken in their local societies – as affecting change to laws will be out of the students' range of possibilities.

Materials:

- Flipchart (optional)

Video

Time Allotted:

2 minutes

Aim:

Students leave with not just knowledge but also an idea of how they can fight indifference.

Instructions:

Show students the short one-minute video that raises awareness of situation of refugees in Poland.

Materials:

- Projector
- Internet access to screen film which can be found at:
http://www.kampaniespoleczne.pl/kampanie,2802,czy_gospodarz_wpusci_na_podworko

Evaluation

Time Allotted:

3 minutes

Aim:

For the trainer to learn from the students and for students to recall something significant that they learned during the workshop.

Instructions:

Distribute three small pieces of paper (three different colors) to each of the students. Prompt them to write on one color what they liked, on the second color what they didn't like, and on the third color what they learned. Then have them post the notes in a designated spot at the front of the room.

Materials:

- Self-adhesive slips of paper (three different colors)



Roma minority

Educating Polish Pupils about the Roma Minority

Ankur Doshi, Nara Narimanova, Katarzyna Klimowicz

Overview

The Roma population is currently one of the most marginalized minorities in Poland. Poland faces the challenging task of integrating, educating, and empowering its 20,000 Roma people.¹ Fortunately, the Polish government has made considerable strides in protecting the Roma community. For example, the Ministry of Interior and Administration has committed some 100 million zlotys over a ten-year period since 2010 to finance programs for Roma people.² The Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights recognizes that Poland has made "positive changes" in various aspects of Roma life. Though we applaud this progress, more work needs to be done to change the negative biases and perceptions against Roma community that exist in Polish society. We propose to create awareness of these issues at the local school level. Through education, awareness, and introspection, we believe that empowering Polish pupils is the first step for long-term integration of the Roma community.

Historical Context

According to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the Roma people have been in Poland for hundreds of years. Based on linguistic and genetic comparisons, historians theorize that the Roma people migrated from northern India to Europe around 13th century CE.³ From Spain to Romania, they have since settled all over Europe. Over the course of many years, they have lived a predominantly nomadic lifestyle and have remained physically and culturally isolated from local European communities.⁴ According to Roma Magazine, the some 20,000 Roma in Poland are divided into four main groups: Polska Roma, Lowarowie, Kelderasze, and Bergitka.⁵ Many of them still live in impoverished conditions, without access to health, education, or employment, circumstances to which Roma people have been no stranger for centuries.

Without a unified voice or state of their own, the Roma have been discriminated for many years and suffered greatly during the Holocaust. Just like Jews, the Roma were viewed as an "inferior race," and although there are no precise numbers, scholars believe tens of thousands of Roma were murdered in the series of concentration

¹ Zuchora-Walske, Christine. Poland. Essential Library, 2013. Countries of the World Set 2.

² "The Report on the Situation of Roma Community in Poland." Związek Romów Polskich. March 2012.

³ "Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti Within the OSCE Area, Ministerial Decision No. 3/03.

⁴ *ibid.*

⁵ <http://www.romamagazine.eu/2012/the-current-situation-of-polish-roma/>

and death camps.⁶ Many of them died on Polish soil in Auschwitz-Birkenau and Treblinka.⁷ The Roma remain as one of the least studied and recognized.⁸ For example, it was not until 1979 that the West German Federal Parliament acknowledged that the Nazi persecution of Roma was based on racism. Most Roma Holocaust survivors had already died at that time, so very few were able to apply for compensation.⁹ The legacy of the Holocaust continues today, as Roma people have still been unable to integrate into European society and are still subject to widespread discrimination.

Prevalence of Discrimination

Discrimination is one of the largest barriers for social movement, as it hurts access to employment, education, housing, and healthcare. Racist, discriminatory, and xenophobic acts against Roma are paramount all over Europe, and Poland is no exception. In 1991, a neo-fascist organization called the Polish National Front distributed posters that called for violence against Roma for their expulsion from Poland.¹⁰ A decade later, Mr. Nicolae Gheorghe, the former Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe's Advisor on Roma and Sinti issues, and his assistant were denied service at a café in Warsaw presumably because of their Roma background.¹¹ A few months after, neo-Nazi groups sprayed racist graffiti, broke windows, and harassed Roma families in Brzeg town.¹² In yet another example, a Roma woman was refused an injection in Opolskie Voivodship because "she was dirty" due to her dark-skin complexion.¹³ These examples highlight the range of discriminatory acts committed against Roma in society. In addition, it is estimated that only five percent of discriminatory cases against Roma are reported.¹⁴ Furthermore, in a survey done in 2008, over 59% of Roma respondents stated they had been victims of discrimination in the past year.¹⁵

Furthermore, there are many examples of racist and discriminatory acts committed by government officials. Reports have suggested that police officials often unfairly treat Roma people as thieves and perpetrators and police officers have used unnecessary force when working with Roma people.¹⁶ Though the government is committed to providing resources, such as housing, for the Roma population, these facilities have often failed to meet basic standards. For example, a report from the Lower Silesia Voivodship states that living

Our group consisted of a Pole, and American and an Ukrainian and our task was to create a workshop on Roma issues for Polish youth from ages 16-19. It was rather difficult to come up with specific ideas of the workshop, but the three of us knew what we wanted to do – we wanted to create a tool to educate the students on Roma history, culture, and connected Human Rights issues in Poland, to raise awareness about diversity among the Roma ethnic group, and to help students in identifying and intervening on discriminatory behaviors. As we started our research, we quickly found out that the Roma population faces discrimination and racism in many aspects of society, and many of them do not have access to proper healthcare, education, or political representation. We also discovered that many people in Polish society hold biases against the Roma community. In our workshop, we knew that we would have to bring these issues up to the Polish pupils. Although in the beginning we wanted to make a video documenting Roma people in Poland, we realized that it was best for us to focus on creating a simple, influential, and effective workshop that would allow the Polish pupils to reconsider the biases they may hold against the Roma.

⁶ <http://www.minorityrights.org/1866/poland/roma.html>

⁷ <http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005219>

⁸ *ibid.*

⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰ "The Report on the Situation of Roma Community in Poland." Związek Romów Polskich. March 2012.

¹¹ *ibid.*

¹² *ibid.*

¹³ *ibid.*

¹⁴ Topińska, Irena. "Poland: Promoting Social Inclusion of Roma." Centre for Social and Economic Research, CASE. August 2011.

¹⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁶ <http://www.minorityrights.org/1866/poland/roma.html>



conditions in one Roma settlement is abysmal, without proper toilets or running water.¹⁷ A study in done in 2001 in Świętokrzyskie voivodship showed that 84% of flats had no bathroom or toilet, 68% had no running water, and only 4% had central heating.¹⁸ Moreover, the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) has documented police officers raiding informal settlements of Roma people. According to the ERRC, these discriminatory acts are hardly investigated and usually go unpunished.¹⁹

Though anti-discrimination legislation exists to protect Roma people, biases against Roma in society make it difficult to enforce these protections. Perhaps the most difficult challenge in empowering Roma people is overcoming the negative perceptions of the Roma community in Poland. Many media outlets exploit the negative stereotypes of Roma people.²⁰ Though no official quantitative data exists to our knowledge, media outlets often show Roma people as threats to local Polish people, as instigators of violence, and as nomadic criminals. News reporters often perpetuate and exaggerate negative representations of Roma people, which have reportedly increased discriminatory acts in communities.²¹ Overcoming the chronic discrimination requires unequivocal efforts from both Roma and Poles to change the status quo.

Education

Educational opportunity and attainment is crucial for integrating the Roma community. Research shows that school enrollment of Roma children has remained low and stagnant since 2004. In some parts of the country, such as Warmińsko-Mazurskie and Podkarpackie, only half of Roma children are in school.²² Furthermore, teachers and day-care supervisors have known to discriminate against Roma children. In one example, a supervisor prevented a Roma child from participating in the day-room activities.²³ Moreover, many Roma students are shunted into special schools at a record high rate on basis of "learning difficulties" and "poor grades."²⁴ However, a study done by the Jagiellonian University found that two-thirds of Roma students that are forced into special schools are capable of learning in normal Polish schools.²⁵ Though scholarships exist for Roma students

¹⁷ "The Report on the Situation of Roma Community in Poland." Związek Romów Polskich. March 2012.

¹⁸ Topińska, Irena. "Poland: Promoting Social Inclusion of Roma." Centre for Social and Economic Research, CASE. August 2011.

¹⁹ <http://www.errc.org/article/racial-discrimination-and-attacks-on-roma-in-poland/695>

²⁰ *ibid.*

²¹ *ibid.*

²² Topińska, Irena. "Poland: Promoting Social Inclusion of Roma." Centre for Social and Economic Research, CASE. August 2011.

²³ "The Report on the Situation of Roma Community in Poland." Związek Romów Polskich. March 2012.

²⁴ <http://www.thenews.pl/1/9/Artykul/57509,Polish-Roma-children-shunted-into-special-schools>

²⁵ *ibid.*

going into universities, very few Roma students progress through the primary and secondary schools. The Polish National Ministry of Education reported that only 0.8% of Roma have obtained a university-level degree.²⁶ Without many educated Roma, it has been difficult for members of the community to hold high positions in administration or seek prestigious employment opportunities.

In addition, the school curriculum does not adequately cover Roma history, culture, and language in Poland.²⁷ The European Roma Rights Center has advocated for an advanced curriculum to be taught in Polish schools about Roma awareness and discrimination against them. Furthermore, this curriculum needs to be taught in a non-discriminatory and unbiased fashion, which is difficult to accomplish considering Roma are not mentioned in Poland's core curriculum and that teacher training programs on diversity and multiculturalism are implemented in only few schools.²⁸ Polish ethnologist Adam Bartosz, director of the Roma Ethnographic Museum in Tarnów, Poland, has stated that Eastern Europeans rarely study Roma history, and he admits that "only a small number" of visitors come to the Roma Ethnographic Museum each year.

There is a need to educate Polish pupils on Roma issues. As stated above, the Polish curriculum does not adequately cover the history of the Roma people in Poland. Furthermore, without Roma students staying the classroom, the Polish pupils' knowledge of and interactions with Roma students is limited. Without schools taking proper measures, the task of education Polish youth on Roma issues is often assigned to the media. Thus, Polish pupils' understanding of Roma might be often limited just to the stereotypes and negative attitudes of Roma people, which are commonly exploited by the media.

The Role of Our Workshop

We believe that awareness is the first step in battling these negative perceptions that prevent social assimilation. We believe that the most effective way to change the social status quo is by empowering today's Polish youth through introspection, education, and increased awareness.

We want to create a workshop that allows Polish pupils to think about discrimination and Roma issues in a different way. Though we highlight facts and figures, we want the workshop to focus on brainstorming and discussion. We also want to utilize a variety of teaching methods to cater to various learning styles of pupils. Finally, we want to bring the issue of injustice and inaccessibility to level of the individual.

Our goals are to educate the students on Roma, history, culture, and interconnected human rights issues in Poland, to raise awareness about diversity among Roma ethnic group, and to help students identify and intervene on discriminatory behaviors. The general order of our workshop is as follows: Introduction and Reflective Questions, Video, Case Studies, Game Show, and Conclusion and Reflective Questions.

In the first part of the workshop, we introduce the topic and ask three Reflective Questions. The pupils will be required to answer these questions and write them down. However, the answers will not be shared. The purpose of these questions is to get the students thinking about discrimination and Roma, both on an abstract and personal level. We believe that this workshop will only be successful if the issue can be brought close to

²⁶ <http://www.romazine.eu/2012/the-current-situation-of-polish-roma/>

²⁷ Fox, Jon and Vidra, Zsuzsanna. "Applying Tolerance Indicators: Roma School Segregation." University of Bristol and Central European University. December 2013.

²⁸ *ibid.*

the Polish pupils, and thus we ask the pupils to think about their personal lives and how they have perceived and/interacted with Roma.

The video, made by the Association of Roma in Poland, follows the questions. This six-minute video covers the history and culture of Roma population through a series of interviews. The video is in Polish. We believe that instead of having the presenters talk about the history and culture of Roma, it would be more effective to show an interesting video with Roma people discussing the matter.

After the video, the pupils will be divided into four groups. Each group will receive a case study. The case studies will highlight four Roma individuals (Roma mother, public officer, law student, artist) and their challenges in Polish society. After reading the case study, each group will discuss answers to specific questions that address the negative stereotypes, difficulties of integration, and challenges of these people. Each group will share its findings with the rest of the class. Also, we believe that the case studies will break stereotypes about Roma, since they show the diversity of Roma individuals within the ethnic group. This concludes the first 45-minute session.



Dr. Andrzej
Mirga, OSCE

Photo: Benjamin Overton

In the second session, we start with a game show. The class will be divided into two teams, and teams take turns answering four categories of questions (Roma History, Roma Culture, Roma in Poland, and pertinent organizations). Different questions in each category have different point values. The answers to these questions were all covered in the introduction, video, and case studies. We believe that the game show will allow a healthy competition in the learning process. We also believe that this game show will help solidify some of the information they have learned, as all of the answers were covered at one point in the workshop. Furthermore, by telling the pupils about the game show at the beginning of the workshop, they have an added incentive to pay attention and possibly take notes. The game show adds an interactive dimension not found in many traditional workshop activities, and we hope to take advantage of that.

Finally, we conclude with a few more reflective questions. Again, the answers will be written down, but they will not be shared. The idea for the concluding reflective questions is to remind them to think about these issues and what they have learned in the workshop. Lastly, the concluding reflective questions are aimed at providing the pupils a sense of empowerment, that they can, in their own lives, prevent discrimination against Roma and ultimately help them integrate with the rest of society.

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Educating Polish Pupils about the Roma Minority

TRAINING WORKSHOP

Problem Description/Diagnosis:

- Roma people are one of Poland's oldest minorities
- About 20,000 Roma people live in Poland
- They face discrimination and racism in all aspects of society
- Many of them live in poor areas without access to proper healthcare, education, and political representation
- Polish students have little interaction with Roma people
- Polish educational curriculum does not adequately address Roma history and culture
- Polish pupils' views of Roma people are often based on stereotypes and negative attitudes

Workshop Goals:

- 1) to educate the students on Roma history, culture and connected Human Rights issues in Poland
- 2) to raise awareness about diversity among the Roma ethnic group
- 3) to help students to identify and intervene on discriminatory behaviors

Target Group:

16-19 years old students from Polish high-schools

Content Overview:

	Description	Time
Introduction and Reflective Questions	Introduction to Roma	10-15
Video	<p>The video will illustrate the history, customs, daily life and human rights issues of Roma people. It will be provided by the Association of Roma in Poland: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lv197E1x0nE</p> <p>Additionally, the video will illustrate the discrimination of the Roma people through the legislative aspects of Human Rights perspective.</p>	10

Case Study	In our case studies, students, in groups, will read descriptions of four individuals representing the same ethnic Roma minority in Poland, each with unique life stories (including interests, professions, social backgrounds, challenges faced in everyday life situations). These case studies aim to highlight the diversity among people, who although are described by the same name, in fact have different characteristics. This way students will be able to confront their stereotypical thinking and reflect on uniqueness of human beings regardless their ethno-cultural labels. Apart from discussing these life stories in groups, students' task will be also to present possible positive practices and favourable attitudes of representatives of Polish society which could facilitate the Roma people dealing with everyday problems and challenges.	20
Quiz - Game Show	This game show will use the „Jeopardy” style format (the Polish equivalent would be a popular game show called "Va banque"). The students will be divided into two or three teams. Each team will take turns answering questions. The questions will be taken from the material in the introduction, video, and case studies. Through this exercise, the students will work together to answer questions. It is believed that the competitive nature of this game show will allow for increased interaction and involvement across all students in a way that the video and case studies may not. By telling the students in advance about the quiz game at the end of the lesson, the students have an incentive to listen attentively throughout the presentation, as the answers to the questions will be taken from the presentation components. Human beings learn through repetition. By using a game show, it is believed that these students will be more likely to remember the presentation and its lessons.	30
Conclusion and Reflective Questions	This workshop is very interactive and it provides students more comprehensive skills to learn, remember, write, read and watch. At the end students with the help of a trainer and given questions will reflect on what they have learned and how their attitudes changed throughout the workshop. They will be also given a list of recommended readings to increase their knowledge on their own.	15
Total		85-90

Methodology:

- we aim to broaden and adapt our presentation to all possible learning styles.
- we aim to make this lesson introspective, collaborative, and fun 😊

Equipment/Resources:

Projector
 Laptop with an access to the Internet
 Connection to projector
 Flipchart/Some sort of board
 Paper and Pens
 Timer

Content Specifics:

- time duration is approximate/suggested

Introduction: (5 minutes)

- introduce team members
- introduce goals and outline (possible PPT slides)
- quickly establish ground rules (tell them and ask if they agree)

Reflective Questions: (10 minutes)

- students answer individual on their own pieces of paper
- time permitted, answers can be shared anonymously upon collection of papers
- three sentences per answer

1. What is a national/ethnic minority?
2. Have you ever met representatives of Roma minority in person? Describe your personal interaction with them.
3. What do you think, where do Roma people originally come from?

Introduction after questions to the history of Roma People:

According to one of the historical theories, Roma people are believed to have originated from northern and western provinces of Pakistan and India. Their life in Iran as nomads contributed to transformation of their language, which still has Hindi and Urdu roots. The Romani language is divided into several dialects, which add up to an estimated number of speakers larger than two million. Furthermore, many Roma are native speakers of the language spoken in their country of residence.

Video: (10 minutes)

Plan of Action: The video is provided by the Association of Roma in Poland: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lv197E1x0nE>.

Case Study: (20 minutes)

4 case studies (Roma mother, Roma public officer, Roma law university student, Roma artist) of individuals, showing the diversity of Roma community.

- in the group, students will list challenges of individuals and possible ways to solve them (through policy, NGO, etc.) for 8 minutes.
- groups will present for 3 minutes to the entire class.

Case Study 1

Read carefully the description of the case of Mrs. Danuta Bil's family and answer the questions mentioned below:

Mrs. Danuta Bil is a Polish Roma and a mother of ten children. Danuta was raised and lives with her husband in a council house in Wrocław in Lower Silesia. One day, her 15 years old twins went out on the backyard and were attacked by a group of young Polish boys, who asked Danuta's sons for a cigarette, which they did not have. Polish boys were drunk and started a fight. When Danuta saw what is going on, ran down to the backyard together with her husband and tried to separate the fighting boys. When she asked the aggressors to stop and go away she has heard a series of abusive insults.

Danuta was terrified. She started to scream and shout, but none of the neighbours who were watching the scene from their windows did not react and did not call the police. Danuta's husband was severely beaten by five friends of drunk boys who came with baseball bats. Also Danuta had to struggle with the thugs who were aggressively offending her.

Finally the police came. Danuta was screaming with fear but one of the police officers rebuked her.

She told the police that people in their neighborhood spit on and look askance at her family. The police officer said that he will come when there is a problem.

After the fight Danuta's husband had his jaw displaced, lip cut and head bit-up. Her family was so scared after that incident that they decided to move out for some time to their close relatives. Danuta says that Roma people often hear on the street obnoxious insults, such as: "Gypsies" and "sluts," mostly from young men. She is scared almost every day when her children come back home from school.

Case study is based on the article "Wołają na nas: Cygani, brudasy, czarnuchy" by Gazeta Wyborcza, available online: <http://wroclaw.gazeta.pl/wroclaw/2029020,35771,6399297.html>

1. What was the reason of the fight started by Polish group of drunk boys?
2. How would you describe the attitude of Mrs Danuta's neighbors watching the incident? How should they react in order to prevent the fight?
3. What was the reaction of the police? Do you think that police officers would act differently if they were dealing with non-Roma people? Do you think that the police should react differently? How?
4. What would you do if you have heard someone insulting an innocent person on the street? How would you feel if someone was offending you every day without any reason?

Case Study 2

Read carefully the description of the case of Mr. Andrzej Mirga and answer the questions mentioned below:

Mr. Andrzej Mirga was born in 1954 in the small Roma hamlet of Czarna Góra. His father was an illiterate blacksmith and his mother was a housewife. Andrzej has four sisters and five brothers with whom in childhood he played on the muddy road of the village inhabited by ca. 250 people. Although his father had no education, he put great emphasis on the education of his children, because he wanted them to live better life than he did. Thanks to his insisting father, Andrzej was the first Roma university student in Poland. He studied at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, specializing in ethnography. He also taught there from 1980 – 1992.

After his work as an educator, Mr. Andrzej Mirga decided to work on behalf of the Roma community. He held various offices in several international Roma organizations and advisory bodies. After the fall of socialism he was a co-founder of the first Roma association in Poland, which he directed from 1991-1995. He was the organizer of two historical commemorations on the occasion of remembering the Roma Holocaust, one in 1993 and one in 1994 at Auschwitz-Birkenau and in Krakow. In 1995 he also represented Romani people at a Days of Remembrance ceremony in Washington D.C. Currently Mr. Andrzej Mirga is working as a Senior Adviser on Roma and Sinti Issues and he heads the Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues in the OSCE's (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) Warsaw-based Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). It is active throughout the OSCE area in the fields of election observation, democratic development, human rights, tolerance and non-discrimination, and rule of law.

When asked which stereotypes about Roma are the most dangerous, Mr. Mirga says: "One of the most frequent stereotypes is that Roma suffer from a predisposition to criminal behavior. All my life I have heard the most unbelievable hyperbole about statistics on so-called 'Roma crime'. I'm not saying Roma people have never broken the law, but we should be cautious about making empty claims about Roma and crime in general."

Based on an article "Z Taboru Na Uniwersytet" by Newsweek Polska, available online: <http://spoleczenstwo.newsweek.pl/z-taboru-na-universytet,18853,3,1.html> and an article "Andrzej Mirga: We should be cautious about making empty claims" available on the Romea website: <http://www.romea.cz/en/en-romano-vodi/andrzej-mirga-we-should-be-cautious-about-making-empty-claims>.

1. What kind of challenges Mr. Andrzej Mirga had to face on the way to his career?
2. Which professions can people with Roma origins practice in Poland? What does it depend on?
3. How can teachers and directors of schools support Roma children in choosing their educational paths and achieving their goals?

4. Why generalizations and stereotypes can be sometimes very offensive and harmful? How would you feel if you have heard on the foreign news about "Polish thieves"?

Case Study 3

Read carefully the description of the case of Mr. Karol Parno Gierliński and answer the questions mentioned below:

Mr. Karol Parno Gierliński was born in 1938 in Poznań in a Sinti family. His parents died during the Holocaust and he was raised by his grandmother. He finished a high school specializing in chemistry and studied in National Academy of Fine Arts. As a young man Karol served in national Polish Army, worked first as a coppersmith and later as a teacher and instructor of art in local community centres.

Mr. Karol Parno Gierliński is currently an appreciated writer, a well known poet and a sculptor. His poems are written in Polish and they often treat of Gypsy issues, such as forced resignation from the nomadic way of life. At the same time in his stories one can find numerous references to universal themes, reflections about the world and the essence of humanity.

He recognizes that in a changing world conditions, education is a prerequisite not only for social advancement, but also for a decent life. Thus he became the author of the first in Poland (and one of the very few in the world) textbook for Roma school children "Miri school/ Romano elementaro".

Additionally, Karol Parno Gierliński is a member of the board of several Roma associations. In 2005 he has been chosen as a representative of The Parliament of International Romani Union. Mr. Gierliński is currently conducting workshops in local high schools and teaches about Roma minority in Poland. He says that the biggest problem in educating on Roma issues are often ignorant teachers who with the word Roma associate only negative stereotypes such as "All Gypsies are thieves".

This case study is based on articles from the official Mr. Karol Parno Gierliński's website: <http://www.parno.polino.net/> and a telephone interview with him.

1. What kind of character features could have influenced who Mr. Karol Parno Gierliński is?
2. How could the fact of Roma Holocaust influence the personal story of Mr. Karol Parno Gierliński?
3. Why do you think Mr. Karol Parno Gierliński's poetry became widely appreciated?
4. Where do the stereotypes and prejudices about Roma minority in Poland mainly come from?

Case Study 4

Read carefully the description of the case of Ms. Judyta Górniak and answer the questions mentioned below:

Ms. Judyta Górniak is a Polish Roma who studied law at the University of Wrocław. She was a very good student, she got the governmental scholarship for the whole period of her studies and her life motto is "study, study and once again study". At the beginning of her career a lot of people from the Roma community did not believe that Judyta will manage to finish her studies and pass all the difficult exams. Many Polish people are surprised when she reveals that she represents Roma minority in Poland. Because she is very successful she is perceived as a kind of anti-stereotype of Roma people.

She currently helps people representing them in regional courts and she provides legal advice at the Roma Education Assistants Association. From 2012 Judyta works in Świebodzice on the position of the Commissioner for the Roma minority.

As a lawyer and a legal advisor Ms. Judyta Górniak often meets Poles who offend Roma people and accuse them of their failures. When she informs those people about her Roma origins and that she now gives them free legal advice, they turn red and apologize.

This case is based on an interview with Judyta, made on the occasion of a social campaign "Jedni z wielu" aiming at changing the stereotypical perception of Roma People in Poland. The interview is available online: <http://jednizwielu.pl/romowie-w-polsce/wywiady/wywiad-z-judyta-gorniak>.

1. Why people from the Roma community did not believe that Ms. Judyta Górniak can succeed in her studies and her profession?
2. Why in a direct face-to-face contact with Judyta Poles change their attitude towards Roma People?
3. What impact, in your opinion, do the anti-stereotypes have on the general perception of minority communities?
4. How can we encourage people whose relatives do not believe that they can succeed because of their origin.

Quiz - Game Show: (30 minutes)

Link to PPT presentation:

http://www.humanityinaction.org/files/527-ROMA_Workshop_PPT.pdf

	History	Culture	Roma in Poland	Pertinent Organizations
100 points				
200 points				
300 points				
400 points				

Rules:

Teacher is in control of the game at all times. She or he should keep track of which questions have been answered. Teacher decides any arguments about wordings of answer. Teacher controls the timer and score.

1. The pupils will divide into two teams.
2. One team will be selected to go first.
3. The Team A picks a question (example: Culture for 300). The teacher selects that question, and the question is shown on the screen. To view the answer, the teacher should click the mouse anywhere on the screen. After the answer is viewed, the teacher must click the "Game Show Man" icon to return to the original screen. It is imperative that this sequence is followed.
4. If Team A answers correctly, then this team earns the number of points. After answering correctly, Team A gets to continue the turn, and it picks another question (example: History for 200).
 - a. If Team A answers incorrectly (or does not answer within 60 seconds), it loses the number of points.
 - a. It is now Team B's turn.

5. Once a question has been attempted, it can no longer be re-selected. For example, if Team A chose Culture for 300, that question cannot be re-selected (even if one or both teams got it wrong).
6. Play continues until all questions have been answered. The team with the most points wins!

Reflective Questions: (10 minutes)

1. What have you learned during the workshop?
2. What has changed in your way of thinking about the Roma community?
3. How will you continue to learn more about Roma people more?

Conclusion:

Interaction workshop which allows students to challenge the views and appreciate diversity of the Roma ethnic group.

Key Terms:

Roma minority, Romophobia, Roma Holocaust, stereotypes, prejudices, discrimination, racism

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Autism in Poland: Contemporary Hurdles and a Haunted Past

Autism in Poland: Contemporary Hurdles and a Haunted Past

Cariad Chester, Mariana Pryven, Jan Świątek

On 6 September 2012, President Bronisław Komorowski moved Poland one step closer to realizing the dream of an egalitarian society. Following unanimous support from the Sejm, President Komorowski ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and committed Poland to eliminating disability-based discrimination. Unfortunately, protecting human rights demands more than signing international conventions. Despite increasing public awareness, the rights of persons with disabilities remain in jeopardy throughout Poland: the employment rate of disabled persons is over three times lower than the rate of the total population, only 6.6% of the total disabled population achieves a tertiary education, and proper access to medical treatment for persons with disabilities remains elusive.

However, it is important to remember that the identity of the disabled community is not homogeneous, but instead a combination of mental, physical, and intellectual disabilities that run the gamut of impairment. To discuss the specifics of how rights of people with disabilities can be protected, the scope of the analysis should be limited to a singular disability. In the following report and complementary workshop, we assess the societal position of people with

autism to explore and critique the barriers that endanger the rights of people with disabilities. By providing a historical perspective, we hope to demonstrate the gains that have been made in addressing disability rights, while reminding our reader of the challenges that remain in achieving social parity with non-disabled peers. In our workshop, students develop an understanding of the behavioral and communicative deficits associated with autism and then participate in a series of innovative exercises designed to help them consider the challenges people with disabilities face in the areas of education, healthcare, and employment. After presenting a historical context for disability-based discrimination and reviewing basic information on autism, this report use the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities as a framework to discuss the failings and opportunities of the Polish government to adequately address the rights of people with autism.



Mr. Tomasz Przybyszewski,
Integracja Magazine

Photo: Sarah Deal



The Historical Perspective

1 September 1939 is an unforgettable date in global, and specifically Polish, history. On the morning of the first, the wheels of the Nazi war machine rolled across the German-Polish border crushing the final hopes of a European peace. But 1 September marks more than the beginning of World War II. On the same day in Berlin, a decree arrived on the desk of the Führer granting permission to Dr. Philipp Bouhler and Dr. Karl Brandt to order a "mercy death" for any patients they considered incurable. The infamous "euthanasia decree" was soon signed by Adolf Hitler and within months the Nazi Party's policy of racial hygiene had coalesced into Aktion T4. Aktion T4, a name not used until after the war, describes the German Nazi campaign to exterminate German citizens with physical or mental disabilities that made them "incurably sick." Children and adults with epilepsy, down syndrome, blindness, deafness, or "imbecility" were all candidates for murder. In the eleven months Aktion T4 was operational, 70,273 people were killed. Even after Aktion T4 officially ended, the killing of people with disabilities continued. Estimates of the number of people killed under Germany's "euthanasia campaigns" now exceed 250,000.¹

Photo: Sarah Deal



Following the German Nazi Regime's systematic extermination of people with disabilities, global leaders codified protections for the disabled in international treaties and covenants. Never again, they promised. International human rights law was meant to shield the world against future atrocities, to provide a transnational tool to counteract the oppression of minorities. Poland's recent ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Peoples with Disabilities (hereafter, the Convention) is an important step, but it is only the beginning of the long process of fully integrating people with

disabilities into Polish society. As Poland strives to achieve the ideals of a modern democracy, the integration of the 4.7 million Polish citizens living with disabilities is rising on the political agenda.² Gains for people with physical disabilities are slowly accumulating, but the rights of people with mental disabilities remain behind. Autism, a mental and intellectual disability, is uniquely appealing as a paradigmatic example for discussing disabilities because incremental improvements are finally being implemented to address the educational, medical, and employment barriers that have kept the autistic population marginalized. This period of transition provides evidence of how the rights of people with disabilities were traditionally ignored and how contemporary acts of redress hold the potential to dramatically improve the quality of life of disabled persons. People with autism, like all people with disabilities, can lead satisfying and dignified lives, but it will take significant societal alterations before the barriers relegating the disabled to a subordinate status are removed.

¹ Gerhard Baader, John Cramer, Bettina Winter: "Moved to Hadamar." The Story of a Nazi "Euthanasia" Institution. In: Historical Series of the State Welfare Association Hesse. Landeswohlfahrtsverband Hesse, Kassel 1991, p. 24

² National Census of Population and Housing. (Narodowy Spis Powszechny) 2011, <http://www.niepelnosprawni.gov.pl/english-version-/statistical-data/demographic-data/>

Autism: A Disabling Developmental Disorder

An estimated 30,000 people in Poland suffer from autism, but the disorder remains poorly understood by the general public.³ When hearing the word "autism," most people think of autistic disorder (AD), but this is only one subdiagnosis of the broader group of autism spectrum disorders (ASD) which include Asperger syndrome and Persistent Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS). The term ASD is used to denote the significant heterogeneity of the disorders; ASD affects each person differently, hence the name "spectrum disorders." Across the spectrum, behavioral expression of the disorder varies widely and there is also diversity in cognitive capacity, ranging from average or superior intellect to debilitating retardation. Asperger syndrome, for example, is diagnosed when average intellectual ability is present, but social impairments exist. Despite dramatic individual differences, all cases of ASD share similar symptoms which can be divided into two categories: deficits in social interaction/communication and restricted and repetitive behaviors. Examples of social

We were initially interested in building a workshop that addressed the challenges people with physical disabilities face in everyday life. We felt like students would easily see the injustice in situations where people with disabilities could not access public spaces or buildings. Drawing attention to the need for more access ramps, elevators, and disability accommodations presented a variety of opportunities for engaging workshop ideas. However, upon further discussion, we decided to try to focus on mental and intellectual disabilities. While focusing on autism, we hoped our workshop would serve to generate conversation around the rights for people with disabilities in a way that included both physical and mental/intellectual disabilities. The societal position of people with autism provides a valuable lens through which to analyze the broader concept of rights for people with disabilities. Autism is poorly understood in Polish society (and globally) and we hoped to simultaneously raise awareness about the disorder while facilitating a discussion on disability rights.

deficits include difficulty in maintaining back-and-forth conversations, abnormal eye contact or facial expressions, and problems adjusting to social expectations. Behavioral symptoms include repetitive speech or motor movements, abnormally high or low sensitivity to sensory input, and excessive adherence to routines. While the direct cause of ASD remains unknown, the scientific community agrees that ASD is the result of a disruption in brain development produced by a combination of genetic makeup and environmental factors. The "refrigerator mother" theory, which posited that the development of ASD was a result of emotional neglect on behalf of the parents, is now universally denounced.⁴ The development of ASD occurs before a child is two years old and is independent of parental attitudes or actions. Understanding the neurological abnormalities at the heart of ASD is important, but the lack of a scientific explanation of autism is no excuse for the failure of policy makers and social actors to provide people with ASD the equality of opportunity they deserve.

Medical Rights: The Problem of Delayed Diagnosis

Article 26 of the Convention to addresses the right to health: "Persons with disabilities have the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health without discrimination on the basis of disability." The article further calls upon signatories to provide early identification and intervention for persons with disabilities. Poland is failing on both accounts.⁵ Medical experts agree that early diagnosis, defined as before the age of 3, is instrumental in properly treating autism.⁶ An early diagnosis not only clarifies the confusion that the families of autistic children experience, but also begins the process of securing

³ Dalej Razem. "An Autistic Person in Poland." <http://www.autyzm.zgora.pl/en/id.10065>

⁴ Kato N, Yamasue H, Watanabe K, Jinde S, Sadamatsu M. "Autism Spectrum Disorders-Recent Advances in the Research on the Impairment in Social Communication." *Brain Nerve*. 2010 Sep; 62(9): 975-86.

⁵ Dalej Razem. "An Autistic Person in Poland."

⁶ Angela Smith. "Early Detection and Intervention." Association for Science in Autism Treatment. <http://www.asatonline.org/resources/clinician/earlydetection>



governmental support for behavioral therapy and special educational services. In Poland, the average age of autism diagnosis is 4.5, eighteen months too late. A shortage of trained autism specialists is commonly cited as the chief culprit behind the delay in diagnosis. Because specialists are scarce, the average distance required to visit a specialist is 92 kilometers.⁷ Even if a specialist is accessible, the waiting time before an appointment can be made is prohibitively long. The Euro Health Consumer Index of 2012 ranks Poland's healthcare system 27th out of 34 countries and notes that patient waiting time is significantly longer in Poland than in most other European countries. Families, on average, spend between 6 to 12 months waiting for appointments with specialists. As they wait, the child suffers. Starved of the necessary educational and therapeutic attention, the child's social and communicative deficits worsen.

Dr. Rymsza, Advocacy Team Manager at the Synapsis Foundation, explained the problem concisely, "Few doctors choose to specialize in autism diagnosis because it simply doesn't pay off." She continued, "It takes longer to diagnose than it does other disabilities... without the government providing more money to autism specialists, the financial incentive for doctors to spend their time diagnosing cases of autism is minimal." Dr. Rymsza is currently coordinating advocacy efforts focused on competitively compensating autism specialists for the time required to accurately diagnose cases of autism. However, the battle for adequate care of children with autism does not end at diagnosis. Only 50% of children who are diagnosed with autism receive permanent care in a specialized institution. Without a greater emphasis on integrating people with autism into the educational system, they will remain marginalized.

The Right to Education: The Absence of Obligatory Spending

Article 24 of the Convention defends the rights of people with disabilities to an education that "maximizes academic and social development." The article specifies that adequate accommodations must be provided to ensure that persons with disabilities can access primary, secondary, tertiary, and vocational education without discrimination and on an equal basis with others. In Poland, the educational rights of people with disabilities are theoretically well enshrined, but the implementation of protections is, in reality, inadequate. For example, the Ministry of Education is legally required to provide additional funding to school systems that accept students with autism. The supplemental funding, up to ten times more than the normal funding for students, is intended to be spent on enhancing the educational experience of children with autism. However, in practice, the money can be diverted to other projects. Instead of spending the governmental subsidy on hiring more teaching assistants, training the teachers to work with autistic students, or buying teaching aides like pictographs, public schools can spend the money on alternative projects like building renovations. Even if the money is spent on hiring additional teachers, the school can avoid integrating students with autism into the educational environment by using the new teachers to make "home visits."⁸ The individualized education provided by home visits fails to immerse the autistic student in an environment where they can develop socially, but succeeds in securing the governmental subsidy for the school district. The absence of obligatory spending laws allows the school director to wield total discretion of where the extra funding is allocated. The Synapsis Foundation, in collaboration with over 50 autism-focused NGOs, is currently advocating for stricter laws regulating the spending of financial support provided by the Ministry of Education. With increased transparency and legal obligations to devote educational subsidies to their intended targets, students with autism and other disabilities will be more fully integrated into the school system and thus society.

⁷ Dalej Razem. "An Autistic Person in Poland."

⁸ Interview. Dr. Agnieszka Rymsza. Advocacy Team Manager, Synapsis Foundation. June 20, 2013



Employment Rights: When Equality Is A Barrier

Article 27 of the Convention enumerates provisions to facilitate the entrance of persons with disabilities into the labor market. Parties to the Convention agree to employ persons with disabilities in the public sector, ensure adequate workplace accommodations, and implement incentive or affirmative action programs to promote the employment of persons with disabilities in the private sector. By ratifying the Convention, Poland committed to helping people with disabilities enter the workforce, but many people with autism struggle with traditional employment. As an alternative to the labor market, Poland has two main types of rehabilitation centers for adults with disabilities: occupational (Warsztaty Terapii Zajęciowej) and vocational (Zakłady Aktywności Zawodowej). Occupational centers teach basic self-sufficiency and attempt to prepare people for vocational therapy. Vocational centers function as sheltered workplaces and offer participants a small wage for participation. The centers receive state funding for each participant and are powerful solutions to the problem of unemployment for people with disabilities. The problem arises from the way money is allocated to the centers: no distinction is made between disabilities. A vocational center receives identical financial compensation regardless of whether people with sensory impairments, paralysis, or autism are employed. Unfortunately, most center directors prefer to hire workers with disabilities that are not as disruptive as autism.⁹ As a result, people with autism and similar mental disabilities are disproportionately excluded from these rehabilitative services. If the current allocation system was altered to account for the variety in disabilities, the incentive to employ people with autism would increase. Until the government adopts a flexible compensation policy (like the one used in educational subsidies for people with disabilities), people with autism will be unfairly discriminated against in vocational and occupational centers.

Towards Education on Disabilities

Our workshop helps students develop an empathetic understanding of the difficulties that people with disabilities face in Polish society. The historical element of the workshop provides a warning against evolving into a society that does not value the rights of the disabled. The discussion of specific barriers that people with autism face in the realms of health, education, and employment provides teachers with examples of problems and potential policy-level solutions to structural inequalities. However, our workshop is not exhaustive and we hope students are able to brainstorm both problems and solutions that we have not addressed. The rights of people with disabilities are curtailed in Polish society and it is our hope that this educational workshop will raise both awareness about disabilities and interest in working to help people with disabilities realize the quality of life they deserve.

⁹ Interview. Dr. Agnieszka Rymśa. Advocacy Team Manager, Synapsis Foundation. June 20, 2013

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Interviews:

- Dr. Agnieszka Rymsza. Advocacy Team Manager, Synapsis Foundation. June 20, 2013
- Ms. Alina Perzanowska. President, Community of Hope Foundation. June 21, 2013



People with Disabilities: Autism as a Case Study

Training workshop

workshop #1:

Introduction to Autism and Human Rights

Aims:

- familiarize youth with the disorder, and show its spectrum
- discuss fear and non-fear based reactions
- discuss the rights of the people with disabilities according to UN Convention

Methods:

instructor's presentation, class discussion, work in small groups, problem solving, case studies

Materials:

photos, clips, exercises, research data

Time:

45 minutes

Introduction

Instructor: She/he starts the workshop with a video clip.¹ She/he asks participants to pay attention to a man's behavior and to his reactions. Afterwards, the instructor poses open questions to the class and leads a moderated discussion:

- What were your impressions?
- How do you think the man felt? Why?
- Is it any different from just feeling dizzy? How?

Students give their responses, associations, examples, which the instructor puts on the blackboard and later explains that all of the things that students named are symptoms of a mental disorder.

¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gX92deUEMs4>

It is important that the instructor emphasizes that the symptoms they all mentioned can point at a variety of disorders which lead to differences in perception of reality. The instructor suggests that autism will be a case study and gives its definition.

Autism is a disorder of brain development characterized by difficulties in social interaction and verbal/non-verbal communication and by repetitive stereotyped behavior.

The instructor plays the next video clip² and invites the students to switch from the "outside view" to the "inside view" and focus on how an autistic person perceives the world around them.

Discussion

The follow up question: how does the person with autism perceive the reality?

Points to incorporate into the discussion:

- a. Different ways of processing sensory information,
- b. Problems with attention,
- c. Difficulties in communication,
- d. Impairment in perception of time.

Then, the instructor asks: "Do the people with autism have some inconveniences in a society? Are they in unfavorable situation somehow?"

After few responses, the students are asked: "When you hear "human rights", what associations do you have?" They try to find a short, but concrete definition. After some suggestions noted on the blackboard, the instructor gives the definition according to United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights:

Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, whatever nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, language, or any other status. We are all equally entitled to our human rights without discrimination. These rights are all interrelated, interdependent and indivisible.³

Next, instructor: "Now, let's try to find particular human rights - for example the right to education. What other human rights should people with disabilities have?" Being aware of the definition above (instructor leaves it written on the blackboard), students try to define in groups particular human rights that the people with disabilities should have.

Then, each group presents their answers. Instructor notes them on the blackboard and comments.

At the end of this exercise, the trainer distributes the leaflet of UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities and she/he compares the propositions of the students with the list of the rights in the Convention (listed below). Then, instructor gives some time to let the students read the leaflet and the description of every right.

- The right to education,
- The right to health,
- The right to habilitation and rehabilitation,

² https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NdoGttacqYY&feature=player_embedded

³ <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Pages/WhatAreHumanRights.aspx>

- The right to work and employment,
- The right to equal recognition before the law,
- The right to live independently and be included in the community,
- The right to an adequate standard of living and social protection,
- The right to participation in political and public life.

Exercise

http://www.humanityinaction.org/files/525-AutismWorkshop_Handout.pdf

The instructor: "Now, look at the photos. Please, identify 2 autistic persons and explain your choice."

After some responses, instructor gives the right answer: all of the people on the photographs are autistic to a various extent and provides brief biographies.

The goal of the exercise: to teach that autism is highly variable and is not visually identifiable.

Conclusions of the workshop #1

Questions:

1. How would you describe an autistic person?
2. Can the behavior of an autistic person be uncomfortable for you? If yes, try to explain why.
3. What rights of people with disabilities should be assured? Why is it so important?
4. How would you distinguish an autistic person in the street? (This question provokes to remember that there is no way to distinguish an autistic person in the street. It is important that the students understand it).

Workshop #2:

Autistic people in the society: problems and solutions

Aims:

- link past human rights abuses to current discrimination against people with autism,
- discuss difficulties people with autism face in employment, healthcare, and education,
- teach to the students how to address problems and grievances in the society and empower them to act,

Methods: teacher's presentation, hypothetical situations.

Materials: flashcards.

Time: 45 minutes



Introduction to the topic:

The instructor might say:

Source: <http://gedenkstaettesteinhof.at/de/ausstellung/03-die-reinigung-des-volksk%C3%B6rpers>

In the previous workshop we discussed the nature of autism and what it feels like for a person to have this disorder. We also understood that this disorder has a wide spectrum, including people who need help and assistance.

Probably, the most terrible "solution" in the modern history of humankind to the problem of mentally and physically disabled people was carried out during World War II: many people with various types of disabilities, including those who would now be diagnosed with autism, were victims of mass extermination.

This German Nazi program, which aimed to exterminate all disabled people, was called **Action T4**. The reason to kill a person with either mental, or physical disability was a diagnosis – "incurably sick". Adults and children, who were labelled "unworthy of life", suffered from schizophrenia, alcoholism, epilepsy, syphilis, Down syndrome, blindness, deafness, and many other diseases. In accordance with information revealed at the Nuremberg Trials, the number of the murdered approached 275,000.

Discussion

What do you think was the most fundamental right that was violated by Action T4?

After students give their ideas and answers, the instructor presents them with the following idea:

The first Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted in 1948 and ruled that a human has the inherent right to life. The atrocities of the war were severely condemned and fortunately today people with disabilities enjoy their right to life. However, the discrimination against them still exists and until we eliminate its different forms and expressions, their human dignity cannot be fulfilled.

Exercise

Introduction: As soon as you graduate and study at universities, many of you will enter a life with challenging studies but also full of possibilities and tools to affect your classroom, university, city, and country. Simply, you are now becoming more responsible for the problems around you because you will have to choose between either addressing or ignoring them.

The first question arises: But how do I do it? Where do I start? In the following exercise we will learn specific tools for making a change possible and practice how to impact your community.

The instructor divides the classroom into 3 groups and emphasizes that as it could be observed the discrimination for people with various degrees of disorders, including autism, is present throughout different spheres of their lives: education, health, and work.

The task: Write a draft letter to three different ministries, in which you will describe the difficulties people with disabilities face and give your recommendations about what should be done. Make sure you use the following language in your letter to emphasize the inherence of the rights of people with disabilities:



- must ensure,
- have equal access to,
- should be provided,
- must be trained,
- meet needs in,
- reach their full potential,
- must employ in the public sector.

(The instructor reads the words out loud)

Every group receives a card with the bullet points to address:

1. Ministry of Education:
 - b. teachers,
 - c. special schools,
 - d. curriculum.
2. Ministry of Labor Market:
 - c. access to work,
 - d. vocational training,
 - e. identify potential industries.
3. Ministry of Health:
 - d. doctors/nurses – specialists,
 - e. research,
 - f. insurance.

Now, one person from each group presents the petition. After each presentation, the instructor provides with more information about difficulties for people with autism in the Polish society (see an attachment for the teachers below). The instructor asks students about what a convincing petition/argument/agenda should contain. The instructor reminds them to:

- indicate the problem,
- learn about it,
- point out at human right which is violated,
- suggest possible solutions and recommendations,
- indicate that you expect an official answer to your request.

Homework and final instructor's words: Your homework will be to write a letter (an inquiry) to the School Principle using the strategies and key words related to human rights the way we practiced it during the class. In this letter, please, ask about the school policies regarding students with disabilities; inquire how many students with disabilities study in your school; ask to what extent their rights are fulfilled. Please, consult the notes you made during our workshop. The aim of this task is to be able to formulate relevant questions, express concerns, speak about different aspects of human rights of people with disabilities, and learn about the current situation in one's surroundings. You too can address discrimination and bring some change about in your community.

Attachment for Teachers

Guidance to the exercise of workshop #1

Please see the separate handout (http://www.humanityinaction.org/files/525-AutismWorkshop_Handout.pdf), which contains brief biographies of autistic people on the photos.

Guidance to the exercise of workshop #2

Education

- Local government must ensure:
 - free transport and care,
 - adequate conditions to learn, adapting teaching programs, methods and curriculum to abilities and needs of children,
 - special schools or kindergardens

Labor market

- In the Netherlands: workplaces for autistic people in informatics,
- In Denmark: Program for autistic people to find a job in IT branch,
- Unfortunately, in Poland there is no such a program
 - Instead, there are Occupational and Vocational Programs, which function not in the best interests of autistic people.

Health Care

- Public Nursing Homes/Social Assistance Centres
 - Services should be tailored to accommodate people with autism.

Rehabilitation services

- Every child with autism should have a right to individualized behavioral therapy provided by a trained professional. The doctor decides how many hours and what kind of services in particular a child needs.

Government Subsidies

- Currently applicable under a lot of restrictions, e.g. income per person in family cannot exceed PLN 523; available only for those who are in Public Nursing Homes.



rights of LGBTQ persons

Poland For Everyone?

LGBTQ Rights as Human Rights

Sarah Deal, Anastasiia Mikhaylova, Justyna Politańska

Poland is more than 1000 years old and is situated in the very heart of Europe. While the current population of the country is over 38 million, nearly 35% of the 60 million Poles live abroad. Large Polish speaking communities/diasporas can be found in the US, Canada, UK, Germany, Australia, Brazil and Argentina. One does not have to live in Poland for long to realize that this is a nation of resilient people who have survived decades of difficult times to emerge as one of the fastest growing economies in Europe and the world. Nevertheless, several human rights issues remain unresolved in Poland.

A History of Discrimination and Change

During World War II, the greatest human rights violations took place under the Nazi state throughout Europe. At this time, Jews, Roma people, disabled people, migrants, and homosexual people faced persecution and discriminatory laws. While discrimination originated in the form of stereotypes and classification by Star of David pins or pink triangles (in the case of homosexual people), these ‘small’ acts of discrimination ultimately evolved into mass deportations ending in the mass murder of millions in concentration camps. The willingness of one individual or group to separate another group of people because of their ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or disability is an example of a ‘slippery slope,’ or a situation in which a small first step leads to a chain of related effects, ultimately ending in a significant event or conclusion. Given the ease at which small discriminatory acts spiraled into great acts of terror, violence and persecution during World War II, it is necessary to constantly assess the present state of human rights and discrimination.

In the case of Poland, the history of human rights violations against marginalized populations has greatly shaped the current conditions of these same groups of people today, for good and for bad. A history of discriminatory policies and victimization is not a history quickly forgotten, particularly in a society in which almost all sectors of society and people felt victimized in one way or another. Whether conscious or not, the biases and perceptions from this time often continue within the older generations and to the next generations. Even after the discriminatory policies are officially eradicated, the victims of these policies still bear the scars.

Despite the nation’s unquestionable desire to never again experience the victimization and injustice of their past, recovery is slow and change does not happen overnight. The people and government of Poland have made great strides in the last 50 years to recover the rights of discriminated-against populations and the topic of human rights now takes a forefront in political discussion and decision-making. Yet even today, policies exist that affectively limit the economic, social, and political rights of certain minority groups, such that these groups of individuals cannot appreciate the same freedom and protections as majority groups in Poland. The

lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, and queer (LGBTQ) community is an example of one such group who is still fighting for their equal rights and protection in Polish society. This essay will focus on the evolution of rights for the LGBTQ community in Poland, as well as the steps being taken to ensure that *LGBTQ* rights are protected as *human* rights.

Discrimination in the 21st Century

Although the word "discrimination" is increasingly used in public discourse, it remains difficult to provide specific boundaries for this term. Polish law (the Labour Code and the Act on the Implementation of Certain Provisions of the EU on Equal Treatment) contains general definitions of discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, or religion.¹ The Polish legal definitions are very similar to those in the EU anti-discrimination legislation, which define direct discrimination as an act "when one person is treated less favorably than another is, has been or would be treated in a comparable situation."² Meanwhile, indirect discrimination is "caused when an apparently neutral provision, criterion or practice would lead to a particular disadvantage compared with other persons, unless it is objectively justified by a legitimate aim and the means of achieving that aim are appropriate and necessary." The Polish law does not have a separate definition for racial, ethnic, or religious discrimination, resulting in a somewhat weak and often misinterpreted or misunderstood law.

Discriminatory traditions, policies, ideas, practices, and laws exist in many countries and institutions in every part of the world. Unfortunately, this also includes countries in which discrimination is generally perceived as a negative act or mindset and in which discriminatory acts are specifically forbidden in law. For example, the United States Equal Pay Act of 1963 prohibits employers from paying different wages to employees based on sex³; However, women's weekly earnings compared to men's in the same industry were lower in all industries in 2009, according to a study by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics.⁴ Now 51 years after the implementation of this anti-discrimination legislation, the gender pay gap remains largely unchanged in the United States today.⁵ As we can see, inconsistencies between written policies and actual practice pertaining to discrimination are not unique to Poland.

Despite the written (but legally unenforceable) constitutional guarantee of equality and non-discrimination for all Polish citizens⁶, non-heterosexual people face legal challenges not experienced by non-LGBTQ residents and citizens in Poland. Both male and female same-sex sexual activity are legal in Poland, but same-sex couples and households headed by such couples are not eligible for the same legal protections available to



Photo: Sarah Deal

¹ <http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id=WDU19740240141;%20http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id=WDU20102541700> (2013)

² http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/employment_and_social_policy/antidiscrimination_relations_with_civil_society/em0008_en.htm (2011)

³ The Equal Opportunity Act of 1963. US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. US Code Vo. 29, sec. 206(d) <http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/statutes/epa.cfm> (2014)

⁴ http://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2011/ted_20110216_data.htm (2011)

⁵ <http://www.aauw.org/research/the-simple-truth-about-the-gender-pay-gap/> (2014)

⁶ Constitution of the Republic of Poland. 2 April 1997. Journal of Laws. No. 78, Item 483. art. 32.

opposite-sex couples. Discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation persists in Poland and the rest of the world despite anti-discrimination legislation; however, much of Polish society is showing a determination to affect real change in both the policy and the perception of LGBTQ rights in Poland.

Where Are We Today?

At the same time that Great Britain and France legalized gay marriage at the start of 2013, Polish lawmakers voted down three bills on civil unions for unmarried couples, whether gay or straight.⁷ With the Polish constitution defining marriage as a relationship between a man and woman, the drafts did not include the right for non-heterosexual people to marry or adopt. Additionally, it can be observed that some members of the political elites are not supporting LGBTQ rights. For example, Nobel Peace Prize winner and former Solidarność leader, Mr. Lech Wałęsa, said

on Polish TV that homosexual lawmakers had no right to sit on parliament front benches, and should even sit "behind a wall."⁸ Mr. Ryszard Nowak of the National Committee for the Defence Against Sects and Violence lodged a complaint against Wałęsa for his hate speech, however prosecutors were unable to press charges due to an existing Polish penal code that does not explicitly protect against discrimination on the basis of sexuality.⁹ Although such hate speech might be dismissed as a case of personal prejudice rather than public opinion, evidence of continued discrimination of the LGBTQ community in Poland and around the world suggests a greater societal problem of continued prejudice of "the Other".

Photo: HIA Poland archive



Activism and Resistance

There are many influences in Poland contributing to the current movements for and against equal rights for the LGBTQ community. One such influence is that of religion. In the Polish context, "religion" often means "Catholicism." Catholics are easily the majority religious group, with 95% of the population maintaining membership in the Roman-Catholic Church, largely a consequence of family and societal tradition.¹⁰ The official position of the Catholic Church states that it opposes gay marriage and the social acceptance of homosexuality and same-sex relationships, claiming that homosexual behavior is a sin.¹¹ The subject of religion, specifically Catholicism and these related beliefs, is commonly taught as accepted facts at schools across Poland. Even though this is not obligatory, in practice it is almost impossible for children not to attend Roman-Catholic classes – many schools do not provide the option to attend other religion classes and if a parent does not want the child to attend the Roman-Catholic course, they are required to provide an adequate justification in writing.¹² In this

⁷ <http://www.pinknews.co.uk/2013/01/25/polish-parliament-rejects-three-bills-to-extend-rights-to-gay-couples/> (2013)

⁸ <http://www.cnn.com/2013/03/05/world/europe/poland-walesa-anti-gay/> (2013)

⁹ Penal Code of Poland, articles 256 and 257

¹⁰ <http://en.poland.gov.pl/Churches,and,Religious,Life,in,Poland,397.html> (2013)

¹¹ <http://www.americancatholic.org/News/Homosexuality/> (2013); <http://www.catholic.com/tracts/homosexuality> (2013)

¹² Anna Dzierzowska, *Czy polska szkoła jest szkołą świecką?*, w: Kościół, państwo i polityka płci, pod red. Adama Ostolskiego, Przedstawicielstwo Fundacji Heinricha Bölla w Polsce, Warszawa 2010, s.90.

context, particularly considering the historic position of Roman Catholic Church on LGBTQ rights, one can begin to understand the causes for modern resistance to equal-rights for the LGBTQ community in Poland. By understanding the historical and modern context of LGBTQ rights in Poland, we can begin to appreciate and evaluate the different tools used to bring about positive, long-term change for this minority group.

Although the situation will not change overnight in Poland—one of Europe's most religious and conservative countries—LGBTQ

activists continue to fight by conducting social informational campaigns and attempting to change the general

perception of LGBTQ people in Poland. Acceptance for LGBTQ people in Polish society increased in the 1990s and early 2000s, mainly amongst

younger people and those living in larger cities.

According to the OBOP Public Opinion survey, more and more Poles admit that

they know gay or lesbian people personally (24% in 2010 comparing to 16% in 2005¹³). The research surrounding this survey demonstrated that personally knowing people

who identify as LGBTQ corresponds with a greater tolerance towards LGBTQ communities

as a whole. Each year, more Poles agree that gay and lesbian organizations should have

a right to demonstrate (a constitutional right already theoretically guaranteed to every citizen

regardless of sexual orientation), but those numbers are still relatively low: in 2010 only 30% of respondents

acknowledged this right.¹⁴ Respondents in the survey also

claimed that they would not mind working with gay/lesbian people (76% did not mind) and even having them as their supervisors (67%).¹⁵

A dynamic trio consisting of an American, Ukrainian, and Pole, our group set out to discuss the state of LGBTQ rights in Poland. At first, none of us knew exactly how we would create a curriculum on such a sensitive and contentious subject in Poland. Unlike the other assigned topics, the perceptions of LGBTQ rights in Poland are intricately influenced and intertwined with Catholic faith and beliefs about morality. Thus, we spent the first several days determining how we could create a curriculum that would respect the beliefs of the typical Polish students while simultaneously challenging them to think about facts and arguments they may have not yet considered. After much brainstorming, researching, and discussion, we finally came to the conclusion that the key to creating the broadest appeal possible for educators and students was to reframe the issue as one about discrimination and inequalities stemming from the Holocaust. We were not looking to change minds or convince students that they should support LGBTQ values, but rather that they should support equal rights for all people whose rights are guaranteed in the Constitution—regardless of whether their values are in line with each other. In this way, we would be able to discuss forms of discrimination against LGBTQ communities that have carried over from the German Nazi state, creating a platform for discussion and education about what it means to support human rights and equality, without committing one to also support LGBTQ sexual practices.

Even after acknowledging the many areas of continued inequality for LGBTQ people in Poland, it is evident that the situation of LGBTQ people is changing for the better. LGBTQ issues are becoming more and more visible in the public discourse, making Polish citizens more aware of these issues. Supported mostly by young Poles with fewer ties to religion and with broader general outlook and open-mindedness, the pro-LGBTQ movement is fighting for equality for all citizens in this country of over 38 million. More and more NGO's are fighting against discrimination of sexual minorities in Poland, and they are becoming more and more well known. *Transfuzja* (launched in 2008 by now-MP Anna Grodzka), *Lambda Warszawa Association* (1997), and *Campaign Against Homophobia* (2001) are just a few of the nationally recognized organizations advocating for equality of LGBTQ people in Poland. Introducing LGBTQ and other minorities' rights into public discourse has likely influenced the acceptance of both the first openly-gay and transsexual MPs, Robert Biedron' and Anna Grodzka respectively, into Polish Parliament – representation that would have been unthinkable even ten years ago.

¹³ http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2010/K_095_10.PDF (2010)

¹⁴ *ibid.*, page 4

¹⁵ *ibid.*, page 9

Despite progress, there are still public cases of LGBTQ people being subjects of physical and emotional abuse. There are many examples of hate speech and violence against LGBTQ people, including the assault of Mr. Robert Biedron, after the 2013 Equality Parade in Warsaw.¹⁶ Non-heterosexual people still often face unequal treatment in the workplace,¹⁷ schools, and public life. There are also consistently cases of violations of many constitutional rights in Poland, including the right to legal protection of private and family life, of honour and good reputation, the right to make decisions about personal life (art. 47), and freedom of movement (art. 52).¹⁸

Human Rights for All

Undeniably, the situation for non-heterosexual people in Poland has changed from what it was just a decade ago. However, there is still a necessity for deeper public dialogue on the issue of homosexuality in Poland, as well as an improved system of non-formal education of children, as the current system often results in children receiving only one viewpoint, which results in increased stereotypes and discriminatory patterns. NGOs and individuals alike are working daily to make real the vision of a Polish society in which all people are equal.

It is our opinion that all members of society, not just the LGBTQ community, need to participate in activism in order to affect systematic change. Regardless of religious beliefs or traditional values, citizens living in and benefiting from a democratic society have (at the very least) a legal obligation to uphold and fight for equal rights and protections under the law. Perhaps the framework need only shift from one of defending homosexuality to one of defending equality of all humans, regardless of gender, sexuality, race, or any other factor. An appeal to human rights can be used as a powerful tool for bringing diverse people and ideologies together around a common goal. Standing up for the dignity and rights of a common humanity means moving from complicity and tolerance to action and activism.

¹⁶ <http://www.pinknews.co.uk/2013/02/01/polish-mp-opposes-equal-marriage-because-gays-are-no-use-whatsoever-to-society/> (2013)

¹⁷ 44% of Poles believe homosexual men shouldn't do certain jobs; 36% of them believe the same in regards to women. These job positions include stereotypical ones like working in education (fear of "depriving" children), healthcare (fear of potential sexual abuses or HIV), and work in administration and politics. http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2010/K_095_10.PDF, page 4-8

¹⁸ <http://www.thenews.pl/1/9/Artykul/138736,Gay-MP-attacked-after-Equality-Parade> (2013); <http://www.pinknews.co.uk/2013/02/01/polish-mp-opposes-equal-marriage-because-gays-are-no-use-whatsoever-to-society/> (2013); <http://wiadomosci.dziennik.pl/wydarzenia/artykuly/110286,nie-chca-krwi-od-gejow.html> (2013); http://www.germanlawjournal.com/pdfs/Vol08No09/PDF_Vol_08_No_09_889-902_Developments_van%20den%20Bogaert.pdf

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Human Rights For All Humans

Training Workshop

2-Day (2 x 45 minute sessions) for High School Students (16-18 yrs old)

Ultimate goal: to help students understand that discrimination against the LGBTQ community is in violation of established human and civil rights, and that they do not have to agree with LGBTQ practices to support equality and non-discrimination for all.

General workshop aims:

- 1) Define discrimination and reframe LGBTQ-related rights as equality rights and rights to not be discriminated against,
- 2) Provide historical background and analysis of discriminatory practices during the Holocaust to create framework for discussion of modern-day discrimination in Poland,
- 3) Stimulate thinking and discussion about the arguments for and against equality for the LGBTQ community.

DAY 1			
TIME	AIMS	DESCRIPTION	MATERIALS, HANDOUTS
1. Getting to Know Each Other			
10.00-10.05	Allows teachers to acquaint themselves with the class and for students to get to know each other; Writing dream jobs will connect with end video drawing similarities between all people's aspirations/dreams.	Have students write nametags, writing their future dream job under the names. Depending on class size, have students go around in a circle and briefly state their name and dream job.	White folded sheets, markers
2. Introduction			
10.05-10.10	Introducing subject of discrimination	Teacher asks pupils about their definition of discrimination, then the group compares their definition to legal definition: Direct discrimination takes place when "a natural person because of gender, race, ethnic origin, nationality, religion, belief, political opinion, disability, age or sexual orientation, is treated less favorably than another is, has been or would be treated in a comparable situation" (2010 Act on the Implementation of Certain Provisions of the European Union in the Field of Equal Treatment ¹).	Flipchart, markers Legal discrimination definition (on a ppt. slide or a sheet of paper to be read out loud by one of the pupils).

¹ <http://www.non-discrimination.net/countries/poland> (2011); <http://www.equal-jus.eu/node/86> (2010); <http://queer.pl/news/191695/ustawa-antydiskryminacyjna-przyjeta> (2010)

		<p>Indirect discrimination is defined as situation in which for a person because of his/her gender, race, ethnic origin, nationality, religion, belief, political opinion, disability, age or sexual orientation, due to an apparently neutral provision, criterion used or practice/action taken, unfavorable disproportions or particular disadvantage occur or could occur, unless that decision, criterion or action is objectively justified by a legitimate aim and when the means of achieving that aim are appropriate and necessary."²</p>	
3. Definitions, History and Polish Experience			
10.10-10.30	<p>Historical framework: non-heterosexuals persecution in Nazi Germany</p> <p>Help pupils draw conclusions about the consequences of perceiving certain groups as "inferior".</p>	<p>Talking about different groups' persecution during German Nazi occupation teacher asks groups below have in common (persecution by the German Nazis):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People with disabilities - Roma - Jews - LGBTQ people <p>After students share reflections and thoughts, teachers begin discussion by posing below questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On what grounds did German Nazis justify persecuting LGBTQ people? - How has the situation of those groups in Poland changed (legally and socially) over time? - Are individuals in these groups still being discriminated against, and if so, in what ways? <p>Theory vs. Practice: The teacher briefly lays out the topic of discrimination against homosexuals during the Holocaust showcasing it as an example of the last stage of marginalization, discrimination. The teacher discusses the current situation of LGBTQ and tries to pin point to those symptoms, which potentially could be alerting and dangerous.</p>	PPT. slides (visual materials showing non-heterosexuals and other groups' persecution in Nazi Germany).
	<p>Provide philosophical and legal framework; legal responsibility to include LGBT people in "all people" group.</p>	<p>Lay out Polish law about discrimination/equality and international human rights ideals. Who is included in "All people" clause?</p> <p>Constitution of the Republic of Poland (most important rights concerning LGBTQ):</p> <p>Base - "The 1997 Polish Constitution contains general anti-discrimination clauses (Article 32), according to which all people shall be equal before the law and have the right to equal treatment by public authorities and no one shall be discriminated against in political, social or economic life for any reason whatsoever."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ownership protection and the right of succession (art. 21) • the inherent and inalienable dignity of the person shall constitute a source of freedoms and rights of persons and citizens. It shall be inviolable. The respect and protection thereof shall be the obligation of public authorities (art. 30) • right to freedom (art. 31) • equality before the law and non-discrimination (art. 32) • equality regardless of sex (art. 33) • right for a legal live protect legal protection of the life of every human being (art. 38) • no one may be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment (art. 40) • personal inviolability and security (art. 41) • everyone shall have the right to legal protection of his private and family life, of his honour and good reputation and to make decisions about his personal life (art. 47) • parents shall have the right to rear their children in accordance with their own convictions (art. 48) • inviolability of the home (art. 50) • freedom of movement (art. 52) • freedom of conscience and religion (art. 53-54) • freedom of peaceful assembly (art. 57-59) • polish citizens enjoying full public rights shall have a right of access to the public service based on the principle of equality (art. 60) 	White paper and marker for teacher list of "all people".

² <http://www.non-discrimination.net/content/main-principles-and-definitions-19>

		<p>The Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Article 1 - Right to Equality Article 2 - Freedom from Discrimination Article 3 - Right to Life, Liberty, Personal Security Article 7 - Right to Equality before the Law Article 10 - Right to Fair Public Hearing Article 12 - Freedom from Interference with Privacy, Family, Home and Correspondence Article 13 - Right to Free Movement in and out of the Country Article 16 - Right to Marriage and Family Article 17 - Right to Own Property Article 18 - Freedom of Belief and Religion Article 19 - Freedom of Opinion and Information Article 20 - Right of Peaceful Assembly and Association Article 22 - Right to Social Security Article 23 - Right to Desirable Work and to Join Trade Unions Article 24 - Right to Rest and Leisure Article 25 - Right to Adequate Living Standard Article 26 - Right to Education Article 27 - Right to Participate in the Cultural Life of Community Article 28 - Right to a Social Order that Articulates this Document Article 29 - Community Duties Essential to Free and Full Development White paper and marker for teacher list of "all people".</p>	
	Identifying fields on which LGBTQ people have been discriminated against.	<p>The teacher asks students to give examples of discrimination against LGBTQ corresponding to human and civil rights.</p> <p>The teacher adds some examples to stimulate the discussion: - employment (difficulties in finding job, Poles expressing the opinion poll that certain jobs shouldn't be done by gay/lesbians OBOP 2010 survey³) – <i>corresponding to article 60 and 32</i> - stereotypes, hate speech, violence (e.g. violence against MP Robert Biedroń after the last Equality Parade⁴, politician's hate speech – MP Krystyna Pawłowicz⁵) – <i>corresponding to article 30 and 41</i> - denying a right to sexual intercourse (OBOP 2010 survey⁶) – <i>corresponding to article 47</i> - denying a right to donor blood (Social Watch – UMK in Toruń students⁷) – <i>corresponding to article 32</i> - denying the right to demonstrate (2005 Poznań and Warsaw – authorities didn't allow for the Equality Parade to be organized (German Law Journal⁸) – <i>corresponding to articles 57-59</i></p>	
<p>4. Movie Viewing: Young People Sharing Experiences About Being LGBT http://www.kampaniespoleczne.pl/kampanie,2782,pedal_to_jest_czesc_od_roweru</p>			
10.30-10.35	Purpose: Introduces LGBTQ people as "normal" human beings (having fears, wanting to love and be loved, having plans and dreams).	Show video about young people talking about being LGBT and family/friends reactions.	Video
10.35-10.42	Opinions: Depending on time, this will either be a chance for teacher to pose questions for students to think about as they leave session 1 or a chance to reflect together and hear different perspectives/ break down stereotypes.	<p>Instructor should have students look at name cards and see that they also have career aspirations and goals and they share many things in common with LGBTQ people.</p> <p>Pose questions for thought: - How are the people in the video similar/different to you/your friends? - How are their problems/concerns different? - What obstacles/challenges do you think they face every day?</p>	

3 obop-arch.tnsglobal.pl

4 <http://www.thenews.pl/1/9/Artykul/138736,Gay-MP-attacked-after-Equality-Parade> (2013)

5 <http://www.pinknews.co.uk/2013/02/01/polish-mp-opposes-equal-marriage-because-gays-are-no-use-whatsoever-to-society/> (2013)

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7 <http://wiadomosci.dziennik.pl/wydarzenia/artykuly/110286,nie-chca-krwi-od-gejow.html> (2013)

8 http://www.germanlawjournal.com/pdfs/Vol08No09/PDF_Vol_08_No_09_889-902_Developments_van%20den%20Bogaert.pdf

10.42-10.45	<p>5. Review Homework Assignment: Go home and look up two existing arguments against providing LGBTQ citizens with equal human rights. Then research at least two counter-arguments that support equal human rights. The teacher will collect these arguments (so they remain anonymous) and will share and reflect on them in class with the students. Emphasize that students do not have to agree with the arguments, but they must brainstorm, write them down and be prepared to discuss. This assignment should help students to reflect on both sides of the discussion of LGBTQ rights. Kids who do this will get a reward/prize (used to provide added incentive to complete the work in the absence of grades). Suggested reward: small candies/chocolate.</p> <p>Possible examples of arguments/statements to be discussed: 1. Homosexuality is against human nature and therefore LGBTQ people should not be allowed to get married. 2. Relationships between people of the same gender is against Christian doctrine, so it should be forbidden in Polish law as well. 3. People who choose to be LGBTQ know they are going against social norms in Poland and so cannot expect the same level of police and legal protection. 4. It is okay to discriminate against people who have different beliefs than me. 5. LGBTQ people can still have relationships, they just can't marry—therefore, they still get to experience all other human rights.</p> <p>Materials: Papers with arguments/statements to be thought over at home.</p> <p>Sources pupils may use: Handouts, materials that will "feed" the discussion: photos, newspaper articles fragments, postcards etc LGBTQ websites Social campaign websites (e.g. http://kampaniespoleczne.pl) Interviewing LGBTQ activists / scientists</p>
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DAY 2

TIME	AIMS	DESCRIPTION	MATERIALS, HANDOUTS
1. Homework Reflections			
10.00-10.05	Get a sense of difficulty level, whether there is general consensus among classmates; determine how to proceed.	Ask questions about challenges students encountered when researching counter-arguments, if people learned something new, etc.	
2. Understanding the Current Dialogue: An Interactive Activity			
10.05-10.20	Encourage discussion and consensus about equality/ rights; start framing things in terms of human rights and non-discrimination. Create dialogue about arguments and provide a platform for hearing different perspectives and improving arguments.	Each group discusses topics and counter arguments they prepared at home (or during the break if the second class takes place on the same day) Possible guiding questions to ask small groups: How is this argument in line with Article 32 of the Polish Constitution? While the Constitution cannot be directly applied to court cases, perhaps it points to a problem with current laws if they are not in line with the country's democratic Constitution.	Flipchart and marker to write counter-arguments pupils prepared at home.
(1)10.20-10.30; (2) 10.30-10.40	Encourage discussion about possible solutions to problems related to LGBTQ discrimination.	(1) Teachers divide pupils again into groups, this time each of the group has to think about possible solutions for problems related to discrimination against LGBTQ people from one of the following perspectives: 1. Individuals 2. Government 3. NGO 4. Media (2) After establishing possible methods of addressing LGBTQ discrimination, have the students choose their favorite solution and stand in front of the class as a group. Students will then act as if they are the NGO, media, etc. and give a 2-minute performance of how they would address the issue (if students are struggling to come up with ideas, teacher can suggest (i.e.): media creating an ad campaign about human rights for all, individuals stopping bullying, NGOs writing letters to parliament, government signing off on a new law or changing the verdict of a case discussed in class).	

3. De-briefing: What Now?			
	Conclusions & Action	<p>Final thoughts: Instructor can conclude with a brief overview of the ways LGBTQ rights have progressed,⁹ acknowledging at the same time that the community as a whole still faces many barriers (discrimination, unequal civil rights, violence). Encourage the class to keep an open mind and to remember that they don't have to agree with people's decisions to treat them kindly and equally.</p> <p>Take-away/Conclusions: Whether you like LGBTQ people or not, whether you approve of their way of living or not – they are human beings and citizens equal to all other humans and citizens. Denying this fact might mean entering a slippery slope that starts with relatively innocent acts of discrimination/marginalization, but can lead to horrible persecution and violence as seen in e.g. the Holocaust.</p>	PPT. slides (http://www.humanityinaction.org/files/526-LGBTQ_Workshp_PPT.pdf).

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⁹ <http://www.economist.com/node/16646458>



rights of persons with
a different national/
ethnic background: the
case of Jews

Talking about ‘the Other’: Stereotypical Anti-Semitic Language in Poland

Clara Kent, Elżbieta Kwiecińska, Vera Wedekind

In an era of political correctness, the discriminatory ideas find their ways into societies subtly, through long assumed practices and understandings. Within this, language has proved among the most difficult to address: anti-Semitic phrases, jokes, and stereotypes has existed in everyday Polish language. Our group proposes that one aspect of addressing anti-Semitism and the rights of the Jewish minority in Poland must include addressing this language. We examine briefly the theory behind a linguistic approach and the historical context of anti-Semitic language in Poland before presenting our proposal to educate and engage Polish high school students in the topic.



Photo: Sarah Deal

Theoretical Framework

In "The Everyday Language of White Racism", the American anthropologist and linguist Jane H. Hill presents the idea that language can be constructed to create and reinforce social inequality. Focusing specifically on the ways that white racism is perpetuated in the United States, Hill addresses how white communities delegitimize and appropriate the vocabulary and diction of communities of color. She explores how underlying American linguistic theories have been constructed to allow whites to perpetuate racist stereotypes and racial hierarchies while maintaining distance from overt and socially acknowledged acts of racism. Essentially, she demonstrates the ways that everyday language can communicate and perpetuate racism without many white Americans knowing or intending to. The way how people talk produces and reproduces ideas about races and assigns people to them. The arguments that Hill makes can be used to understand not just American linguistic discrimination but also the social meanings of other languages because of universal patterns in language use. In particular, Hill's understandings of language as a group signifier and the ideas of intentionalism and personalism are helpful in understanding the ways that contemporary Polish language reinforces societal discrimination.

Intentionalism is the idea that the speaker's intentions, rather than the communicated effect, take priority when understanding what a person says. It is the general idea of intentions meaning more than actual affect. This idea underlies many of the ways that people use discriminatory language. Vocabularies and ways of speaking about the world are communal, multi-generational projects. Many of the words and phrases we use on a daily basis have their root in contexts and intentions that occurred long ago, outside the realm of recent memory. Therefore, it is easy for us to use words and phrases that are rooted in hurtful, discriminatory intentions without necessarily knowing or meaning to. Intentionalism would say that this doesn't matter; all that matters is the speaker's intentions. But real human experience says otherwise. Language has a powerful effect on individual and group psyches.

Sociologists and anthropologists in the twentieth century came to recognize how language shapes our understandings of the world. Often, language gives us the categories we need to understand the world around us. It is difficult to imagine the world outside of the ideas, the vocabularies, that we have been given. Therefore, language is crucial to shaping and influencing how people interact with the world, and which realities they are able to imagine. Linguistic patterns and traditions that are based off discrimination, prejudice, and hate will

effectively perpetuate those same discriminatory attitudes. Because they are using the same categories of "us" and "them" they perpetuate ideas of "the other," and often doing so detrimentally. The intentions of the speaker do not matter because they are still perpetuating unjust, hurtful, and discriminatory ideas through their language.

Upon learning our group and topic assignments, we each delved into individual research. We realized we had a unique opportunity to tackle the huge, historic issue of anti-Semitism with a new and fresh approach - through talking about the power of language. The opportunity to work, discuss, and plan (...) proved invigorating as we put the final touches on our workshop scenarios. All in all, we learned not only about workshops or anti-Semitic language, but also how to work together in diverse teams, each using their unique background experience to make the team better.

This is often hard for people to acknowledge because discrimination is often viewed as an individual phenomenon, not a social one. Therefore, if someone is participating in discriminatory patterns of speech, they must be a discriminatory person, someone our current society has deemed a "bad" person. This is the idea of personalism. Yet this theory lacks an understanding of structural and societal discrimination. Structural discrimination operates on a scale beyond that of the individual. Language can be viewed as one such system. Language requires the communal understanding of a group of people. When we use discriminatory language we are doing so in societies that acknowledge those words and phrases as valid means of communication. This communal language shapes

us. In the same way, we have the power to shape our societies and communities by changing the language we use. We can change the in and out groups around us by changing the boundaries of "us" and "them" language. In contemporary Poland, this understanding of linguistic discrimination can be used when addressing to the notions "us" (Poles) and "them" (Jews).

Framing the Problem

It is estimated that 90% of Poland's pre-war Jewish population was killed during Second World War by German Nazis, and after the war most survivors left Poland. The country's current Jewish community does not exceed 5,000¹, a fraction of what it once was. Yet the problem with anti-Semitism in Poland still exists. Anti-Semitism is acted out in a variety of ways in contemporary Poland. A respected The Association "Nigdy Więcej" ("Never

¹ <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsourc/vjw/Poland.html>

Again") regularly reports on incidences such as vandalism on Jewish cemeteries and memorials, as well as on neo-Nazi movements and symbols in their "Brunatna Księga" ("Brown Book").²

In addition, anti-Semitic language is widespread in the everyday speech of Poles, and especially of young people³, for example through jokes or certain phrases. This kind of anti-Semitism is among the most difficult to fight because according to psychological theories it concerns peoples' cultural unconsciousness, which is shaped in socialization and broadly understood culture. It is based on historically-rooted stereotypes and myths.

Anti-Semitic myths date back to medieval times. One common myth centered on ritual murder, wherein Jews were accused of using Christian blood to make matzo. The power of these stereotypes did not come from their truthfulness, but rather from European Christians' political, social, and cultural fears. Jews were "the other," named as "unbelievers" and "murderers of Jesus Christ".⁴ The nineteenth century saw the birth of modern anti-Semitism as it has come to be known. It is strictly connected with the invention of the modern nation. Political and racial anti-Semitism found its strength in the claims that one nation or race can be "better" and more important than the others. Jews, already religious outsiders, were perceived as a threat and it was claimed that they were extraordinarily powerful or in positions to rule over others. Common discourse concerning Jews claimed that "Jews govern the world" and that "Jews are capitalistic bloodsuckers". Again, Jews were set apart socially and in everyday discourse. This process of "otherizing" was still rooted in societal fears and pinned on an easily targeted, outsider group.⁵

Following the First World War, Poland faced the challenge of dealing with its ethnic minorities. In 1931 in Poland 68.9% of the population were Poles, 13.9% Ukrainians, 8.6% Jews, 3.1% Belarusians, 2.3% Germans, 0.4% Russians, and 2.8% "others".⁶ Poland, after 123 years being under the rule of Russia, Germany and Austro-Hungary, was finally independent, but most of Poles treated Poland only as the "Polish" homeland. Like all Polish citizens they lived under Polish law, which on the basis of March Constitution from 1921 guaranteed them the equal rights. It was also a time when after the Polish-Bolsheviks War fear of "Żydokomuna" (Jewish-Communism) arose. It was claimed that the Communist revolution was actually a Jewish, anti-Polish conspiracy. Poland tried to introduce state-forced assimilation of the country's ethnic minorities, aimed at creating citizenship identity, independently from ethnicity or religion. In reality, rather than achieving the desired homogeneity, minorities were treated as second-class citizens and insulted by the nationalistic party "Endecja" (National Democrats), especially by economic boycotts and the destruction of Jewish property. Endecja slogans were "swój u swego" (in English, "our [people] in our [land]") and "Don't buy from the Jew".⁷

During Second World War, Poland was under the German Nazi occupation. German Nazis built their concentration camps in Poland, and millions of Polish and European Jews were killed within the Polish borders. Raul Hilberg, Jewish-American historian divides attitudes toward Holocaust into three types: perpetrators, victims and bystanders, in which Poles are qualified as bystanders.⁸ As a contrary argument there is used murder in Jedwabne done on Jews by Poles described in Jan Tomasz Gross's book "Neighbors. The destruction of the

² Kornak, Marcin. *Brunatna Księga 2011 – 2012*, Stowarzyszenie "Nigdy Więcej", Warszawa 2013.

³ Dybka Dariusz, Gogol Yulia, Maki Andrew, "Contemporary Discourse on Anti-Semitism in Poland", Warsaw 2006, <http://www.humanityinaction.org/knowledgebase/212-contemporary-discourse-on-anti-semitism-in-poland>, Poland, <http://www.axt.org.uk/antisem/archive/archive2/poland/poland.htm>

⁴ Tokarska-Bakir, Joanna. *Legenda o krwi*, pp. 39-63, 97-164, Warszawa 2008.

⁵ Poliakov, Leon. *Historia antysemityzmu*, vol. 2, pp. 67 – 137, 162 – 186, Kraków 2010.

⁶ <http://mbc.cyfrowemazowsze.pl/dlibra/docmetadata?id=14481&from=publication>

⁷ Michlic, B. Joanna. *Poland's Threatening Other: The Image of the Jew from 1880 to the Present*, p. 386, University of Nebraska 2006.

⁸ Hilberg, Raul. *Sprawcy, Ofiary, Świadkowie. Zagłada Żydów 1933 – 1945*, p.387, Warszawa 2007.

Jewish Community in Jedwabne".⁹ In Jedwabne on 10 of July 1941 took place mass kill of no less than 340 Jews done by no less than 40 Polish men from Jedwabne.¹⁰ Another argument is that Jedwabne cannot be compared to the German Nazi extermination camps, where 6 million Jews were killed.¹¹

They were certainly knowledgeable about German Nazi propaganda against Jewish communities. These propaganda campaigns called Jews "warmongers", "vermin", "the universal enemy", "parasite nations", "incarnation of evil."

After the war, the problem of anti-Semitism and anti-Semitic languages did not disappear. The old myths of ritual murder contributed to the pogroms in Kraków and Kielce in 1945 and 1946.¹² Because of continued social insecurity and oppressive communistic regime, surviving Jews often emigrated from Poland to the United States or Israel. The last emigration wave was in 1968 after an anti-Semitic campaign done by Polish United Workers' Party. Their slogan was "Zionists to Zion". This false propaganda showed Jews as secret agents, who had to be discarded from Poland.

The Polish transformation after 1989 made some attempts to remove anti-Semitism from the Polish social discourse. Yet the problem of the cultural stereotype of a Jew as an alien and enemy has continued to persist. In 2013, a survey on attitudes Polish high school students regarding Jews found that 40% of the respondents said they would not like having a Jewish classmate, and 44% said they would not like Jewish neighbors. 60% would prefer not having a Jewish partner.¹³ It can be assumed that, if these prejudicial attitudes have persisted, so has discriminatory language. And if the language continues to persist and remains ingrained in everyday language and understandings, it might be difficult to combat this sort of prejudicial thoughts.

Suggestions

Given this context of historically embedded anti-Semitic language use in Poland, the authors suggest holding a 90 minute workshop in Polish high-schools that aims at achieving three main goals: Firstly, the workshop educates students about the historical and present discriminatory use of anti-Semitic language. Secondly, students develop an understanding of the importance of language for furthering or hindering discrimination during the workshop. Lastly, students the workshop allows students to learn ways to raise awareness of social issues, specifically discriminatory language.

The workshop targets 16-19 year old high-school students because students in this age are usually mature enough to handle such a serious topic appropriately and already have some knowledge about history, especially the Holocaust. Both factors contribute to the success of the workshop.

The workshop is divided into two main parts. In the first part, the instructor gets the students interested and emotionally involved in the topic through a short exercise that focuses on how it feels to be called a 'bad name'. After introducing the topic and aims of the workshop, the instructor introduces the students to theory about the use of everyday, common language to discriminate or exclude certain groups from mainstream culture. The class then discusses if and why intentionality in language use matters. Next, the

⁹ Jan T. Gross, *Neighbors. The destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland*, Princeton 2001.

¹⁰ <http://ipn.gov.pl/wydzial-prasowy/komunikaty/komunikat-dot.-postanowienia-o-umozliwieniu-sledztwa-w-sprawie-zabojstwa-obywateli>

¹¹ Machcewicz, Paweł. *Wokół Jedwabnego*, w: "Wokół Jedwabnego", vol. 1, Warszawa 2002.

¹² Meducki, Stanisław and Wrona, Zenon. *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie 4 lipca 1946 roku*, vol. 1. p.201. Kielce 1992.

¹³ Tomasz, Urzykowski. *Uczniowie: Nie chcemy mieć Żydów w swoim otoczeniu*, Gazeta.pl 15.04.2013 r., http://warszawa.gazeta.pl/warszawa/1,34862,13745358,Uczniowie___Nie_chcemy_miec_Zydow_w_swoim_otoczeniu_.html

instructor provides a historical framework, situating anti-Semitic Polish language in a larger historical narrative, tracing roots from medieval times until today. This part of the workshop ends as students discuss the topics as a class, thinking, for example, how they feel upon hearing anti-Semitic language and how one can behave in such a situation.

In the second half of the workshop, students are introduced to the idea of social campaigns through examples from the US and Poland and then asked to develop a social campaign against anti-Semitic language in Poland. They work in small groups, creating stickers, flyers, and posters. They are given one existing slogan to work with ("I am Jewish. I am Polish."), but are encouraged to come up with unique slogans. After working on this, the students present their campaign ideas to the class. The workshop ends with a brief conclusion and suggestions for how to implement the campaigns, for example in their school.

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Anti-Semitism in Everyday Polish Discourse

TRAINING WORKSHOP

Goals:

- 1) to educate students about the historical and present discriminatory use of anti-Semitic language,
- 2) for students to develop an understanding of the importance of language for furthering or hindering discrimination,
- 3) for students to learn ways to raise awareness of social issues, specifically discriminatory language.

Methods Overview: We hope to accomplish our goals through a 90-minute workshop. The workshop will be split in 45-minute segments. In the first half of the workshop, after getting students emotionally involved with the issue of negative language use, the instructor will develop a general theory about the use of everyday, common language to discriminate or exclude certain groups from mainstream culture. The instructor will also provide a historical framework, situating anti-Semitic language in a larger historical narrative. After being given examples of current anti-Semitic language use today, students will reflect on their own experiences and observations of anti-Semitic language. They will discuss as a class their feelings about and reactions to these observations.

The second 45-minute segment will be devoted to leading the students through a creative activity. Students will be given examples of successful campaigns from the US and Poland against discriminatory language. They will then be asked to create, contribute to, and present a campaign against anti-Semitic language in Poland. The final minutes of the workshop will be devoted to reflection and plans of action.

Detailed Workshop Schedule:

Activity	Expected Time (in Minutes)	Overview	Goal	Resources Needed
1. Opening Activity	5	Have students write their hair, eye color, and height on their name tags. Introduce them to the concept of stereotypes and ask them to picture how they would feel if they were being grouped on things they can't control and heard negative stereotypes about themselves. Have the students silently reflect at the end.	To get students attention and establish their interest in the topic through getting engaged emotionally. Students are to realize language use does not only matter to minorities, but to everybody.	Name Tags

2. Introducing the Workshop	5	Introduce the workshop. Make sure to clearly state the goals and objectives to students. Give them an overview of the workshop, explaining the first and second half of the time. Explain students why it is important to have an open and safe environment in which everyone can speak honestly without being judged and ask for their collaboration in this.	To introduce the workshop to students and give them a set of basic expectations.	
3. Understanding the Power of Language	15	Give a brief theoretical overview of why language is important. Talk about the power of language to shape the way individuals and the masses think and to hurt or exclude others. The first 10 minutes will be mostly instructor led, focusing on an overview of why discriminatory language in every form is wrong. Students will then discuss the question of intentionality.	To help students understand the power of language in the public sphere.	PPT slides http://www.humanityinaction.org/files/524-Antisemitism_Workshop_PPT.pdf
4. Context of anti-Semitic Language both Historical and Present	20	Help the students understand that modern anti-Semitic language is related to/takes place in a larger historic context of anti-Semitism, also in the case study of Poland (see the explanation in the essay). Help them make connections between past acts of discrimination and existing language at the time. The first part of this portion is largely instructor led. Then students will reflect on their own experiences with anti-Semitic language.	To help the students situate modern discriminatory language against Jews in a history of anti-Semitism in Poland. To have the students recognize and acknowledge the presence of anti-Semitic language in their every day lives.	PPT slides http://www.humanityinaction.org/files/524-Antisemitism_Workshop_PPT.pdf
BREAK		Distribute needed activity materials and split up students into groups of 3-5 during the break, rearrange tables if necessary.		Paper/Posters, Markers, Blank Stickers
1. Introduction to Social Campaign Activity	5	Introduce the idea of a social campaign. Give brief examples from the United States and Poland and one possible example slogan for the students ("I'm Jewish & I'm Polish" or "I am a Jew, I am a Pole") to work within their context. Leave the assignment fairly open ended, but tell them their time limits. Explain to them that these will be put up around the classroom and/or school.	Have the students work together in groups of 3-5 to develop a social campaign against discriminatory language.	Pens, Markers, Paper, Posters, Blank Stickers, PPT slides http://www.humanityinaction.org/files/524-Antisemitism_Workshop_PPT.pdf
2. Group work time - Social Campaign Activity	20	Student work in small groups to use the example slogan and come up with a design, or create a new slogan and design against anti-Semitic language in Poland.	Have the students help develop a human rights campaign.	Pens, Markers, Paper, Posters, Blank Stickers
3. Presentation of Social Campaign Activity	15	Have each group take 2-3 minutes to present their design and slogan. Have them state the idea behind the slogan and/or design and what they hope to communicate with their campaigns. Allow time for brief questions and comments.	Have the students present and see each other's social campaigns as a means of sharing and sharpening ideas.	None
4. Conclusion	5	Restate the goals and objectives of the workshop. Ask the students if they feel they have accomplished the goals and objectives. Praise the students' work and offer further time or resources for continuing the discussion.	Help the students wrap up the workshop and provide avenues for further action and research.	None

Further instructions per section

Part I

1. Opening Activity

- Hand out nametags and ask students to write down their name, hair colour, eye colour and height.
- Ask all blonde students to raise their hand. Ask them if they've ever heard anybody say that blonde people are stupid. Ask them to imagine how they felt if everybody would talk about blonde people not only as stupid, but also as lazy. As in: "You dumb, lazy blonde."
- Ask all students with brown eyes to raise their hand. Ask them to imagine how it would be like if everybody called them a thief because they have brown eyes. As in: "Oh, I know your kind. You are one of those brown-eyed people; I know you steal. Get out of here."
- Ask all students who think they are tall to raise their hand. Ask them to picture that everybody at schools tells them that tall students cannot get good grades. How would they feel if their classmates and teachers told them that, if they did get good grades, they must have cheated?
- Tell the students that we often use language as a means of reinforcing stereotypes. A stereotype is when people have thoughts about specific types of individuals or certain ways of doing things, but that these beliefs may or may not accurately reflect reality.
- Tell students that they will have time to discuss later, but that for the moment you just want them to silently reflect on how they would feel in such situations.
- Give the students 30 seconds to a minute to silently reflect.

2. Introduction to the Workshop

- Make sure to clearly state the goals and objectives to students:
This workshop is about how language is being used in a way that is hurtful to Jewish people because it differentiates them from other people. We are learning to become more aware of how we often use language in negative ways and how we can use it in more positive ways and how we can encourage others to do the same. I will be talking for a little bit, but for the most part I will ask you about your experiences and ideas and you will get to talk a lot and can create something together with your group.
- Give them an overview of the workshop, explaining the first and second half of the time:
The workshop is divided in two parts of 45 minutes each. In the first half, we will learn that the ways we use language are very powerful because language influences how we think and can hurt and exclude certain groups of people. This has been done in the past and is still being done today, for example to Jews. We will brainstorm together how language is used to exclude Jews in Poland today. After the break, you will develop a campaign that raises awareness about anti-Semitic language use in Poland and you will be able to create posters and flyers in an artistic way.
- Tell the students that you would like the workshop to take place in an environment in which everybody can feel safe:
Everybody should be able to be comfortable and share openly without being judged by others. Ask them to contribute to this. Specifically ask students to remember that everything that is being said during the workshop

stays inside the classroom and that they do not share with others what their classmates have said. Also remind them that, though we'll be discussing difficult topics, we believe they are mature enough to do so without using sensitive topics to hurt others.

3. Understanding the Power of Language

http://www.humanityinaction.org/files/524-Antisemitism_Workshop_PPT.pdf

This section is focused on helping students understand the power of language, both written and verbal, to contribute to societal discrimination.

This section is mostly focused on teacher input. The instructor will give a brief overview of theories about the role of language in societal discrimination. After the section on instruction, students will briefly discuss as a group the importance of intention in discriminatory language.

Below is a basic outline of what the instructor should make sure to include in their presentation. Feel free to add as time allows, but make sure these themes are communicated.

[Slide 1] Language Used to Dehumanize

- Language has an extraordinary power to shape the way that we think. Linguists suspect that language is so powerful that we usually only have ideas that we have words for. As in, if we can describe it and name it, we can understand it. If we can't name it, we don't have the mental categories to understand it.
- Therefore, language shapes the way we think. In the past language has been used to divide people. It starts with breaking us up into "us" and "them." Sometimes these categories are useful, as when teaching children who is a safe person in their family for them to follow around a park. But on a societal level, these "us" and "them" categories are often hurtful and dangerous. They make it easy to treat others differently.
- This pattern of using language continues when we begin to insult and dehumanize other people. When we talk about people as "them," as "the other," it's easier to see them as lesser than we see ourselves. When we talk about people as if they weren't human, we are preparing ourselves to think of them as un-human and treat them as un-human.

[Slide 2] Does Intention Matter?

- Sometimes it's easy to get swept up in conversations. Language is a communal activity, so it really only takes place in groups, to communicate with others. Sometimes common jokes and phrases are exclusive and discriminatory, but everyone uses them to express common ideas, maybe not even meaning to be discriminatory.
- The idea that our intentions matter more than the effects of our words is called intentionalism. It's like saying that as long as I didn't mean anything bad, my words can't be bad. But we all know that words and actions can hurt even if the other person doesn't mean for them to.
- Our intentions do matter, but we need to remember that our language can have bad effects even if we don't mean for them too. Just because something is a joke, or a common phrase, or normal and not meant in a bad way, doesn't mean it's right to be hurtful.
- Give the example of a sheet of paper. I might accidentally rip or crumple up a sheet of paper. Even if it was an accident and I try and fix it and straighten it out, the paper won't be the same again. Just like that, our words can have harmful effects even if we don't mean to.

[Slide 3] Using Language for Good

- Language has been used for bad in the past, but we can use language for good too.
- Some easy ways are to:
 - Be inclusive. Don't split groups into "us" and "them."
 - Be intentional. Be aware of the connotations of what you're saying, and if it's hurtful, don't say it. If you don't know what a joke or insult means, especially if it's about another group of people, it's better to be safe and not say it.
 - Be encouraging. Use positive language when you're talking about groups that have been and still are discriminated against.
 - If your friends use language that's hurtful or discriminatory, don't laugh. Tell them it's not right and start saying something different.
- Discuss the following questions with the students:
 - When you've heard anti-Semitic language, do you think people are meaning to be discriminatory? And do you think it matters if they meant to or not?
 - Try and guide the students to understanding that intentional discrimination and unintentional discrimination are hurtful, and therefore wrong.

4. Context of anti-Semitic Language both in Historical and Present Perspective

The instructor should need about 10 minutes for the following power point presentation so that afterwards there are 10 minutes left for discussing students personal experiences and observations.

Check out the essay for including additional information, but do make sure to include the following information for the students when presenting the slides:

- **[Slide 1]:** While Jews sought refuge from anti-Semitism in other European countries in the Middle Ages in Poland, anti-Semitism also has a long history in this country. For example, in that period of time Jews were accused of ritually murdering Christian children so that they could use their blood to make matzo. Jews were also held in collective responsibility for the death of Jesus Christ and insulted as Christ-murders. Of course, these stereotypes were not true, but instead they are an expression of widely held fears regarding Jews because they were perceived as being different.
- **[Slide 2]:** In the 19th century, modern anti-Semitism was born. Jews were often perceived as only religious outsiders. In addition, many Poles also perceived them as a threat to the Polish nation overall and as none-Polish. Jews were stereotyped as capitalists that rule the world and thus need to be excluded from society. This was still a common notion in the 20th century. After World War I, many laws limited the daily lives of Jews, for example they only had limited access to university and some professions. In this interwar period between World War I and World War II, it was also widely believed that Jews were communists and that there was a Jewish-Communist conspiracy against Poland and Jews were generally described as stingy merchants. There were even boycotts of Jewish shops and products and Jewish property as being destroyed.
- **[Slide 3]:** During the German Nazi-occupation in World War II, Poles were subjected to German Nazi propaganda that called Jews to be vermin, parasites and enemies. While there were Poles who helped Jews during the occupation, there were those who were indifferent and there were also Poles who be-

lieved in this propaganda and participated in or at least facilitated the murder of Jews. During World War II, 90% of Poland's Jewish population was killed by German Nazis and only about 10,000 Jews remained in Poland after the war as the rest emigrated, mostly to Israel or the US.

- **[Slide 4]:** During the communist era, anti-Semitism was wide-spread. The old myths regarding ritual murder played a role in the pogroms in Kielce and Kraków in 1945-46. The Polish United Workers' Party also conducted an anti-Semitic campaign with the slogan "Zionists to Zion." Jews were also disliked by parts of the Polish population as many people believed that Jews were communists and the Jewish population supported communist occupation. In this increasingly hostile environment many Jews no longer felt safe and emigrated to the US or Israel.
- **[Slide 5]:** Despite many efforts to reduce anti-Semitism after the transformation of 1989, anti-Semitic stereotypes and language are still very common in Poland today. Many people still see Jews as aliens and enemies. These attitudes strongly influence youth. For example, a 2013 survey on attitudes Polish high school students regarding Jews found that 40% of the respondents said they would not like having a Jewish classmate, and 44% said they would not like Jewish neighbors. 60% would prefer not having a Jewish partner. Calling somebody a Jew is generally perceived to be an insult among youth and the word Jew is even used in a verb – as "to jew" - meaning that somebody is being stingy and cheap. Apart from this type of everyday language use that many people share, there are also neo-Nazi movements in Poland that use neo-Nazi symbols and do vandalism to Jewish cemeteries and memorials. You can learn more about this when checking out the "Brunatna Księga" ("Brown Book") by the "Nigdy Więcej" ("Never Again") Association.
- Now, we will talk more about your own experiences with anti-Semitic language.

Personal Experiences with Anti-Semitic Language

The goal of this second part of the session is to have the students recognize and acknowledge the presence of anti-Semitic language in their every day lives and the impact on the affected.

The instructor is supposed to stimulate students' reflections by posing the following questions to them and engaging them into discussion.

- Ask the students how it makes them feel when they hear such anti-Semitic language.
- Ask the students how other people, specifically Jewish people, might feel that are being stereotyped in such ways.
- Ask students to think about what they've just heard (anti-Semitic language) and how they felt at the beginning being stereotyped by something they can't control such as their hair colour. Are these ways of stereotyping related (the example stereotypes from the beginning and the anti-Semitic stereotypes)?
- Towards the end, ask them how they behave when they hear anti-Semitic language in their daily lives and what they think they can and should do about it.

Finish up by saying that after the break they will get a chance to think more about how to do something against such language.

Break

Part II

1. Introduction to Part II

- Tell students what their groups are and seat them accordingly.
- Tell them that in the second part of the workshop, they will be creating a social media campaign.
- Explain to them that a social media campaign is similar to an advertisement for a product and can consist of posters, flyers, stickers, TV spots, webpages, blogs, etc. However, unlike a normal advertisement, social campaigns try to raise awareness of certain social issues, for example the treatment of minority groups. Social media campaigns often urge people to take action and/or change their own behaviour.
- Show them the examples from the US and Poland, reading out loud what the posters say and explaining what the campaigns were about
- E.g. The "Drop the I-word" campaign was supposed to encourage people to use the word undocumented instead of illegal immigrant as calling somebody illegal makes it sound like that person does not have any rights and is not a human being like everybody else.
- The "Think Before You Speak" campaign encouraged people to stop using gay as a bad word. It emphasized that gay people are normal people like everybody else that have hobbies, dreams, etc.
- The Polish example of "I am a Jew. I am Polish." encouraged people to break down categories that excluded Jews from being accepted as fully "Polish." It encouraged people to stop talking about Jews as if they were foreigners.
- The Roma campaign, "Roma are you brother," encouraged people to break down the walls that put them and Roma in different categories. By calling them "brother" it put them in the same, close realm of family.
- Tell them that from now on they will have 20 minutes to either create a poster/flyer/sticker campaign using the slogan "I'm Jewish. I'm Polish." (or something similar if they can think of it) and illustrate that slogan with paintings or drawings. Encourage them to be as creative as they want to.
- Remind them that in the end they will have to present their results to the class and that their work will be displayed in the classroom and/or school.
- Ask them if they have any questions and encourage them to start working.

The next two parts are very much student led and the instructor should be in the background as much as possible.

2. Group Work Time - Social Campaign Activity

- As students are working in small groups, walk around checking in with all groups in case they need help. Give them a heads up 5 minutes before the time is over (after 15 minutes) so that they know they need to wrap up within the next 5 minutes and should start thinking about what to say during the presentation. Also remind groups to be aware of noise levels if necessary.
- If students seem "stuck" and can't think of anything, remind them that an effective poster can be as simple as the words or phrases displayed simply and boldly.
- If students are not taking the assignment seriously, remind them that this is a group activity and they are accountable to the class for their efforts. If they refuse to take it seriously, ask them to step aside so that the rest of the group can work effectively.

3. Presentation of Social Campaign Activity

- Ask students to come up to the front of the class (or stand where they are, whichever is more convenient) to present their campaign to their classmates.
- Restate that each group will explain what the idea behind their campaign is and what they hope to communicate with it.
- Remind them to be brief as they only have two or three minutes to present.
- Allow for questions from their classmates if time allows.

4. Conclusions

- Restate the goals and objectives of the workshop.
- Ask the students if they feel they've accomplished the goals and objectives.
- Praise the students' work and offer further time or resources for continuing the discussion.

Suggestions for the instructor to take the campaign further:

- A) In the school:
 - Students could be given additional material, e.g. during art class, to produce more posters and stickers and distribute them throughout the school (e.g. posters on the school notice board and within classrooms, stickers in changing rooms, etc.)
- B) Outside the school:
 - If the campaign is successfully implemented within the school, a local newspaper could be contacted and asked to write about the project. This way public outreach is increased.

Annex: List of Stereotypical anti-Semitic Language That Might Be Spotted in Poland

IMPORTANT: This is just for the instructor to see. Only use examples from this list if students cannot come up with any examples by themselves. We do not intend to teach the students new insults, so it is preferred that the workshop is based on their own experiences.

- "You Jew!" (i.e. You are not one of us; You are different; (in some cases) You enemy)
- "Give me money. Stop Jewing. Don't be a Jew."
- "<a name of a city> without Jews"
- "Żydzew" - Widzew is the name of the sports club, so the Jewish version is an insult
- Sometimes there are visual symbols used instead of words e.g.: Nazi symbol and Celtic cross are anti-Semitic
- Jew=Communist (online)
 - "Żydokomuna"
- "Jews go to Israel" - online "If you don't like being in Poland, just leave."



Irena Sendler



Silencing Passivity and Empowering Witnesses

Hannah Gardenswartz and Katarzyna Kotula

When the German Nazi's invaded Poland in 1939, they created not just a system of oppression and anti-Semitism, but also a system that required the Polish people to become the first people to experience and witness the horrors of the German Nazi's schemes, which would culminate in the horrific genocide of the integrated Jewish population. With the help of propaganda and fear tactics, the German Nazi system allowed the Poles to watch while their neighbors were brutally treated and later murdered. In the face of such hopelessness, the more astounding moments were those where people decided to take action against the system. The courage of Irena Sendler stands out against the passivity of others, despite having pressures, such as the threat of death by the German Nazis, to remain complacent. Her will to speak out despite all the fears and reasons not to reminds us how defiant human compassion can be and inspires us to access that human kindness that each of us has.

Growing up, Irena Sendler's father was a doctor in a mostly rural community, where his patients were mostly poor Jews. Because he saw regular the inequalities of the era, he became one of the first Polish Socialists. His work towards equality and regular interactions with the Jews greatly influenced Irena's life and work, both before and during the Second World War. Before the War, she worked as the Senior Administrator in the Warsaw Social Welfare Department, where she would administer canteens throughout the city. The canteens provided meals, financial aid and services, as well as other services for Warsaw's orphan, elderly and poor populations. Because she was already very involved with social work and social welfare, she continued her work after the German Nazi invasion. After this invasion, her canteens also provided clothing, medicine, and money for Jews, all of whom were registered under fictitious Catholic names.

Construction of the Warsaw Ghetto, where all of Warsaw and later much of Poland's Jewish population was herded behind a wall, began in October 1940. Upon seeing the horrendous conditions created with the high walls of the ghetto, Irena began to help Jews by smuggling food and medicine into the ghetto. In order to legally enter the ghetto, one needed to be issued a pass. Because she was working in social welfare, she was able to get a pass from the Warsaw's Epidemic Control Department and she visited the ghetto daily, reestablished contacts and bringing food, medicines and clothing. Because she witnessed firsthand the 5,000 people that were dying each month from starvation and disease in the ghetto, and she decided to help the Jewish children to get out.

By joining with Żegota, she was able to bring some aid to the Jewish families and children. Żegota was an underground network of people, with Jewish and not, that worked solely for the purpose of getting aid the Poland's Jews and find places of safety for them in Occupied Poland. Poland was the only country in Occupied



Europe where, throughout the war, there existed a dedicated secret organization expressly for the aid of the Jewish population. In Warsaw, Irena (codename Jolanta) became the head of the Żegota's Children Department, where she cared for Jewish children and smuggled them out of the Warsaw ghetto.

At first, she used her network of around 30 people, mostly women, to smuggle children out, underneath the floorboards of a small ambulance. As the Żegota network became more advanced, more creative ways were used to smuggle food and medicine in and children out. Some children were taken out in gunnysacks or body bags, while others were buried inside loads of goods or carried out in potato sacks. Others were placed in coffins; one mechanic took a baby out in his toolbox. The church that straddled the border of the Jewish and Aryan spaces had two entrances, one to the ghetto and one to the Aryan side of Warsaw. Some children were able to enter the church as Jews, but exited the other side as Christians. As the missions continued, Irena recruited at least one person from each of the ten centers of the Social Welfare Department. With their help, she issued hundreds of false documents with forged signatures and successfully smuggled almost 2500 Jewish children to safety and gave them temporary new identities.

The feedback we received focused on the worry that we were putting her on a pedestal and making her a lofty hero instead of a woman who did what she thought was right. This was one of the biggest challenges of the revisions, because in many ways we do want to put her on a pedestal, mostly because we believe that she deserves it, however that creates an not relatable personage. We think that she deserves to be given an honorific place in history. Perhaps the greatest honor is not being a lofty hero, but being one that students some 70 years later can draw inspiration from. Not everyone has the courage to smuggle 2500 children out of the Warsaw ghetto and into homes and convents in the Aryan part of Warsaw, but everyone might have the courage to stand against injustice in many ways, both large and small.

Irena struggled with the idea of taking children away from their families.

On the one hand, the children ought to be raised in their own families, by the parents who love them so entirely. On the other hand, if they stayed in the ghetto, they were almost guaranteed to die, from either the horrible conditions leading to starvation or disease or from the deportations to death camps. Taking a child away from their families, families that are about to suffer a terrible fate, was a personal struggle for both Irena and the parents. Irena could not save everyone who she knew was going to be murdered and being able to save only a few is a heavy burden. Similarly, the knowledge that the child is safe but far away can be a difficult sacrifice the parents had to make.

Irena Sendler accomplished her incredible deeds with the active assistance of the church: "I sent most of the children to religious establishments. I knew I could count on the Sisters." Counting on the nuns and on other Catholic families to take in and hide the children was part of her operation. However, these were Jewish children, now being taken away not only from their families, but also from their rituals and practices. Regardless of whether or not the children came from religious Jewish families, the rich Jewish culture was also being lost to the genocide. The children grew up as Catholic Poles, not even remembering their Jewish heritage until long after the War was over. By the end of the War, Poland was more homogenous and had lost much of the thriving Jewishness that had existed before. While the children were saved, their Jewishness died during the War, as their parents most likely did as well, and the children were then integrated into the predominately Catholic Polish culture.

Catholic birth certificates and identity papers were forged and signed by priests and high ranking officials in the Social Services Department so that the children could be taken from safe houses in Warsaw to orphanages and convents in the surrounding countryside. The only true record of the children saved was a carefully coded list that included all of the children's original names and new identities, safely hidden under an apple tree in Irena's neighbor's back yard, across the street from German barracks.



Despite her heroism, particularly in the face of German Nazi oppressive control, where death was the punishment for helping Jews, Irena Sendler has not become the most well known character in Polish history, or at the very least not as well-known as she deserves. She was not a woman who felt the need for glory, only a need to take children away before they were deported with their parents to their almost-certain death. Her humble attitude is exemplified in the fact that she has said "I could have done more...This regret will follow me to my death." By standing against the system of oppression and death, even when others did not, Irena has done enough. She no longer has to do more; it is now up to the rest of us to care for others in her memory. Irena believed that she could have done more; by continuing to work against discrimination today in her memory, perhaps we can be sure that she has done enough. One way to do so is by combatting the lack of knowledge surrounding her life and her valiant efforts to save lives. If we do not have any stories to remember, how can we ourselves feel inspired to action, to human compassion, in a place or time or situation where it is so much easier to remain a passive witness?

By teaching Irena Sendler's story and biography, we could also give students some figure to inspire their action, while also teaching them how small acts of discrimination can become slightly larger acts of oppression, which can become violent acts against an entire culture, race, religion, or ethnic group. Irena was able to do much because her situation presented a need for large actions. She could be a great role-model also nowadays as there are people that are not being treated in a just manner in Poland.

Through a 90 minute classroom workshop, divided into two 45 minute sections, for Polish students aged 16 to 18, we propose a lesson plan that teaches students who Irena Sendler was, her actions during the war, and why some people choose to act against injustice and why some just silently witness. Our workshop asks students to realize the complexity of the attitudes of Polish citizens during the Second World War and instill the necessity of active citizenship, where students are aware and involved with their governments and communities, because the positive and negative behaviors of individuals affect the total of society. Holocaust education ought to act as a "preventative measure" of sorts, where people are forced to the conclusion that we do not start with murder. We start with indifference and witnessing; silence is consent to what is happening around you, and therefore we must to the difficult task of courage and speaking out.

The first section of the workshop will focus primarily on Irena Sendler's life and achievements. The opening exercise asks students to think of a situation when they were a by-stander or when they acted to help someone else, so that they can reflect on how easy indifference is and much more courage is involved in action. We hope that this will give students some context or place for personal reflection on how much courage is involved in taking action. Following this exercise, we have a clip of the movie "In the name of their mothers – the story of Irena Sendler" (2010), so that students are able to learn about the life of Irena without needing to sit through a lecture. Along with the movie clip, students are asked to answer different questions about Irena's life, so that they are required to remain engaged and focused on the film. It also allows us to guide their focus to what we believe are the most important facts and discussion points. After the film clip, students will discuss in small groups the answers, with an emphasis on her actions and an individual evaluation of her actions.

After a short break, the students would resume for the second half of the workshop, focusing on complacently witnessing the Holocaust versus being an Irena and taking action. Using different sources materials, students not only learn how to work with different materials, but also are given a framework for why people do act and why people do not act. The first of such exercises is using quotations on why people decid-

ed to help the persecuted Jews. The student's focus is on finding a few words that best describes their reasons. Aside from giving context into the different reasons people helped the Jews, it also helps students learn how to read a primary source and gain some better understanding of the topic at hand. The next exercise is a photograph analysis, where the students are given two pictures and most work to extract a meaning and understanding of passive witnesses from this source material. The third exercise is an analysis of the Ed van Thijin (a Holocaust survivor) quote:



Photo: Sarah Deal

"You never know how you would behave in a situation where someone beats someone. You cannot predict your reaction if you take up a cause of injured person or not. Most people do not react because of the fear. Such persons should not be judged. You can only blame those who help the perpetrator. And those who intervene can only admire."

The focus of this exercise is that students might find it easy to say they will act, but until you are in a situation that requires action, you do not know how courageous you will or will not be. The other key point is that we cannot judge those who did nothing, but doing something is much harder, particularly when we are discussing the Holocaust era. Hearing or seeing a call to action is easy yet responding to that call is a remarkable feat. There were many people in Warsaw who saw what was happening to the Jews and chose not to help. The city witnessed so many horrors that in the end, people could be both a victim and a perpetrator. Some rose above the situation and did not wish to be a perpetrator, despite all the pressures to focus on one's own victimhood. This final exercise is crucial because it is here that we want students to critically think about why they have chosen to remain silent and then maybe feel that next time they might be able to overcome their fear to do what is right. The final discussion will be a small summary of the workshop, focusing on how they can apply the theme of just action of Irena Sendler to their own lives, and work through the idea "Who keeps silent in the face of murder - becomes a partner of the murderer. Who does not condemn - consents."



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Irena Inspiration

Workshop

Workshop scenario

- The topic: Irena Sendler and Witnesses to the Holocaust
- Duration: 90 minutes (2 x 45 min)
- Students: 16-18 year old

The aims of the lesson:

After the lesson, the students should:

- a. Know:
 - who was Irena Sendler and what she did during the war
 - why some people take action/take a stance in difficult situations and why some become passive witnesses
 - how to work with different source materials
- b. Be able to:
 - explain the relations between Poles and Jews during the War
 - point out the main factors that encouraged/discouraged Poles to help Jews
 - understand and critically evaluate their own behavior/attitude
 - explain the importance of individual moral courage in everyday life
- c. Realize:
 - the complexity and diversity of attitudes of Polish citizens in time of the War in regards to the treatment of Jews
 - the necessity of active citizenship, both historically and today
 - the inability to clear judgment of the behavior of others (without the knowledge of the wider context of the situation)
 - how positive and negative behaviors of individuals affect of the rest of society

Methods of teaching:

elements of lecture, "talk" (*pogadanka*), individual work with the source material, group work, discussion, and "brain storm"

1. Teaching aids:

- handouts, photos, source texts (memoirs of survivors), part of the movie "In the Name of Their Mothers - the story of Irena Sendler" (dir. Mary Skinner, Poland / USA 2010) <http://www.pbs.org/program/irena-sendler/> or <http://www.ovguide.com/irena-sendler-in-the-name-of-their-mothers-9202a8c04000641f800000001cdabe8b>

**Course of the lesson:**

Time (min)	Exercises	Group Size	Materials Needed
3	Welcome, prepare students for classes - Let students into classroom and settle in - Be sure they have a piece of paper and a writing utensil - (If done by a guest presenter, have them introduce themselves and the organization they are affiliated with)	All students	
5	<p>Introduction to the topic of the lesson:</p> <p>Exercise nr 1: Students are asked to think about a situation when they remained passive and watched something happen that they knew was wrong when they acted to help someone else. Do they regret their choice? Afterward, answer for the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When have you ever seen someone being hurt? - Where were you? - Did you help that person or not? What were your reasons? - How did you feel at the time? - Upon reflection, what would you do differently? <p>(Alternate: If students do not want to write about themselves and their action or inaction, but perhaps they could talk about a scene they have seen where someone could have intervened, but did not.)</p> <p>Teacher explains to students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the topic of the lesson will be Irena Sendler - that today they will talk about Irena Sendler and the importance of the decision taken by us in our lives and the meaning of our attitude to other people 	<p>Individually</p> <p>Sharing the answers with others</p>	
25	<p>Exercise nr 2: Students watch part of a documentary movie about Irena Sendler. On the basis of the information from the film they have to fill out the handouts.</p> <p>Teachers distribute the handouts and ask them to take note of the content of the questions. If there are no questions about the handout, the teacher should screen the movie.</p>	Individually	<p>Handout 1 http://www.humanityinaction.org/files/544-Sendler_workshop_handout1.pdf</p> <p>Part of the movie "In the name of their mothers – the story of Irena Sendler" (2010)</p>
15	<p>Checking the answers of students should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an emphasis on the importance of the actions of Irena Sendler - an individual evaluation of Irena Sendler's actions - an explanation of unclear material, answer questions, etc. 	All students	<p>Handout 1 http://www.humanityinaction.org/files/544-Sendler_workshop_handout1.pdf</p>
5	Short break	All students	
1	<p>Introduction to the second part of the lesson: Selection by the German Nazis of Polish lands to become the place of the extermination of the Jewish population forced the Poles to be witnesses, victims and in some cases perpetrators. This extreme situation proved to be a particular challenge for Polish society, resulting in the need to address the attitudes of Poles on tragedy of the Jewish people. There are three different attitudes to the Holocaust adopted by the Poles: victims, perpetrators and witnesses. Any genocide or discriminatory action taken by one group of people against another usually follows this same pattern. The category of witnesses is very broad: it contains those who helped the Jews, those who did nothing, and those who collaborated with the German Nazis. Irena Sendler sacrificed a lot in order to save Jewish children. Different people, in the same place and situation of Irena Sendler, had different reasons for helping Jews.</p>	All students	-
4	<p>Exercise nr 3: Below are some comments made by those who helped the persecuted Jews. Read them and find the word that you think best explains why they helped.</p> <p>(Check the answers)</p>	Individually	<p>Handout 2 http://www.humanityinaction.org/files/545-Sendler_workshop_handout2.pdf</p>



1	<p>Introduction to the next exercise:</p> <p>Initially, anti-Jewish restrictions did not cause public opposition. This was due to the pre-war anti-Semitism, and allowed the impact of Nazi propaganda to effectively foster the Polish-Jewish antagonism. In addition, some people saw tangible benefits of the anti-Jewish policies of the Nazi occupation (occupying Jewish homes, plunder of Jewish assets). While there were groups, such as the underground organization Żegota that helped the Jews, many people did not help, despite seeing the same thing as members of Żegota.</p>	All students	
16	<p>Exercise nr 4:</p> <p>Look at the two photographs showing similar events. then try to answer the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What do you see in the pictures (note the gathered people)? - What can you say about the mood of the people gathered in the pictures? - Are they passive witnesses? Why? <p>After checking the answer, the teacher draws on the board two large circles which in the middle "overlap" each other (a Venn Diagram). The teacher asks students to write the feelings and emotions of passive witnesses in the middle of one circle, and in the second the feelings and emotions of the victims. If any of the feelings are the same for both groups students write them in the middle of the wheels.</p> <p>Example of a Venn Diagram:</p> <div style="text-align: center;"> </div> <p>(After examining the feelings and emotions of other people, it is easier to understand their behavior and the reasons why they reacted in the way that they did.) The teacher ask students to select from the list below or to write down two concepts that you think explain the reasons why people do not react (Fear, Hatred of Jews, Self-protection, Ego-tism, Impotence, Cowardice, Ignorance, or Indifference).</p> <p>After checking the answers, teacher ask some additional questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why do you think some people in extreme situations summon up heroic deeds and the other become passive witnesses? - How would you have behaved in situations that present on the photos? Why do you think you would have one response over another? 	<p>4 people</p> <p>All students: those of them who have any idea – write it on the blackboard ("brain storm")</p> <p>All students</p>	<p>Handout 2 http://www.humanityinaction.org/files/545-Sendler_workshop_handout2.pdf blackboard</p>
5	<p>Introduction to another exercise as a reference to the last question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can we be sure of our behavior and reaction in extreme situations? <p>Exercise nr 5:</p> <p>"You never know how you would behave in a situation where someone beats someone. You cannot predict your reaction if you take up a cause of injured person or not. Most people do not react because of the fear. Such persons should not be judged. You can only blame those who help the perpetrator. And those who intervene can only admire." Read Ed van Thijn's statement. During the war he was hiding on the Aryan side. His hiding place was discovered just before the liberation. He survived, because at that time Jews were no longer deported from the Netherlands to concentration camps.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What does this quote mean? Please rephrase the quotation in your own words. - How can we apply this quote to our lives? - Do you agree with this quote? 	Individually	<p>Handout 2 http://www.humanityinaction.org/files/545-Sendler_workshop_handout2.pdf</p>
10	<p>As a summary of the lesson, the teacher asks students to reread their statements that were written in the first exercise of the workshop and reflect on why they took action, why they remained witnesses, and what will be their reaction next time they are in a similar difficult situation, while keeping in mind that no one can be sure of their actions until the specific situation arises.</p> <p>Questions for further reflection:</p> <p>"Who keeps silent in the face of murder – becomes a partner of the murderer. Who does not condemning - consents". The Follow-up question: "Every Pole was obliged to sacrifice his/her life and the life of his family/neighbor for Jewish compatriots. Yes? or No?"</p>	All students	Inscription on blackboard

