



PRIFYSGOL CYMRU —————
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
————— UNIVERSITY OF WALES
Trinity Saint David

Where do we stand? A case study on the British contribution to Holocaust memorial culture

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Abstract

European Holocaust memorial culture is an umbrella term used to define the relationship between the Holocaust and how we, as humans interact with the topic. Each country has individual means of representing the history surrounding the mass slaughter of Hitler's "undesirables". The events of the Holocaust reach contemporary society in several forms; research questions for this study will centre around developments in battling denial, commemoration in British society, and education policies. Research was conducted through qualitative means, mainly methods of content and narrative analysis. Source material ranged from scholarly works to reports based on public surveys. Ulterior methodologies available in my field of study were limited through ethical issues or the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic. My findings revealed aspects of British Holocaust Memorial culture stretch into vast levels of our society but there is a divide between the bodies that strived to cement its place in British society and individuals within that society that do not accept its presence in our culture. My conclusions are that Britain does indeed continue to fight anti-Semitism in its modern form of Holocaust denial with varying degrees of success. Britain commemorates the victims of the Holocaust through various means but are met with repeated controversy in the court of public opinion. The British youth are educated on the Holocaust by means of the national curriculum and access to the internet, however it is a field that lacks specification in certain areas of teaching methods.

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Introduction

The horrific events of the Holocaust are commonly thought of as a wartime tragedy, something that belongs in a different century to our own. In theory this is true, but the ripples of the Holocaust reach contemporary society in numerous forms. Holocaust culture is present in numerous European cultures, each country has adopted its own methods of remembrance for the millions claimed by Hitler's murderous plot. Holocaust culture can be defined as the interaction between human beings and the Holocaust. How we think about and understand the history of the massacre, communication surrounding such a sensitive topic, and the behaviour that's exhibited towards it.¹ This particular study will pay attention to British Holocaust memorial culture, specifically areas of education, denial, and commemoration.

The Holocaust has become one of the most documented events in history, thousands of books and articles have been released on the topic since the 1960's. Scholars are bewildered by the Holocaust because no one thought it possible to systematically destroy an entire population based on their birth, until it happened. The topic is so vast and detailed it's able to be revisited over and over, represented in numerous forms of films, plays, and academia.² Through continued work with historical documentation, new interpretations or theories are hypothesized, increasing the number of scholarly works produced. These advancements lead to the topic being ever present in our academic society, as it should. Shimon Peres called the Holocaust "a great warning to us all", he said we should never forget those who died, that we have to ensure an event like the Holocaust never happens again and to do this we have to remember.³

Each chapter will link to a research question. Firstly, does the fight against anti-Semitism continue? In this chapter I aim to analyse the depth of Holocaust denial in British society and the responses to it by academics. Previous literature refers to the occurrence of denial but offers limited to no explanation on why it occurs, my investigation aims to shed light on these aspects.⁴ Chapter 2 will centre around: How does Britain commemorate Holocaust victims? My aim is to explore the reception of commemoration by the public and investigate commemorations extended meaning and usage in British society. Literature on this topic highlights the evolution of commemoration projects and the ethics involved but lacks reference to how they could be developed for wider purposes, my research will explore the potential expansion of commemoration.⁵ Chapter 3 will focus on: How is the British youth educated on the Holocaust? My aim is to reflect on the manner the Holocaust is taught in and responses by academics that ensure it is an evolving topic subject to change. Literature on Holocaust Education was limited to its inclusion in the National Curriculum until recently, so my contribution to the topic will be culminating the new information.⁶

My methods will be qualitative and specific to content and narrative analysis. I will be categorising themes in British Holocaust memorial culture that fit my research questions and interpreting relevance for any other conclusions I draw throughout the investigation. Interpreting meaning from individual's

¹ D. Shneer, A. Shternshis, & N. Underwood, 'Post Holocaust Cultures: A Special Edition of East European Jewish Affairs', *East European Jewish Affairs*, 48.3 (2018), p. 261–62

² D. L. Niewyk, *The Holocaust: Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation* (Lexington, Mass: D.C. Heath, 1997), p. 7

³ T. Dvorin. 'Peres: 'the Holocaust Is a Great Warning to Us All'', *Israel National News*, January 27 2014.

Available at: <https://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/176787> [Accessed 4 Mar 2021]

⁴ S. E. Atkins, *Holocaust Denial as an International Movement* (Westport, Conn: Praeger, 2009) p. 117-126

⁵ S. De Jong, *The Witness as Object Video Testimonies in Holocaust Museums* (New York; Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2018) p. 1-2

⁶ C. Sharples & O. Jensen, *Britain and the Holocaust: Remembering and Representing War and Genocide* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015) p. 1-6

experiences in addition to academic findings will add a little humanity to a very content heavy subject. Content and narrative analysis are standard methodologies for this field, they are the most appropriate relating to the resources of books, journals and reports I will be using. Ethically, I could not conduct quantitative research in interview format as access to Holocaust deniers would not be permitted. I could have conducted a poll on public opinion of Holocaust commemoration and education in Britain but the COVID-19 pandemic meant that was no longer a feasible option. As this is an emotive topic, I will have to ensure my strong feelings about the topics I will be covering do not impact my impartial role as a researcher.

Chapter 1- Fighting anti-Semitism in the modern age

This chapter focuses on the phenomenon of Holocaust denial, and the responses by historians to it. It achieves this by concentrating on 3 topics: denial and antisemitism; denial in British culture; and efforts to counteract denial. I aim to demonstrate how denial stretches further than academics, and how this affects Britain's ability to combat the issue.

What is Holocaust denial?

It is a widespread agreement that there was a systematic attempt by the Third Reich to kill all of Europe's Jews and other minorities between 1941-1945. This plot was successful to the extent of murdering over 6 million Jews and 5 million minorities by various means, including mass gassing in concentration camps built specifically for that purpose. This event is called The Holocaust.⁷ Despite the high levels of evidence collected from witness testimony, documentation, images, and film, there are still those that deny certain elements of The Holocaust. Expert historical writing is concerned with evidence, source analysis, and impartiality; Holocaust deniers have adopted the methodologies and appearances of professional historiography. This persona makes their work dangerous instruments in confusing the general public who cannot distinguish reliable scholarship from distorted, like historians can. Members of society will acknowledge academic scholars as credible sources of information; appearing as a professional expert forms trust in words spoken by those individuals. Deniers can be identified by not obeying the professional conduct of a historian, they wilfully mistreat evidence by disregarding or omitting crucial facts to paint a deceitful picture of their own historical "truth".⁸ When challenged, a denier will claim their right to freedom of speech is being attacked or repressed, but this claim becomes invalid when presenting opinions that contradict fact. Opinions are built upon fact-based information; they can stretch as far and as wide as they like, but they must be grounded in universal truth. This is where the distinction between historiography and ideology appears.⁹ Historians follow a code of ethics centred around integrity; strongly opposing the abuse of history with intent to deceive.¹⁰

Denial as antisemitism

Richard Evans explained that deniers repeatedly base their ideologies in 4 main areas:

- 1) The casualty rate is in the hundred thousand, not millions
- 2) The gas chambers were never used to kill people at any time
- 3) Nazi high command created a plan for the deportation of Europe's Jews only, not their extermination
- 4) The Holocaust is a myth created by Allied propaganda during the war, sustained by the Jewish people for their own personal agendas.¹¹

These claims call into question mountains of historical evidence, collected and interpreted over decades by professional historians. Holocaust denial is a form of abuse on survivors, it attempts to reshape history, convincing people there is "another side" where Germany was vilified and the Jews were

⁷ R. Evans, *Lying about Hitler: History, Holocaust, and the David Irving Trial* (New York, N.Y.: Basic Books, 2002) p.105

⁸ M. Altanian, *Archives against Genocide Denialism?* (Swisspeace, 2017) p. 28

⁹ D. E. Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory* (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 1994) p. xv

¹⁰ Altanian, *Archives against Genocide Denialism?* p. 28

¹¹ Evans, *Lying about Hitler*, p.109

exploitative liars. Deniers' claims re-victimise survivors and dishonour the dead.¹² This is a blatant demonstration of anti-Semitism; at their core, deniers and neo-fascist groups have the same views of hatred towards Jews, racial minorities, and democracy. It is easy to ask the question 'why is the Holocaust different from any other historical event where innocents were massacred?'. Deniers would answer 'the power of Jewish influence'. It is this kind of demonization that classifies deniers as anti-Semites.¹³

Holocaust deniers have been found to have alternate agendas lurking behind their claims. One such agenda is the revival of fascist ideology. Politician Nick Griffin used his position as editor of 2 right-wing magazines, *Spearhead* and *The Rune*, to exercise his anti-Semitic claims. He believed the British people were being brainwashed through Jewish control of the media, and the Holocaust was an extremely profitable lie. Having recently left the Italian extremist group International Third Position, whose goal was international Fascism; Griffin sought to use Holocaust denial as a tool to re-establish the British National Party's neo-fascist roots in the early 1990's.¹⁴ Rational thought would dictate that the end of Hitler's Nazi regime meant the end of fascism as an accepted political standpoint. The links between fascism, the Nazi party, and anti-Semitism continue to discredit the ideology; to revive fascism, it needs to be separated from the horrors of the Holocaust.¹⁵ Efforts to reinforce this separation can be traced back to the later years of the war when Nazi leadership took measures to ensure uncertainties about the Holocaust. Should their crimes ever be uncovered, Heinrich Himmler ordered the destruction of the death camps and as many of its occupants as possible before the Soviet army arrived, in addition to specific secret SS files also being scheduled for destruction. A survivor was taunted by an SS officer and told it didn't matter how the war ended because they had already defeated the Jewish people. The officer remarked even if there were survivors and items of evidence, the world would not believe a claim so monstrous.¹⁶ These objectives of destruction of truth and memory are now being introduced by planting seeds of denial that will bear fruit when eye witnesses are no longer alive to object.¹⁷ This separation of ideals appeared in a different format when Griffin became leader of the British National Party in 1999. He opted to reserve his outward displays of anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial, in order to gain better results in electoral votes. This toning down of anti-Semitic behaviour put him in an almost respectable position, where he was able to withstand a scandal over misuse of party funds. Griffin retained his ideologies but suppressed them to better his political career, he has never retracted statements made on Holocaust denial. His party is currently in decline but still currently operates as a far-right, fascist organisation.¹⁸ It is this presence in public organizations that makes combatting it even more difficult, politicians have platforms to speak from and constituents that will listen.

Denial in Britain

It is worth noting that denial is in fact an international phenomenon, what originated in Europe has since spread across the world. There are active Holocaust deniers in almost every country, with numerous publications in their arsenal.¹⁹ Denial could be the sole basis of an entire dissertation but for purposes set by my title, I'll focus on their presence in British society.

¹² Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust*, p.3

¹³ Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust*, p. 215-217

¹⁴ Atkins, *Denial as an International Movement*, p. 125-126

¹⁵ Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust*, p. 49

¹⁶ Atkins, *Denial as an International Movement*, p.7

¹⁷ Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust*, p. 24

¹⁸ Atkins, *Denial as an International Movement*, p. 125-126

¹⁹ Atkins, *Denial as an International Movement*, p. 1

According to Stephen Atkins, Holocaust denial in Britain was at its height roughly between 1970 and 2000.²⁰ Several British males in professions such as journalists, politicians, and historians produced anti-Semitic works denying the Holocaust, published prominently by the Historical Review Press. The lack of female publications during this time has been subject to review but no explanation why has been offered. Specifically, The English Historical Review noted in a recent study that women's works were rarely published in their journal between the 1960s-1990's. In 1967 there was a slight influx in female publication when 5 out of the 15 articles published were of female origin, however the numbers plummeted again by 1970 when only 2 of the 11 articles were written by women.²¹

Holocaust denial played significant roles in 1970's Far Right politics. Richard Verrall, a member of the National Front, used the last name Harwood to write numerous works of denial. Beginning with his 1974 booklet *Did Six Million Really Die? The Truth at Last*, he stated the statistical impossibility of six million Jews being killed, as the population in Nazi-controlled Europe never surpassed 2.5 million. He sent copies to journalists and politicians across Britain in hopes of obtaining recognition but ultimately, no rewards came of the effort. He published other works in 1978, *Six Million Lost and Found: The Truth at Last* and *Nuremberg and Other War Crimes: A New Look*, only to be met with claims of plagiarism put forward by American scholar Gill Seidel. Verrall was discredited by these claims and his blatant lack of credible research techniques. Michael McLaughlin was the head of the British Movement in 1975, he published *For Those Who Cannot Speak* in 1979, defending Nazism from multiple angles. He claimed the Holocaust was a hoax, Anne Frank's diary was a fabrication, and advocated for the restoration of a Nazi-like regime to save Europe.²² These politicians masqueraded as academics to further their own agendas in British politics, they demanded publicity. Under Stephen Atkins categorisation of certain types of deniers, Verrall and McLaughlin are 'media stars'.²³

One of the most famous deniers from Britain is David Irving, according to Atkins, he categorises as an 'academic research star'.²⁴ Irving used his specialised knowledge in Hitler history to publish numerous books. He defended Hitler's policies and advocated his innocence in the extermination of the Jews. Irving produced several controversial pieces, resulting in numerous law suits against him, rarely ruling in his favour. Several historians challenged his professional conduct, highlighting inaccuracies in his sources. Years of claims came to a head in a libel suit Irving brought against historian Deborah Lipstadt and Penguin Books in 2000, this case saw all of his historical works called into question for their accuracy. Irving used the case as a platform to address what he believed was an "international Jewish conspiracy" against him, transitioning to a 'media star' denier. A judge ruled in favour of Lipstadt, stating in his verdict that Irving was an anti-Semite and a Holocaust denier who misused historical evidence to fit his personal ideologies. This destroyed his reputation as a World War II historian.²⁵ The Irving vs Lipstadt trial produced large amounts of scholarship on the topic of denial. Lipstadt later published *History on Trial: My Day in Court with a Holocaust Denier*, fully detailing her account of the trial, in 2016 it was adapted into a feature length film called *Denial*. Historian Richard Evans also took the opportunity to publish the work he had conducted on behalf of the defence, his book *Lying About Hitler: History, Holocaust, and the David Irving Trial*, specified every distortion of evidence Irving had ever committed in his published works.

²⁰ Atkins, *Denial as an International Movement*, p. 117-126

²¹ R. Mitchell, 'Women in the English Historical Review', *The English Historical Review*, 133(563) (2018) 1–16 (p. 10)

²² Atkins, *Denial as an International Movement*, p. 117-118

²³ Atkins, *Denial as an International Movement*, p. 2

²⁴ Atkins, *Denial as an International Movement*, p. 2

²⁵ Atkins, *Denial as an International Movement*, p. 122-123

There appears to have been a surge of denial in more recent years, particularly amongst the British general public. In 2019, the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust conducted a survey of 2,006 British adults. This survey led to the discovery that 5% do not believe the Nazi's methodically murdered millions of Jews, and 8% believe the scale of the massacre has been exaggerated. Overall, two thirds of participants either blatantly underestimate the death toll or were simply unaware of how many died. It was reported by Community Security Trust, an organisation that monitors anti-Jewish hate crime, that more than 100 cases of antisemitic incidents were being recorded monthly in Britain.²⁶ In the same year, musician Alison Chabloz was convicted by The Crown Court on 3 counts of posting offensive communications on social media. She posted 3 songs with the central themes being, a Jewish conspiracy to dominate the world, in addition to denying the Holocaust. The verdict was based on the grounds of Holocaust denial being considered extremely offensive, Chabloz was sentenced to 20 weeks in prison, 180 hours of unpaid community service, and a 1-year ban from social media. This conviction was the first of its kind in British law, never before had there been a criminal conviction of Holocaust denial on social media.²⁷ In 2020 there were substantial claims of anti-Semitism in the Labour Party, upon investigation, Jeremy Corbyn was suspended. Investigations found that anti-Semitic complaints were not being handled effectively and the party were in breach of the Equality Act on 3 accounts. The party leader Keir Starmer, issued a statement strongly opposing anti-Semitism and apologised on behalf of the party, promising change. Corbyn contradicted Starmer, confessing there is anti-Semitism in the Labour Party but it has been exaggerated for political gain by the party's opponents and the media.²⁸

This recent surge does not appear to have a clear-cut reason. Some sources indicate it is due to lack of knowledge on the topic by the general public, when asked in polls they simply are unable to provide crucial facts about the events. This points to the need for better educational resources and raising awareness. On the opposite end of the spectrum, it could be efforts to educate people on the Holocaust that lead them to denial materials. This unintentional result subjects them to another perception of Atkins where true believers of denial are formed. Through reading the literature or hearing a speech, then telling their friends or colleagues; the messages ripples through communities without hesitation.²⁹ Similarly, excessive media coverage could be leading people who are unaware of denial to conduct research of their own and unintentionally resonate with the material. Or perhaps by merely suppressing rather than abolishing figures like Griffin or Irving, Britain has left the door open for people in similar positions, like Corbyn to take up the mantle. The scholarship is limited in this particular area.

Battling Denial

Holocaust denial attacks one of the few thing's survivors managed to salvage from the horrors they experienced: their memory of the events. Certain European countries such as Germany, have clear laws

²⁶ C. Baynes, 'More than 2.6m Brits Are Holocaust Deniers, Poll Finds', *The Independent*, Jan 27 2019. Available at: <<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/holocaust-memorial-day-poll-uk-jews-murdered-nazi-germany-hope-not-hate-a8746741.html>> [Accessed 2 Feb 2021]

²⁷ C. Mortimer, 'London Court Upholds Holocaust Denial Conviction against Singer', *Euronews*, Feb 13 2019. Available at: <https://www.euronews.com/2019/02/13/london-court-upholds-holocaust-denial-conviction-against-singer> [Accessed 2 Feb 2021]

²⁸ Anonymous, 'A Guide to Labour Anti-Semitism Claims.' *BBC News*, Nov 18 2020. Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-45030552> [Accessed 2 Mar 2021]

²⁹ Atkins, *Denial as an International Movement*, p.3-7

against denying the Holocaust, Britain has no such laws. A petition was started in 2020 to make denial illegal in the U.K, but only received 337 signatures before it maxed out 6 months later.³⁰ As denial has not yet been legally qualified as a form of hate speech universally, independent countries adopt their own means of legal challenges.³¹ In 2007, The United Nations General Assembly requested all UN members to reject denial of the Holocaust as a historical event without reservation, but stopped short of criminalizing it.³² The reservations against lawful means of repressing denial come from the relationship between freedom of expression and human rights laws. Denying the Holocaust is not an opinion, it's a lie; unfortunately, courts cannot prosecute lies.³³ Hate speech and denial go hand in hand, legally the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights forbids any support for national, racial or religious hate crimes; but is not specific enough to include genocide denial. This is where debate begins on whether genocide denial goes above the confines of freedom of speech.³⁴

Battling denial is the responsibility of each individual, no matter their position in society. To increase awareness and strengthen response, the government, policy makers, the media, and law enforcement all need to be united under a common set of guidelines for tackling this issue. The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance have created a set of guidelines to help policy makers begin to address denial in the correct manner. The IHRA suggest 4 primary tactics:

- 1) Identify and track the phenomenon
- 2) Train policy makers at all levels of society (from educators to judiciary systems)
- 3) Promote educational work with institutes surrounding the history of the Holocaust (museums and memorials)
- 4) Means of countering the spread of denial via the internet.³⁵

The organization have raised concerns over the recent increase in Holocaust distortion, there is currently no international or national body tracking the phenomenon, so it is going unchecked. To the IHRA there needs to be an effort to establish a sustainable framework of people fully funded and trained to combat the issue. Policy makers should be working with institutes to train all levels of society in responding to hate speech, anti-Semitism, and Holocaust related controversy; clearly distinguishing legal from illegal speech within the parameters of free speech.³⁶ With this report only being published this year, responses or adoption of techniques are yet to be seen by policy makers, but awareness and education look to be the best ways forward.

³⁰ *Petition: Make Holocaust Denial in the United Kingdom Illegal*. (2020)

³¹ P. Behrens, N. Terry, & O. Jensen, *Holocaust and Genocide Denial: A Contextual Perspective* (New York: Routledge, 2017) p.228

³² Behrens, Terry & Jensen, *Holocaust and Genocide Denial*, p.160

³³ Behrens, Terry & Jensen, *Holocaust and Genocide Denial*, p. 228-229

³⁴ Behrens, Terry & Jensen, *Holocaust and Genocide Denial*, p. 213-215

³⁵ IHRA, *Recognizing and Countering Holocaust Distortion: Recommendations for Decision Makers* (Berlin: IHRA, 2021) p. 22-25

³⁶ IHRA, *Recognising and Countering*, p.30-35

Chapter 2- Commemoration in British Society

This chapter focuses on the commemoration of the Holocaust, and the responses to it by general public. It does so by concentrating on: the importance of commemoration; current methods in British culture; and the debate in court of public opinion. I aim to demonstrate how commemoration is not just about remembering the victims, but can be used as a tool to educate and unite under common cause.

Why do we commemorate the Holocaust?

As a nation that neither committed nor collaborated in the Nazis attempt to erase the Jewish people, why do we then commemorate it? Post-war Britain saw numerous survivors choose to settle within our country. Many were influenced by the relief that was provided after British soldiers liberated Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. Pre-war, we hosted thousands of child refugees after *The Night of Broken Glass* in 1938. These displays of aid made Britain appear as the ample stage to re-build their lives on. For survivors that settled in Britain, memorials are a communal space to remember their loved ones. The Holocaust is further solidified in British culture by our joint allied effort in pursuit of riding Germany of Nazis and bringing war criminals to justice. The Holocaust is embedded in each country's history by wider topics of intolerance and racial prejudice that have continued relevance for all.³⁷

Commemoration is our primary method of not only remembering, but honouring the victims in addition to the liberators of the Holocaust. This mass slaughter of Europe's Jews and other minorities was on a scale so vast and gruesome that it becomes uncomfortable for some to remember; but the measure in which life was lost is precisely the reason it must be remembered.³⁸ Explanation is not merely enough to do justice the cruelties these people were made to suffer, but failing to factualise what happened and how, only assists the Nazi's ideologies.³⁹ The preservation of the camps, artifacts, documentation and recorded witness testimony were the means of authenticating the Holocaust, they now serve alternative purposes of education. As we approach the age where survivors are no longer with us to keep the discussion going, these vital pieces of evidence will be what keeps the memory and the understanding of the Holocaust alive.⁴⁰

Remembrance becomes a part of the larger effort to teach humanitarian lessons, it is a tool for educating people on topics of anti-Semitism and racism. Providing awareness and promoting reflection on the ideologies and actions that lead to the Holocaust, forms active engagement with contemporary issues. Its overall aim is to demonstrate how lack of respect for indifference can have dangerous consequences; this linking of the past and future serves as a preventative measure.⁴¹ Enlightenment philosophers believed that reason and learning would lead to the steady progression in the quality of life; the Holocaust tainted that faith. The Final Solution was rationalized by racial ideology, the framework for which was manufactured by anthropologists, biologists, economists, historians and sociologists; all well educated people.⁴² The difficulty in linking the Holocaust to these humanitarian lessons is attempting to comprehend that this horrific event happened to people like us, but it was also perpetrated by people

³⁷ Sharples & Jensen, *Britain and the Holocaust*, p.2

³⁸ A. N. Wilson, *Hitler: A Short Biography* (London: Harper press, 2012) p. 155

³⁹ D. Sommerville, *The Complete Illustrated History of World War II* (London: Hermes House, 2014) p. 98

⁴⁰ IHRA, *Recognizing and Countering*, p. 47

⁴¹ Sharples & Jensen, *Britain and the Holocaust*, p.2-6

⁴² D. Cohn-Sherbok, *Understanding the Holocaust: An Introduction* (London: Continuum, 2004) p. 218

like us. Educated, civilized German people made the decision to exterminate the Jews and other minorities in the most calculated and systematic method ever invented.⁴³ It is the efficiency in the dismantling of an entire race of people that makes it such a hateful topic. The piles of shoes, false limbs, glasses, suitcases painted with addresses in hopes of being returned; the taking of gold from belongings and people, right down to their teeth.⁴⁴ Learning the lessons the Holocaust has to teach to us as the human race is not only crucial to the bettering of public policy, but it is the right thing to do. There is a universal point that unites us all in remembering, it is not just to understand that any of us could have been the Jews, but that any of us could be the Germans or their allies.⁴⁵

Methods of commemoration

According to Sharples and Jenson, the Holocaust did not coherently enter public thought until the 1980's and when it did, it stemmed controversy. An account by Steven Cooke noted how the first Holocaust memorial solely dedicated to its victims, was placed in the corner of Hyde Park. The issue with this, it was considered to blend into the landscape and therefore be unnoticeable to passers-by. Cooke discovered that initial proposals to place it near the Cenotaph were declined, he thought this represented the distancing of the Holocaust from Britain's official involvement in WWII.⁴⁶ Reasons for this distancing could be attributed to the controversy taking place within Britain during the 1930's-40's, surrounding certain measures that could have been taken by the government to save more Jewish lives. There are 3 areas of interest surrounding the 30's-40's:

- 1) How much the government knew; if they knew about the horrors being committed on the Jewish race, why did they continue their trade and diplomatic relations with Germany?
- 2) What could have been done pre-war; Britain refused to host more refugees or grant access to Palestine, those that did make it here were treated poorly.
- 3) Post-war handling of war criminals; the public refused to support the respectable treatment of the SS members on trial, they were treated as honourable soldiers rather than criminals. This upset was reignited in the 1980's when it was revealed an SS officer had been allowed to settle in Britain.⁴⁷

The creation of memorial museums like the National Holocaust Centre and Museum, was structured to be a combination of honouring and educating. The memorial elements would pay tribute to the lives lost, and the museum exhibits would represent the history of the event. This combination aimed to surround the depiction of such an awful event with a moral framework, but also add more detailed context to memorialisation.⁴⁸ The moral dilemmas that are attached to setting up memorials or exhibits come from using locations and objects to represent individual stories, because the people they are about are no longer here. The Holocaust can never be detached for the objects that represent it, in the same way that the event cannot be thought about without the aid of said objects. This relationship can make representation difficult; it can appear that exhibits have a lack of humanity to them. The remains of a

⁴³ D. B. Kunz, 'Remembering the Unexplainable: The Holocaust, Memory, and Public Policy', *World Policy Journal*, 14(4) (1997), 45–53 (p. 51)

⁴⁴ N. Ferguson, *The War of the World: History's Age of Hatred* (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 2006) p. 506

⁴⁵ Kunz, 'Remembering the Unexplainable', p. 52

⁴⁶ Sharples & Jensen, *Britain and the Holocaust*, p. 5

⁴⁷ Sharples & Jensen, *Britain and the Holocaust*, p. 3-4

⁴⁸ De Jong, *Witness as Object*, p. 6

straw mattress can inform you of the sleeping conditions in the camps, but does little to represent the person that slept on it. De Jong refers to the ‘power of memory’ being in the stories that were attached to each individual life, artifacts being used as material witnesses do not compare. This was a major driving force in the inclusion of video testimony from survivors and soldiers to exhibits across the world.⁴⁹

Recordings of witness testimony are used to represent what objects cannot, feelings and emotion. Video testimony gave the victims back their voices, they then used them to educate others in history and morals. These videos were incorporated into museums to create emotional connections with their audiences. Survivors tend to talk in plural terms as they speak for others they shared the experience with or generalise on behalf of all victims.⁵⁰ When people morally and ethically connect with a story, they take the journey with the survivor; every victory, every defeat is also felt by the person watching. This emotional connection can lead the visitor to reflect on discrimination in their own society and the realisation that some circumstances that lead to the Holocaust have yet to be completely overcome. A generation of ‘secondary witnesses’ has become the result of video testimony; people who hear the stories of survivors and then educate others on them.⁵¹

Institutional work can stretch beyond the walls of museums, this was demonstrated when the Imperial War Museum restored Hitchcock and Bernstein’s *Night Will Fall*. Sydney Bernstein was commissioned by the British Army film unit to produce a documentary on the concentration camps liberated by the allies; he employed Alfred Hitchcock as supervising director. Footage was provided from the liberation of several camps including Bergen-Belsen, Buchenwald, Dachau, Auschwitz, and others. The documentary was left incomplete after political authorities stopped production. The government were unnerved by the growing Zionist movement and also needed to keep Germany onside as an anti-Soviet, post-war ally. Some footage was later used by American director Billy Wilder in a propaganda film, its use largely differed from the intentions of Bernstein and Hitchcock to serve as a point of contemplation on inhumanity. In 2014 the original documentary, *German Concentration Camps Factual Survey* was completed by scholars at the IWM. Renamed *Night Will Fall*, after a line of original dialogue from the documentary: “unless the world learns the lessons these pictures teach, night will fall”, it highlighted the horrors of the Holocaust with never-before-seen images and footage. The film was released to the public in 2014 at the London Film Festival and received positive reviews.⁵²

Memorial organizations work with institutes and play large roles in the commemoration of the Holocaust, they conduct the research and present their findings to educate the public. Museums are a broad point of direct contact with the people they aim to educate; school children, adults, scholars, tourists etc. It is the importance of their role that dictates certain measures should be taken to protect them; the International Memorial Museum Charter states governments and local communities are responsible for safeguarding collections and ensuring institutes have independence from outside political directives. The IHRA invented guidelines that policy makers should be following to ensure the safeguarding of these institutes:

- 1) Financial, material, and technical support should all be provided to encourage the update of existing exhibits and the introduction of new ones

⁴⁹ De Jong, *Witness as Object*, p. 1-2

⁵⁰ De Jong, *Witness as Object*, p. 190-201

⁵¹ De Jong, *Witness as Object*, p. 187- 189

⁵² Anonymous, ‘Night Will Fall Review – Unflinching Footage Reveals True Hell of the Holocaust’, *The*

Guardian, Sep 18 2014. Available at: <<https://www.theguardian.com/film/2014/sep/18/night-will-fall-review-holocaust-documentary-hitchcock-liberation-belsen-auschwitz>> [Accessed 5 May 2021]

- 2) The government should include trips both in person and online to Holocaust related museums and sites to the curriculum, with preparation before and reflection after visits
- 3) Ensure government funded institutes support professional development of their staff so exhibits do not unintentionally misrepresent history, and they can deal with addressing diverse awareness
- 4) Encourage collaboration with major professional organisations to create an international network of support in addressing the Holocaust.⁵³

Commemoration has become institutionalised further by its involvement in politics. In 2000, Foreign Secretary Robin Cook announced the adoption of the International Holocaust Memorial Day on January 27th into British society. Why it took over 50 years for politicians to finally recognise the importance of what happened, and the need to commemorate it, is speculated. It was rumoured to have been a result of anti-Semitism within the establishment; Tony Kushner stated it was down to the liberals refusing to seriously contemplate the idea of an entire group of people being targeted as a result of racial or religious indifference.⁵⁴ Members of Parliament sign the Book of Commitment to mark Memorial Day and pledge their support for the event. This show of commitment to the cause was a large step towards commemoration becoming institutionalised in Britain.⁵⁵ David Cameron set up a cross party commission in 2014 to plan a national Holocaust memorial and education centre. He has advocated for £100 million of funding and the location of the centre to be Vitoria Tower Gardens. Cameron's rationale was that placing the centre next to parliament would symbolise the values of our society on tolerance and diversity, values that we aim to teach children and have adults understand.⁵⁶ Almost 7 years later, the project has yet to be completed, numerous debates have slowed the signing off of construction. Controversy over the centre's placement takes form in concerns over it becoming a potential target for terrorist attacks; its placement next to the symbolic heart of democracy in Britain makes it an even likelier target. Its placement near parliament reads to some as a celebration of the British response to the Jews when they were in crisis, whereas the reality of this has already been questioned and addressed previously. The economic hardship caused by the Coronavirus pandemic is a major factor in the centres delay, a minimum of £50 million would be needed from public funding to complete the project. Although the centre has the potential to fulfil its mission statement of becoming a permanent reminder of the responsibility citizens hold in democracy; to stand up for those whose rights are being threatened. The likelihood of this project being carried out is vulnerable due to lack of funding and public support.⁵⁷

⁵³ IHRA, *Recognizing and Countering*, p. 47-48

⁵⁴ D. Stone, 'Day of Remembrance or Day of Forgetting? Or, Why Britain Does Not Need a Holocaust Memorial Day', *Patterns of Prejudice*, 34(4) (2000), 53–59 (p.53-54)

⁵⁵ Sharples & Jensen, *Britain and the Holocaust*, p. 1

⁵⁶ J. Gregory, 'Why a Former PM Thinks a £100m Holocaust Memorial Should Be Built at Parliament', *MyLondon*, Nov 4 2020. Available at: <<https://www.mylondon.news/news/zone-1-news/former-prime-minister-david-cameron-19214691>> [Accessed 5 May 2021]

⁵⁷ D. Adamson, 'Plans for UK Holocaust Memorial Looked Promising, but Now Debate Has Stalled', *The Conversation*, 2020. Available at: <<https://theconversation.com/plans-for-uk-holocaust-memorial-looked-promising-but-now-debate-has-stalled-148289>> [Accessed 7 March 2021]

Is it necessary?

Is commemoration as effective as we think? Criticisms of Memorial Day in particular were made by Dan Stone when he stated the day can be largely ignored by significant numbers of the British population. The government funded ceremonies are touching, but to survivors and their family's public participation is the key to educating and understanding of the Holocaust. Without active involvement from the public, the message goes unheard. Stone noted that the amount of effort made to bring the Holocaust into British culture, is seen to be wasted on one day rather than continuous remembrance throughout the year. Arguably, memorials and museums are the focal point of remembrance all year round, but their promotion around any other time than Memorial Day is scarcely seen. Memorial Day is seen to be used as an opportunity for governments to present themselves as morally righteous, focusing on their involvement in contemporary issues of discrimination. Stone's overall attitude is that it misses the point; it has been reduced to laying wreaths and uttering "never again" rather than challenging people to consider what it is they are commemorating and why it should never happen again.⁵⁸

A repeated topic of debate is how many means of commemoration do we need? Memorial Day, the film industry, Public Memorials, Museums; London in particular have the IWM and the London Jewish Museum, other Holocaust centres in Nottinghamshire and Huddersfield demonstrate the nationalisation of the memorial effort in England. But what about other countries in Britain? Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland do not have the same amount of commemoration materials England does. It has been argued that funds requested for new projects could be better used by maintaining or advancing already existing projects. Co-chair of the British Holocaust Memorial Foundation pledged to look at our history without censorship. Existing projects could arguably be updated to include the full history of British involvement with the Holocaust. Including the messages intercepted by Enigma and decisions made by high command to not bomb Auschwitz in 1944, instead directing full attention to the war effort. Revealing these events could help to further educate on the hardships of war but also take responsibility for where we could possibly have done more.⁵⁹ If the goal is to preserve history are we then missing the point?

The lesson brutally taught by the Holocaust was that intolerance can have disastrous consequences in which an entire race of people were destroyed or enslaved. Hitler's degradation of the Jewish people and other minorities sank to levels never previously experienced by man. Millions of innocent men, women, and children were forced into labour, tortured in concentration camps, systematically murdered or purposely starved to death. Their remains disposed of to leave no evidence of the atrocities being committed.⁶⁰ The Holocaust should have served as a cure to the disease that is genocide, however it has done nothing to prevent further genocide around the world. In 1971 Bangladesh lost 1 and a half to 3 million people to the genocide committed by the West Pakistan military, on the eastern citizens fighting for self-determination. The killing of 150,000 Hutu people in Burundi 1972 by the Tutsi army, they specifically targeted the elite and educated members of society. 1000 Ache Indians were killed in Paraguay between 1968 and 1972, the tribe were constantly raided with the intention of killing the men and capturing the women and children to be sold.⁶¹ These tragedies demonstrate that commemorating the Holocaust seems to be far easier than applying its lessons.

⁵⁸ Stone, *Day of Remembrance*, p.53

⁵⁹ Adamson, *Plans for UK Holocaust Memorial*

⁶⁰ N. Lowe, *Mastering Modern World History* (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1982) p. 184

⁶¹ Cohn-Sherbok, *Understanding the Holocaust*, p. 252-253

Chapter 3- Educating future generations

This chapter focuses on the educating of children on the Holocaust, and the responses by academics to teaching methods. It achieves this by focusing on 3 topics: the introduction to the National Curriculum; the development of teaching methods; and the current teaching methods. I aim to demonstrate how education is evolving to better inform the younger generation on the Holocaust.

The National Curriculum

The British government formed the belief that it was highly important for children to be taught the history of the Holocaust and understand how society can prevent the repetition of such an appalling event. As a result, the Holocaust was made a compulsory topic in secondary school curriculums since the introduction of the National Curriculum in 1991. It was reported that students had personally encountered intolerance, prejudice and anti-Semitism both in the classroom and society; this was taken into consideration as a driving force for the teaching of the topic to tackle these issues. High-quality Holocaust Education includes students gaining detailed knowledge of when it happened, why it took place, where it was situated, and who carried it out. Students should have an understanding of the roles played by the perpetrators: the Nazi's, the victims: the Jews and other minorities, the bystanders: German citizens and allies, and the rescuers: the allied forces. Education in this format will lead to active and informed individuals logically carrying their understanding into society.⁶²

In Key Stage 3, students will learn about the Holocaust through the unit *Challenges for Britain, Europe and the wider world 1901 to the present day*. It is a compulsory topic that can be taught in addition to:

- Women's suffrage
- WWI and the Peace Settlement
- The inter-war years: The Great Depression and rise of dictators
- WWII and the wartime leadership of Winston Churchill
- The creation of the Welfare State
- Indian independence and the end of Empire
- Social, cultural and technological change in post-war British society
- Britain's place in the world since 1945.⁶³

There is however, no specification on what to include or how to teach the topic.

Interestingly, the Holocaust is not a designated subject in the WJEC GCSE specification for History. In the unit *History with European/ World focus, Germany in transition 1919-1939* is a topic available for coverage. In this topic is the subject of Nazi economic, social and racial policy; treatment of the Jews in the given timeframe only highlights the early persecution of the Jews, any mention of the Holocaust would become an end note of what the persecution led to rather than being a focal point.⁶⁴ The specification changes slightly for A-Level, students are taught *Germany: Democracy to Dictatorship c.1918-1945*, split into 2 units of *Weimar and its challenges c.1918-1933* and *Nazi Germany c.1933-1945*. Teaching on the treatment of the Jews follows the same specification as GCSE but provides more

⁶² House of Commons Education Committee Holocaust Education Second Report of Session 2015-16 HC 480. 2016. (London: The Stationery Office) p. 7–8

⁶³ Department of Education, *History Programmes of Study: Key Stage 3*, 2013. Available at: [National Curriculum - History key stages 3 and 4 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/264262/History-Programmes-of-Study-Key-Stage-3-2013.pdf) pp. 1–5 [Accessed 8 May 2021]

⁶⁴ WJEC, *WJEC GCSE in History Specification*, 2019. Available at: [GCSE Specification Template \(wjec.co.uk\)](https://www.wjec.co.uk/media/158125/GCSE_Specification_Template.pdf) p.18 [Accessed 8 May 2021]

in-depth information. Unlike GCSE, A-Level highlights the Holocaust under the topic *Changing Nazi foreign policy and WWII 1933-1945*, specifically noting the Wannsee Conference and the Final Solution.⁶⁵ WJEC specifications have remained the same since their review in 2015, however they could be subject to change in the future as a result of the *Successful Futures* report written by Graham Donaldson calling for reform to the National Curriculum to achieve 4 main purposes:

- 1) Ambitious capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives
- 2) Enterprising creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work
- 3) Healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society
- 4) Ethical, informed citizens, ready to be citizens of the world.⁶⁶

Teachers combine overview and in-depth studies to help pupils understand both the extended arc of development and the intricacy of specific aspects of the content. The skills set out in the curriculum to be strengthened are:

- Critical thinking through historical enquiry
- Communication through oracy, reading, writing and wider communication
- ICT through developing and presenting knowledge
- Numeracy through chronological awareness
- Personal and social education through understanding views and interpretations of people and events
- Career and the world of work through understanding of factors that have shaped the world in the past.⁶⁷

Two main organisations provide Holocaust Education training in Britain: The Holocaust Educational Trust and the Centre for Holocaust Education. The government funds the CoHE at a rate of £500,000 a year, matched by Pears Foundation to provide training as part of initial teacher education and continuing professional development courses. However, the programme does not appear to be reaching all teachers in Britain; the CoHE estimated only 6000 teachers use their programme out of 30,000 History teachers spread across 4000 secondary schools. In addition to tens of thousands of Religious Studies, English and Citizenship teachers that are giving lessons without proper training. University College London conducted research in 2009 that revealed 80% of teachers were self-taught on the topic. This is a result of 50% of secondary schools in England not being required to follow the National Curriculum in addition to some schools not prioritising History as a main subject. Schools are subject to this exonerating the topic for reasons of:

- 1) Limited time frames in which to teach the topic
- 2) Lack of guidance from the curriculum on what to cover, why, and how it should be taught
- 3) The quality of teaching and learning about the Holocaust is not included in the Ofsted inspection framework

⁶⁵ WJEC, *WJEC GCE AS/A Level in History Specification*, 2019. Available at: [wjec-gce-history-spec-from-2015-e.pdf](#) p. 62 [Accessed 8 May 2021]

⁶⁶ G. Donaldson. *Successful Futures Looking at the Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales*, 2015, [online] Available at: <<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/successful-futures-a-summary-of-professor-graham-donaldsons-report.pdf>> [Accessed 10 May 2021]

⁶⁷ National Assembly Wales, *Key Stages 2-3 History in the National Curriculum for Wales*, 2008. Available at: [HISTORY NCO January 08 NEW \(E\) \(gov.wales\)](#) pp. 8–9 [Accessed 8 May 2021]

differently holds no weight. Not a single teacher asked listed diverse backgrounds as a problem to overcome in the classroom, very little evidence has been seen to give any kind of merit to the claim.⁷³

Teaching of the Holocaust could be seen as a foundation stone for teaching about other crimes against humanity in the world. Studying the Holocaust alerts students to the concept of genocide, other genocides from around the world could be taught in comparison to demonstrate the potential dangers and promote awareness to the roles and responsibilities of students in the global community. Students should be made aware that there are patterns to genocide, warning signs that researchers have identified and reported as prevention measures for a world that still remains under threat from events like mass murder. Teachers have advocated for the introduction of teaching about genocides outside of the Holocaust, concern was raised that this opening to further areas of interest would come at the cost of Holocaust Education. If addressed properly, guidelines should be laid out to ensure that other topics of genocide are covered in detail and linked to the Holocaust rather than choosing one or the other. There is a lot of work still to be done on teaching the Holocaust, when asked teachers stated there does not appear to be time or the supply of sufficient resources to train teachers on delivering the topic of other genocides.⁷⁴

Ethical issues can arise with the use of horrific images in Holocaust Education. Safeguarding is a main priority for teachers, with care and professional thought, images can be justified for usage in lesson content. Images have powerful educational impacts; if students are supposed to learn and engage with genocide then they need to be shown the reality of the topic, within reason. Images are only 1 source of representation but for many students they are compelling and provide a great amount of detail to be visually absorbed, carefully analysed, then asked questions about. Yes, using images in the classroom comes with risk but the resilience of children is largely underestimated, teachers should be safeguarding students without overprotecting them. Images of mass graves or piled bodies are available at the click of a button through the internet, is it not better that they encounter these images in a classroom setting where they can draw their own meaning with the support provided by a teacher? A teacher can construct a lesson so that the learning experience is respectful to both the students and the individuals represented in the images, they can also issue content warnings and provide the option of leaving the session if uncomfortable. Safeguarding should remain a top priority but the banning of horrific images for teaching the Holocaust is problematic and risks losing a tool with great educational potential.⁷⁵

How is it taught?

While the Holocaust will continue to be taught at GCSE and A-Level in accordance with the WJEC specifications, attention has been turned towards Key Stage 3. In 2016 the UCL Centre for Holocaust Education published a study *What do students know and understand about the Holocaust?* It revealed that the majority of the 10,000 students they asked did not have clear knowledge or understanding on the topic. The organisation compiled this evidence and used it to create a textbook with the mission statement of improving understanding of the Holocaust in significant ways by:

- Providing an appropriate historical overview of key aspects of the Holocaust
- Helping to understand the roots of anti-Semitism
- Deepening knowledge of key individuals, places and events
- Encourage the challenging of common myths and misconceptions
- Develop knowledge of key historical concepts
- Enable the answering of the question: How and why did the Holocaust happen?

⁷³ Pearce, Foster & Pettigrew, *Holocaust Education*, p. 172-180

⁷⁴ *Education Second Report*, p. 11-12

⁷⁵ Pearce, Foster & Pettigrew, *Holocaust Education*, p. 217-218

- Helping to understand the impact the Holocaust had on ordinary people across Europe
- Prompt consideration of the importance of the Holocaust today.⁷⁶

The textbook is laid out into 6 units chronologically advancing from Jewish life in Europe to Nazi Germany 1933-39, Jewish life under Nazi rule 1933-39, Europe's Jews during WWII, The Holocaust: Responses and responsibility, and Aftermath and legacy. Each unit contains chapters covering a specific time period and has an overall theme. Units start with an overview outlining what knowledge and understanding will be developed, what key issues will be discussed, how it will expand your understanding through working with historical ideas and concepts and the big question prompt: How and why did the Holocaust happen?⁷⁷ This textbook will be used to teach Key Stage 3 students, it is available across Britain and when fully recognised could act as the specification that has been lacking in how to teach the Holocaust to years 7-9. When the textbook was released in October of last year, the UCL took to their social media to promote sales. History teachers were offered a set of 30 free textbooks for their first order and were received well by academics across the country.⁷⁸

Holocaust culture was built in the era of analogue media, but with the development of the digital age, tools for learning are readily available. The internet transformed the sharing of information in virtual public spaces with unlimited reach, at the tap of a button anyone can learn anything.⁷⁹ The introduction of social media as a learning tool will strike many as odd, since the platform normally exists for entertainment value. However, in recent years multiple organisations have taken to social media to educate a wider audience. This generation of students have access to phones, computers and tablets, all likely contain social media apps. Opening up Twitter and typing 'the Holocaust' in the search bar will bring up multiple educational organisations ranging from UCL Holocaust Education in Britain to the U.S Holocaust Museum in America. The option to follow these institutes means notifications are available anytime they post new content; students can view these pages any time, on any platform, take the information into the classroom and have it verified and discussed by their teacher. The implementation of knowledge through social media can of course be misinterpreted, which is why it is important to make sure any account information is taken from has the blue tick of validation.⁸⁰ Social media can also be used a platform for researchers studying interactive historical culture in action. Social media has become a typical stage for people to air opinions and views, this does sometimes spark confrontation but that makes for more detailed research for anyone investigating.⁸¹ Social media is becoming another tool for education in the digital age, educators should warn students on e-safety and validity of content to keep them safe and correctly informed.

⁷⁶ S. Foster, A. Pearce, E. Karayianni, & H. McCord, *Understanding the Holocaust: How and Why Did It Happen?* (London: Hodder Education, 2020) p. 1

⁷⁷ Foster, Pearce, Karayianni & McCord, *How and Why Did It Happen?*, p. 5

⁷⁸ UCL Holocaust Education, 'Understanding the Holocaust: How and Why Did It Happen? Release collection' [Twitter], [\(2\) Holocaust Education \(@UCL_Holocaust\) / Twitter](#) 23 Oct 2020 [Accessed 9 May 2021]

⁷⁹ J. Shandler, *Holocaust Memory in the Digital Age: Survivors' Stories and New Media Practices* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2017) p. 40

⁸⁰ The National Holocaust Centre and Museum, 'Homepage' [Twitter], [\(2\) The National Holocaust Centre and Museum \(@HolocaustCentUK\) / Twitter](#) [Accessed 9 May 2021]

⁸¹ T. S. Andersen & B. Törnquist-Plewa, *The Twentieth Century in European Memory: Transcultural Mediation and Reception* (Leiden: Boston: Brill, 2017) p. 331–333

Conclusion

Denial has become an anti-Semitic tool that has spread like a disease across numerous levels of British society. It has become associated with academics, politics and law, its presence in these public positions of power is what has made it so difficult to counteract. British society has done well to suppress Holocaust deniers both inside and out of the court room. Cases that have landed in court have led to criminal convictions including prison sentences, or have greatly decreased the validity of professional standpoints for the defendants involved.⁸² However, suppression is not abolition, and that is the overarching aim in the fight against denial. Measures taken by Britain were not severe enough to stamp out the phenomenon, key figures simply went elsewhere to be heard. The recent influx of Holocaust denial could be attributed to the resurfacing of what already existed in 1970's-2000's Britain, but it should be properly addressed with a full investigation so that it can be tackled in the correct manner.⁸³ From examples in recent years, Britain has a lot of work to do regarding completely criminalizing Holocaust denial, but has taken great strides to demonstrate their zero tolerance for anti-Semitic conspiracy theories and denial of the Holocaust in published works. The government should aim to collaborate with organisations like the IHRA, the guidelines they proposed have the potential to impact Holocaust denial on a large scale in the future. If policy makers were to set guidelines for institutions to collectively counteract denial with correct training through education in museums and memorials, it would set Britain in the right direction of eradicating denial from our society.⁸⁴ The fight against anti-Semitism does continue in British society and likely will for years to come.

Commemoration has surpassed merely remembering the victims of the Holocaust, it evolved to paying respects to survivors and thanking the liberators, it has further developed into a tool for teaching history and humanitarian lessons, and has also found status as a political advantage.⁸⁵ British society has created numerous means of commemoration across the board since the 1980's: the adoption of Memorial Day, creating of public memorials, museums and education centres, and institutional work. All methods have become pillars of remembrance in British society, the level to which they interacted with them is another topic. Its use as a political tool to demonstrate how unlike the monsters who committed the Holocaust we are is insulting to its mission.⁸⁶ British society is in danger of the public overruling further efforts to commemorate the Holocaust, more people are challenging the introduction of new projects armed with numerous questions on cost and location, but the most important being: do we need more?⁸⁷ Arguably yes, but perhaps not in England; large scale projects like public memorials and museums are scarce in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, if the goal is national commemoration, then strides need to be taken to achieve this. An investigation should be launched into why the public feel this way about a topic that is supposed to unite us and what can be done to improve. The divide in society can be mirrored by the divide in the wider world, prompted by the question how effective is commemoration or the lessons we are supposed to learn from it, if genocides continue to happen and go unchallenged?⁸⁸ If the UN was created to tackle issues that affect the world, like genocide, then why is nothing done to prevent further horrors?

Education of the younger generation in Britain on the Holocaust is achieved through its addition to the national curriculum. The government have remained unchanged on the importance of the topic even after multiple reviews, so it remains in the curriculum.⁸⁹ However, there should be review or expansion of the Key Stage 3 History specification, as it currently states that the topic must be taught but not what

⁸² Atkins, *Denial as an International Movement*, p. 117-126

⁸³ Atkins, *Denial as an International Movement*, p. 117-118

⁸⁴ IHRA, *Recognising and Countering*, p.15-35

⁸⁵ Sharples & Jensen, *Britain and the Holocaust*, p. 1-6

⁸⁶ Stone, *Day of Remembrance*, p.53-58

⁸⁷ Adamson, *Plans for UK Holocaust Memorial*

⁸⁸ Cohn-Sherbok, *Understanding the Holocaust*, p. 252-253

⁸⁹ *Education Second Report*, p. 7-15

to specifically include.⁹⁰ GCSE and A-Level will continue to be taught as part of topics on Nazi Germany laid out in their respective specifications. Research seems to be the catalyst for change in education, the field is largely underdeveloped and continuing to change. However, the recognition that some practices need review or revision shows continuous development in reaching the best format for Holocaust Education.⁹¹ The work of institutions is invaluable to the evolving of teaching methods and resources. The textbook they created by the UCL will stand as a resource well into the future of Holocaust Education.⁹² The evolution of social media as a learning tool used by institutions is ground breaking, students interact with social media on a regular basis and are likely to take in the information without realising; it will likely have thought provoking effects that are then take to the classroom.⁹³ An investigation on the effectiveness of social media as a learning tool in relation to the Holocaust would determine if it is a tactic to carry into the future.

⁹⁰ NAW, *Key Stage 2-3 History*, p. 8-9

⁹¹ Pearce, Foster & Pettigrew, *Holocaust Education*, p. 7

⁹² Foster, Pearce, Karayianni & McCord, *How and Why Did It Happen?*, p. 1-5

⁹³ Anderson & Törnquist-Plewa, *The Twentieth Century in European Memory*, p. 331-333

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