



Auschwitz: Inside the Nazi State

Suggested Clips for the Classroom

The following are meant to help teachers identify clips from the series that may be useful in their classroom. I have titled the clips. Each listing will give a sketch of the contents, length, and approximation of how far into the episode it appears.

Episode 1: Surprising Beginnings

The evolution of Auschwitz based on situational factors, local initiatives and Nazi ideology from the top. I.G. Farben, Himmler, and other factors are presented to show the evolving role of Auschwitz in the war in the east.

1. Testimony of Hans Friedrich: (Perpetrator) (Approx. 17-18 minutes in.)

An unrepentant SS soldier, whose perpetrator testimony is chilling. This clip begins with Hitler's planning of a war of annihilation in the east. Nazi strategic thinking included mass starvation and war of annihilation are highlighted and reinforced with the arrival of Soviet POWs in Auschwitz. Friedrich testifies to mass killings of Jews in the east (Ostrog, Ukraine in August 1941) and the escalation to killing women and children. Film footage of locals acting at the encouragement of the SS against their local Jewish population broadens this clip to include collaborators. The delusions of Nazi ideology as well as antisemitism is illustrated. It is important to break down Friedrich's testimony as either an outright lie or evidence of how he believed the propaganda/ideology of his youth. Early propaganda created the idea that Jews were taking over farms. Remembering that Jews made up less than 1% of the population in 1933 and one-third of those lived in Berlin his testimony cannot be accepted at face value. One could balance this testimony with Joe Regensberger's testimony from "Telling Their Stories: NH Holocaust Survivors Speak Out." (13 minutes)

2. T4 Program: (Approx. 29 minutes in – immediately follows clip 1)

This clip shows the connection of T4 to Auschwitz and shows how T4 doctors bureaucratically processed patients (they had never met) to death in the T4 program. A brief background of the T4 program and Nazi racist ideology should precede this clip. (5 minutes)

3. Discussion: (End of episode 1)

Shows the difficulties in teaching the Holocaust and illustrates the difficult pedagogical question, "Can we learn anything from the Holocaust?" (7.5 minutes)

Episode 2: Orders and Initiatives

This episode highlights the evolution of Auschwitz in the "Final Solution:" Architectural construction designed to induce suffering, Wannsee Conference, and Hoess 'at home' in Auschwitz. The Lodz ghetto is highlighted (with some chilling color images) as is the character of Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski. The deportation of Hamburg Jews as well as the Chelmno killing camp are presented. I have selected the following two clips:

1. Slovakia and the "Final Solution" (Nationalism & Collaborators/Perpetrators) (Approx. 32 minutes in.)

A difficult clip that begins with the early gas chambers in Auschwitz. This clip will illustrate the concept of nationalism and the role it played (in combination with religious prejudice) in making the Slovak government collaborators with the Nazis. The retrospective testimony of one Slovak Hlinka guard is particularly chilling and will give your students a clear view of antisemitism. Using a map of Slovakia to introduce the clip would be useful. (8.5 minutes)

**2. Rudolph Hoess ‘at home’ in Auschwitz
(Approx. 40 minutes in - immediately follows clip 1)**

The development of the first gas chambers in Birkenau (little red house and little white house) and a description of the process, from “selection” to annihilation. The testimony of a Slovakian woman victim and the postwar writings of Hoess are disturbing. (7.5 minutes)

Episode 3: Factories of Death

This episode highlights the escalation of mass murder and the trial and error methods used by the SS to discover how to do it. Their willingness to continually face and overcome practical problems such as disposal of bodies and maintaining secrecy allowed them to work toward fulfilling Himmler’s fantasies. This episode includes descriptions and reconstructions of the evolution of the gas chambers of Treblinka and Auschwitz-Birkenau.

1. Children of Drancy (Approx. 2.5 minutes in)

An extremely difficult, but important clip. This is the story of France’s collaboration and the deportation of foreign Jews living in France in July-August 1942. This is a heartbreaking story of approximately 4,100 children, who were first separated from their parents, sent to Drancy, and later deported for two days and nights to the gas chambers of Auschwitz. This is an essential story in allowing our students to understand the unprecedented nature of the Holocaust. Oskar Groning testimony (SS garrison at Auschwitz) reveals Nazi ideology and antisemitism. A map of Occupied and unoccupied France should be used beforehand. Use your discretion. (14 minutes)

2. No Haven in the British Isles (Approx. 18 minutes in)

This is an excellent clip to show how even British policemen and administrators complied with Nazi directives to deport four Jews living in the Channel Islands after the German invasion. This will have a stunning impact on students as these were four people who should have been able to escape. (4.5 minutes)

3. The Good Nazi (Approximately 38 minutes in)

The story of Wehrmacht officer and Nazi Party member since 1933, Dr. Albert Battel. He rescued and hid Jews before the deportation from the Przemysl on July 26, 1942 Przemysl ghetto. A tree currently grows in the park at Yad Vashem recognizing him as “Righteous Among the Nations.” (4 minutes) http://www1.yadvashem.org/righteous/index_righteous.html

Episode 4: Corruption

This episode undermines the image of the “elite” and disciplined SS who were guards in Auschwitz. Greed, corruption, and lack of discipline highlight the testimonies of former SS soldiers. Individual stories of callousness and cruelty of both male and female guards are told. Dr. Joseph Mengele’s story is focused upon. 47 minutes into the episode, a brief, one-minute story about Rudolph Hoess and his family could be used to illustrate the bizarre world in which they believed. Hoess is removed from the camp through promotion. He is reluctant to go, being so content with his family there. Eventually he leaves, but his family decides to stay. There is a clear disconnect when viewing this as one sees he and his children playing together while living next to planet Auschwitz.

1. The Sobibor Revolt (Approx. 26 minutes in)

(11 minutes)

2. Danish Rescue (Approx. 38 minutes in)

(5.5 minutes)