1. Antisemities: Hatred as Identity

Antisemitism is a dynamic and durable force of hate. It is toxic to democracy and potentially lethal to its targets - especially when expressed as conspiracy fantasies. This presentation explores the origins of antisemitism utilizing Rabbi Jonathan Sacks’s metaphor of a “mutating virus” to explore antisemitism as a psychological construct of an “other”. How do issues of identity (individual and collective) allow the cultural expression of antisemitism? How do trauma and fear feed antisemitic anxieties and identities? We will trace the development of antisemitic ideas from its Christian roots of anti-Judiasm through to modern antisemitism. This presentation broadly examines the difficult relationship between Judaism and Christianity and Christianity’s wrestling with its own assumptions and traditions while facing the darkness of the Holocaust. We will wrestle with current manifestations of antisemitism from Nazi Germany to the QAnon conspiracy fantasies.

2. QAnon Conspiracy Fraud: QAnon emerged in 2017 and has gone from being a fringe conspiracy to one embraced by political leaders. What is the QAnon fraud? We will explore the transmission and expression of The Protocols of the Elders of Zion by examining its antisemitic roots and mainstream appeal. What are the characteristics of conspiratorial thinking? How and why can people accept and justify these frauds? Why do conspiracy theories threaten democracy? How do they damage and mislead? How do we recognize and respond to the threat and talk to somebody who embraces it?

3. Traveling and Studying in Israel

This presentation developed from trips to Israel and will serve as a fun travelogue illustrating the geography, culture, and history of Israel. Particular focus will be given to the Old City of Jerusalem as well as Jewish, Christian and Muslim holy sites. Additionally, we will visit the landscapes of the Galilee, Masada and the Dead Sea, as well as the Jordanian and Lebanese borders. The presentation will end by highlighting the work and mission of Yad Vashem.

4. Heeding the Warning Signs: Antecedents and Precursors to the Holocaust

This presentation examines how the Holocaust was not just possible, but permissible. How did the Nazis utilize the preexisting building blocks of mass atrocity (antisemitism, discrimination, homophobia, racism, sexism, misogyny, appeal of authoritarianism) to become a mainstream political party with “moral authority” within German society? While obsessed with “the Jews”, the Nazi persecution of many groups helped them to utilize natural social processes of group identification and turn them on a genocidal path. In the cases of these minorities, professionals and many segments of society became invested with the questions thrust before them and wrestled — through growing frustration — to imagine more radical solutions…from sterilization to deportation to… Nazism existed and was attractive precisely because its ideology “made sense” to many Germans and held emotional appeal by tapping into: symbolic expression and cultural meaning; morality; nationalism; pride; redemption; and enemy-making in times of trauma and confusion. We will also explore U.S. connections to Nazi race policy in order to become more alert that when “others” in our midst are targeted or marginalized, we all risk losing our freedom.

5. The Rise of the Nazis: 1933-1939 (Middle School)

This presentation will focus on the origins and rise of the Nazis; the accession to political power; the human rights violations and antisemitic policies. How do human rights violations escalate without being checked and what is the responsibility of individuals when facing such violations? A major focus will be how we create the “other” and how to be an “Upstander” in the face of a perpetrator or bully. An ideal introductory presentation for high school and middle school dealing with the issues of personal and social responsibility and resistance.

6. Rise of the Nazis: The Plot to Destroy Democracy (1919-1933)

Did the Nazis come to power through coercion and/or consent? How was Hitler, a constant failure rescued by those who wished to use him, able to exploit the weaknesses and tensions in the Weimar Republic to become chancellor? We will trace Hitler’s failures and personality myths while exploring his changing political tactics. We will examine the inability of opposition parties to unite against Nazism. Close attention will be focused on how Article 48 (Presidential rule by decree) enabled a small group of anti-democratic, conservative and nationalist politicians and aristocrats to wield extraordinary power in a plot to destroy the Weimar Republic. We will explore their fatal mistake of rescuing Hitler from failure in order to champion their conservative and nationalist agendas. Once they agree to naming him chancellor, Hitler and the Nazis will dismantle the Republic within five months utilizing the Reichstag Fire, the election of March 1933, and the Enabling Act.

7. Destroying Democracy from Within: Failure and Limits of Democratic Institutions (1933-1938)

What happens when the judiciary sides with or accommodates an authoritarian leader? Hitler was a consistent failure, rescued throughout his political career by conservatives and nationalists. They believed the system would hold him in check. They consistently underestimated him. Hitler had a great contempt for law, but came to see the benefits - especially with the need to persuade a variety of German conservatives - to progressively remove human rights from those he perceived as dangerous threats to his idea of the German Volk. This presentation examines how some conservatives overcame their general sense of unease and helped the Nazis to destroy democracy and build a police and terror state; how target groups are created, how professionals and institutions “buy in”; how the police and the judiciary supported the expansion of Nazi power; the struggle between the states, judiciary, and SS over control of policy and imprisonment; the development of and role played by the concentration camp system; and the state security police apparatus. We will explore how mass atrocity not only became possible, but permissible.
8. Purity, Eugenics, and Lethal Medicine
We will explore the origin and context of eugenic thinking beginning with Francis Galton and ending in Nazi Germany. We will explore the role that white supremacy, elitism, and misogyny played in the eugenics movement. Specific attention will focus on Charles Davenport and Harry Laughlin's Eugenics Records Office in Cold Springs Harbor, NY. We will explore how racism and anti-immigrant sentiment fused with the eugenics movement in Buck v. Bell and the 1921 and 1924 immigration acts. We will examine how Hitler and the Nazis utilized American race law and eugenics precedents in the implementation of their "racial hygiene" policies; to include race law, marriage law, forced sterilization, the Nuremberg Laws, children's euthanasia, the T4 Euthanasia program, and the Holocaust. We will wrestle with identifying the factors that contribute to targeting people and how to confront and suppress them. What are the connections and differences between American and Nazi German eugenics practices?

9. The United States and the Challenge of Nazi Germany
Facing the challenge of fascism and its appeal in the U.S. President Roosevelt was able to rescue liberal democracy in an uncomfortable partnership with the Southern Democratic Party that combined progressive ideas with Jim Crow racism. We will explore the fears faced and consider the impact of FDR's response to the threat of Nazism. Policy decisions are presented in context of the unfolding events between 1933 and 1938. Topics covered include: U.S. immigration policy and the quota system; U.S. attitudes of pacifism, isolationism, racism, xenophobia and antisemitism; Anti-lynching legislation and political realities; the Evian Refugee Conference, the German American Bund; Charlie Chaplin; and the failed Wager-Rogers kindertransport bill. We will examine what is at stake in the struggle to preserve democracy by listening to the echoes of the past.

10. Learning from the Past: Facing Difficult History in the U.S. and Germany

How did American racism influence German race policy and how does German encounter with its Nazi past help Americans confront their difficult history of slavery? What do cultures of defeat (the Confederacy and post WW I German society) have in common? How did the creation of the “Lost cause” myth distort the history of the Civil War and facilitate a different re-enslavement of black Americans? Tasked by Hitler to develop race laws, Nazi thinkers specifically cited the American experience as the world leader in white supremacist legislation. Nazis began researching American race laws and discovered that immigration, naturalization, and marriage laws could be useful in crafting what became the infamous Nuremberg Laws. This presentation explores implicit and explicit bias that leads to racism. We will explore how racism functions in the U.S. and American reactions to Nazi Germany then and now. Racism will be a central theme of the presentation as we explore how leaders manipulate it to the detriment of most. We will explore the second Civil War (the War against Reconstruction) and how its ideology of racism has influenced the American experience. We will explore the for-profit convict labor system that helped entrench a new form of slavery and Hollywood’s subtle and not-so-subtle embrace of both racism and the southern myth of the “Lost cause.” We will also examine the symbolic and identity-laden issue of Confederate statues. As antisemitism, racism, Nazism, and the KKK have re-emerged as significant societal factors we must confront this difficult history as we explore the implications for the future.

By highlighting examples of leadership and the influence of targeted minorities in enhancing democratic values, we explore how to utilize this history to promote competencies for democratic citizenship.

11. Elie Wiesel: Profound Trauma, Remembrance and Hope
This presentation explores the power, necessity, obligations and challenges of “remembering.” Using Wiesel’s text, Night, we will explore how traumatic memory is held and expressed. We will trace the life of Elie Wiesel from his birth in Sighet, Romania; his early, formative years; the unfolding situation in Hungary and Europe; the round-up of his family and deportation to Auschwitz; the fate of his family; and his post war experiences. How does Night serve as a counter-Torah attempting to “hold” the trauma? We will discuss Night as a stylized, constructed memoir that begins Wiesel’s wrestling with his experience and explore how his life continued after Auschwitz in a journey of hope against despair.

12. Anne Frank – To Be Free, to Be Myself
Who was Anne Frank? This presentation frames Anne’s Frank’s experiences as one of growth and introspection through her diary. How does I Anne’s voice still remain, as she hoped, “useful” as we face the challenges of today? How do we resist evil while maintaining our moral core? Drawing on the diary and Anne’s experiences we will challenge our own prejudices and ask difficult questions of ourselves. Special attention is given to the memories of Hannah (Goslar) Pick, Anne’s childhood friend (whose January 2007 interview will be used). The life and decisions of the Frank family (such as emigration and going into hiding) are placed within the context of the Nazi era. Otto Frank’s failed attempt to get his two children (Margot and Anne) into the United States begins a discussion of refugee policy and the villainization of immigrants and refugees. This presentation also traces the fate of those hiding in the Secret Annex. How can we draw on the example of the rescuers and of the Franks themselves to honor Anne’s April 1944 wish, "If only I can be myself”?

13. Number the Stars: Danish Rescue
For elementary students reading Number the Stars. It will place the story and its characters within the broader context of events in Denmark during the war. It gives a general account of the history of the rescue of Danish Jews while exploring the traits of an “Upstander.” We will discuss in general terms the history and relative advantages of Denmark during the Nazi era and explore the rescuers and the rescued. We will examine “goodness” as a human, not national trait. It will place the story and its characters within the broader context of events in Denmark during the war. It gives a general account of the history of the escape and rescue of Danish Jews while exploring the Jewish Foundation for the Righteous’ 8 traits of an “Upstander.” *(Grades 5-8
14. Civil Society Between Darkness and Light: Danish Resistance and Rescue (19840-1946)
   An exploration of the German occupation of Denmark, the Danish resistance, the rescue operation to Sweden, and the postwar reintegration of Jewish refugees. What factors shaped Danish attitudes towards its Jewish neighbors? Was the Danish government collaborating or merely cooperating? Why was the summer of 1943 the turning point? What was different about Nazi policy in Denmark? What vital role and example did Sweden provide? A particular focus will be on the fishing village of Gilleleje and those rescued and others captured and sent to Theresienstadt. Two child survivor testimonies recorded in October 2015 (Ole Philpson and Tove Udshott) will be utilized. By examining Denmark’s unique experience and its testament to civil society before, during, and after the Holocaust, we raise questions about how to improve civic responsibility and build stronger democracies.

15. France Under Nazi Occupation: Memory, Myth, and Misogyny
   Exploring the traumatic history of France during World War II, this presentation explores collaboration, the Holocaust, resistance, and memory. How is “collaboration” defined, who defines it, and why? What role did contentious politics and ideological divides play in Vichy collaboration and the Holocaust? How does memory continue to be a battleground between the right and the left? How does gender shape interpretations of the past? What was unique about the French experience? Why did a greater percentage of its Jews survive the Holocaust? Topics covered include: the ongoing political conflict between left and right; the defeat of France in 1940; antisemitism; Vichy collaboration; French resistance; French police roundups; “Vél d’Hiv” roundup; French prisoners of war; Volunteer and forced labor in the Reich. How does this examination of a difficult past help us to confront our own difficult and traumatic history?

16. The Power of Place: Encountering Auschwitz
   How does one encounter the killing site of Auschwitz? What can we learn? How and what do we “remember”? Based upon visiting Auschwitz I and II in November 2014 with the Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (AIPR) this presentation explores how ordinary people commit extraordinary evil. Weaving together archival images from a project by two Nazi photographers from the lab/identification service project in Auschwitz with photographs from the 2014 trip, we will explore the process of genocide and the “moral universe” the perpetrators created. We will explore the deliberate structures created to serve the needs of the SS, architects and businessmen in exploiting and destroying human beings. We will explore the challenges of encountering such a place, make room for mourning, refusing to normalize our outrage, and ask, “Where do we go from here?”

17. The Holocaust: The Twisted Road to Auschwitz
   This presentation focuses on the cascading radicalization and evolution to genocide that took place from 1939-1945. We explore how Nazi policy incrementally evolved and adapted over time in the complex face of changing political, military, and social circumstances. Specific attention will be placed upon the Nazi racial laboratory of Poland 1939-1940. Topics to be covered include: Nazi ideology and the unfolding war situation; the influence of location; emerging role of the SS; the difficulties and failures of implementing emigration policy and demographic engineering; the failure and complicity of the Wehrmacht; T 4 Program; ghettos; General Plan Ost and the Commissar Order; the Wannsee Conference; the Einsatzgruppen and the “Final Solution.” By exploring individual initiative of “working towards the Führer” we will examine the “moral universe” created by willing perpetrators. (For advanced classes.)

18. The Human Problem of Genocide
   April is Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month in the State of NH. What is required to recognize, deter and prevent genocide? What is genocide? When do processes become part of a genocidal momentum? How do we prevent the escalation? How do we identify moments in the process where intervention (any type) can change the momentum? What can we do to make a difference? We will discuss the U.N. Genocide definition; genocide risk factors and warning signs. We will explore proactive and reactive responses. We will also wrestle with the tension between the moral imperative to act and the principles of nonintervention and state sovereignty. This presentation seeks to empower students to make such attitudes and behaviors culturally unacceptable.

   As the Soviet Union collapsed in the 1990s, Yugoslavia unraveled in the face of Serbian and Croatian nationalism. Slobodan Milošević and Serb nationalists took advantage of the situation to embark upon a project of creating a “Greater Serbia” as Croatia sought to expand into a “Greater Croatia.” The wars unleashed “ethnic cleansing” and genocide. What forces were at play to enable another series of European mass atrocity crimes? How did the shadow of WW II influence nationalists? What role did the United States, the United Nations, and the European Community play in enabling these crimes? What can we learn about the process of genocide and our responsibility to intervene and prevent? This presentation explores the multi-ethnically informed city of Sarajevo and Bosnia; the unfolding process of genocide; nationalist ideologies; Islamophobia (which continues to limit understanding, responsibility, and justice); the challenge of memory and remembrance; and how the Dayton Peace Accords created a corrupt, ethno-nationalist partitioned Bosnia.
Teaching the Holocaust: Keeping the Moral Core

The methodological considerations we explore can be applied to any social studies or English curriculum. This workshop explores ways to approach this extremely difficult topic by guiding teachers in developing individual classroom rationales to help focus a unit or course. Why does teaching the Holocaust continue to be relevant? What should we teach? Ultimately, our role will be to create safe environments that focus upon encouraging democratic readiness and active citizenship while paying attention to escalating violence towards an “other.” We will explore the pedagogical and contemporary challenges and considerations facing today’s classroom teacher by utilizing a framework of competencies for democratic citizenship.

Decoding Images: The Challenges of Using Atrocity Photographs and Images

Photographs do not merely capture or illustrate the historical past, they interpret it. A potential pitfall in teaching about the Holocaust is using Holocaust imagery without ever teaching students how to evaluate and decode those images. As many of our students’ encounters with the Holocaust will often be visual (and a visual memory that is shaped by collective memory) it is important to recognize that the majority of images from the Holocaust have been taken and framed by the perpetrator. These images were carefully constructed and passed through censors and/or were shaped by Nazi protocols. Nazi photographers were designated as “weapons” of the Nazi effort and their images continue to have power to shape the narrative in ways that serve the perpetrator. We must recognize that the photographs are part of the process of genocide. We must critically evaluate this evidence as much as we do written or oral material. This workshop uses a series of competency expectations such as: recognizing perspective; intentionally; social, political context; elements of composition; expanding the frame; in order to apply these competencies today. Students will be able to deconstruct imagery while developing a sense of the “moral universe” perpetrators operate in.

Teaching Anne Frank: To Be Free, to Be Myself

How do we "remember" and teach about Anne Frank? What are the contexts and pitfalls to be aware of? How do we keep our moral integrity when dealing with Anne as "symbol" and icon? How do we avoid teaching the diary as fairy tale or fable? The life and decisions of the Frank family (such as emigration and going into hiding) are placed within the context of the Nazi era. Otto Frank’s failed attempt to get his two children (Margot and Anne) into the United States is highlighted. This presentation also traces the family’s history after their betrayal in the Secret Annex. How can we draw on the example of the rescuers and of the Franks themselves?

Teaching Elie Wiesel: Trauma, Remembrance, and Hope

How does one approach Elie Wiesel's work and witness in the classroom? This workshop presents Night as a constructed memoir, a crafted testimony; a matzeva (marker/gravestone) about the limits of witnessing and “surviving survival”. We will discuss Night as the beginning, not end, of Wiesel’s reencounter with the Shoah by exploring the text through his Hasidic roots and identity. By studying the Shoah and Wiesel's writings we will encounter his hope that the spark for goodness must be ignited within us. How does Night help us to “hold” someone else’s traumatic memory? How will reading this book make me a better person? How will Night allow us “to fence with the shadows, but always have the song”? This workshop looks at the construction of Night; the questions it raises; its Hasidic framework; and how to teach it as the beginning of a journey against despair.