



Crafting a Life From Holocaust to High Fashion

**She survives in a new country through her wits, her imagination,
and above all, her hands.**



Introduction

Purpose

This Educators' Guide walks students and teachers through the life of Sidonia Perlstein, in conjunction with the exhibit entitled "Sidonia's Thread: Crafting a Life from Holocaust to High Fashion." With the aid of her beautiful clothing designs, Sidonia's story is linked together with historical background and essential concepts in an effort to provide a meaningful and unique way to uncover the story of a remarkable Holocaust survivor. This Educators' Guide facilitates an engaging connection between students, teachers, and the exhibit, and is separated into sections based upon the following goals:

1. To promote an understanding of the concept of how an ordinary person, under certain circumstances, can lead an extraordinary life.
2. To promote knowledge regarding the particular plight of Hungarian Jews during the Holocaust.
3. To bring about a greater knowledge regarding the lives of immigrants in the United States in the last half of the twentieth century.
4. To enhance knowledge about the relationship between creative design, dressmaking, and textiles and the Holocaust and its aftermath.
5. To learn some nontraditional methods of remembering those who have had a meaningful impact on our lives today.

The goals listed above showcase themes central to Sidonia Perlstein's life, incorporating the important history of Hungarian Jews and their experiences during the Holocaust, the topic of immigration, and the struggles and successes of starting a new life in a different country in the aftermath of World War II. The perseverance demonstrated by Holocaust survivors like Sidonia Perlstein is stressed throughout the themes, historical pieces, and activities included in this guide.

This guide provides historical background or context pieces accompanied by visuals and educational activities suitable for high school and college-aged students. While all five sections of the guide provide valuable educational experiences, teachers may not be able to utilize every section, and may have to pick and choose what to use. Each section is designed to provide a comprehensive experience related to the section goal. Educators may choose whether some or all of the sections and activities are suitable for their particular classrooms.

United States Holocaust
Memorial Museum "Learn
About the Holocaust" Link:
<https://www.ushmm.org/learn>

Echoes and Reflections link:
<https://echoesandreflections.org/teach/>

As a prerequisite for utilizing this guide, students and teachers should have background knowledge regarding the causes, events, and impact of the Holocaust. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum website, specifically the "Learn About the Holocaust" link contains valuable information to aid with the building of this foundation. In addition, the Echoes and Reflections website offers lessons that are useful for gaining this background information. Both organizations also offer teacher-training programs for Holocaust education.

Resources

Resources consulted and used for the narratives included in each section can be found at the end of this guide, in the “Resources” section. Each narrative is followed by suggested activities for high school and college-aged students, including internet resource links that are immediately accessible, without cost. A glossary of important terms is included at the end of this guide as well.

Standards Addressed in this Educators' Guide

The reputable Echoes and Reflections organization, which specializes in Holocaust education, created a Standards Alignment Chart for the lessons included in their program, which incorporates standards from both the Common Core and the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) C3 Framework. Due to the comprehensive nature of this chart, the connected content, and the credibility of the Echoes and Reflections program, the Echoes and Reflections Standards Alignment Chart was used as a guide for addressing applicable standards in this Educators' Guide. Most or all of the Common Core and NCSS C3 Framework standards listed in the Echoes and Reflections chart have the potential of being covered throughout the activities in this guide. The educators' choice regarding which activities they wish to use for their classrooms, along with adaptations, will impact which standards they address.

Echoes and Reflections
Standards Alignment Chart
https://echoesandreflections.org/wp-content/themes/twentyseenechoes/fileview.php?source=1&file_nm=2020/02/11_Acadmic-Standards-1.pdf

Please consult the first link to the left to access the Echoes and Reflections Standards Alignment Chart. Note that the lessons referenced in the Echoes and Reflections Standards Alignment Chart are lessons included in that program, and not this Educators' Guide. However, the standards from the Common Core and the NCSS C3 Framework listed in the Echoes and Reflections chart can be addressed through the activities in this guide.

The Museum of Jewish Heritage
<https://education.mjhnyc.org/aligning-with-the-common-core/>

Furthermore, the second link from the Museum of Jewish Heritage also includes standards from the Common Core that are applicable to this Educators' Guide. While many of them are also included in the Echoes and Reflections chart, it may be worthwhile to view this link from the Museum of Jewish Heritage when considering standards.

Educators' Guide Acknowledgments

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From Ordinary to Extraordinary

How an ordinary person, under certain circumstances, can lead an extraordinary life.

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**ORIGINAL
TO BE GIVEN TO
THE PERSON NATURALIZED**

DECLARATION OF NATURALIZATION

No. 7234775

Petition No. 37155

Personal description of holder as of date of naturalization: Date of birth February 28, 1919; sex female; complexion medium; color of eyes gray; color of hair brown; height 5 feet 5 inches; weight 133 pounds; visible distinctive marks none; Marital status Unmarried; former nationality Hungary

I certify that the description above given is true, and that the photograph affixed hereto is a likeness of me.

(Sign here)

Sidonia Perlstein
(Complete and true signature of holder)

Commonwealth of Massachusetts, s.
Hampden

Be it known, that at a term of the Superior Court of Hampden County held pursuant to law at Springfield, Massachusetts on November 5, 1954, the Court having found that SIDONIA PERLSTEIN then residing at 64 Osgood St., Springfield, Massachusetts, intends to reside permanently in the United States (when so required by the Naturalization Laws of the United States), had in all other respects complied with the applicable provisions of such naturalization laws, and was entitled to be admitted to citizenship, thereupon ordered that such person be and (she was) admitted as a citizen of the United States of America.

In testimony whereof the seal of the court is hereunto affixed this 5th day of November in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and fifty-four and of our Independence the one hundred and seventy-eighth

Edward G. Shea
Clerk of the Superior Court.

By _____ Deputy Clerk.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Seal
Sidonia Perlstein

It is a violation of the U. S. Code (and punishable as such) to copy, print, photograph, or otherwise illegally use this certificate.

Sidonia's naturalization certificate

Who was Sidonia Perlstein?

On November 5, 1954, Sidonia Perlstein became a United States citizen. In preparation for this event, Sidonia spent several nights a week for nearly five years, walking to citizenship classes with her young daughter Hanna. This momentous event was marked by a new sense of optimism, as well as a legal change to the spelling of Sidonia's name, removing the "z" following the "S" in her first name. Yet, nothing could erase the events that brought Sidonia and Hanna to America or stop Sidonia from using her lifesaving skill and expertise as a seamstress to provide for herself and for her daughter.

Sidonia was born in February of 1913 in Dámóc, Hungary, a small town far from the urban centers like Budapest, with only a handful of Jewish families, where she lived with her parents



Sidonia's Hungarian home

and her five older siblings. Sidonia and her siblings learned to sew at a very young age. The family's clothing was simple, work related garb, using sturdy fabrics that were suitable for farm chores and country living in the early twentieth century. Sidonia, her three sisters, and her mother shared their Singer sewing machine, and used their expertise in both machine sewing and hand sewing to earn money for the family. Their abilities were recognized in their community, as their Catholic neighbors would bring the embroidered cloth they used in their Easter baskets to Sidonia's mother to inspect. Thus, for three decades, Sidonia lived a contented life in Dámóc as part of a large family, and helped her father to run his grocery store and trading business, often taking a train to nearby Sátoraljaújhely to trade for her father and to visit her older sister Etel there.

World War II began with the invasion of Poland in 1939. Although Sidonia and her family had been impacted during the late 1930s by the restrictions placed upon them by the Hungarian government of Miklos Horthy, the Jews in Dámóc knew nothing of Adolf Eichmann, or the plan already well underway of carrying out the Final Solution. Many Jews in Hungary's countryside believed they had been spared deportation, or that deportation would mean forced labor only. One of the first groups of Jews to be deported in Hungary, Sidonia, her family, and the other Jews in Dámóc were sent to the ghetto created in Sátoraljaújhely. They were among thirty or forty people staying in her sister Etel's apartment. In May, she was deported again, this time by train, in a horrifying trip to Auschwitz. Upon arrival at Auschwitz-Birkenau, Sidonia and her family faced a selection, where she and her sister Laura were separated from the rest of her immediate family.

After working as slave laborers and surviving multiple selections in Auschwitz, Sidonia and Laura were transferred to Dachau in July of 1944, where they arrived on August 1, 1944. While in Dachau, Sidonia and Laura walked several miles daily to a nearby castle taken over by the Wehrmacht (German army), in order to help with cooking and cleaning. A while later, Sidonia was transferred to a subcamp where she broke her leg. An injury in these circumstances often led to death. The next day, a guard appeared at the roll call and asked if any of the prisoners could sew. Sensing this was a life or death moment, as her injury meant she could no longer do the job she had been given, Sidonia loudly volunteered, catching the attention of the guard. By volunteering to sew, her life at Dachau was spared, and from that point on she sewed various projects for soldiers, officers, and clerks.

In December 1944, Sidonia and Laura were sent to Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. It was there that Sidonia met Yuri, a Czech prisoner who was designated by the Nazis as a *kapo* or supervisor. Toughened by her own situation yet empathetic to the prisoners, Yuri often helped the prisoners get food or easier labor jobs at the camp. Her grit and compassion not only helped Sidonia survive the camp, but became a model of resilience. Unfortunately, due to the inhumane conditions, it was also there that Laura tragically died, leaving Sidonia to face liberation alone, when British troops arrived and liberated Bergen-Belsen on April 15, 1945.

The survivors of the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp then transferred to a nearby army training camp, converted to a displaced persons (DP) camp. Sidonia stayed, had a brief relationship, and gave birth to her daughter Hanna in August of 1947. Sidonia remained in the DP camp in Bergen-Belsen from 1945-1949, sewing clothing for herself, as well as sewing items for trade; even sewing for a few paying customers, allowing her to purchase the few items she would bring with her to America, including a sewing machine.

From Europe to America

Sidonia also tried to locate family in the United States who could sponsor her and her daughter, but she was unable to gain sponsorship from prosperous relatives in California. Thus, with the passage of the Displaced Person's Act in 1948, and with the help of several organizations, Sidonia and Hanna set sail for the United States on the USAT General R.L. Howze, with Sidonia's paperwork noting her intended occupation as a seamstress. She and Hanna arrived in New York City, without any family to meet them, on July 3, 1949.

Sidonia and Hanna were sent shortly after their arrival to Springfield, Massachusetts into a neighborhood with around one hundred other survivors, where Sidonia set about the overwhelming task of restarting her life. Despite her skill as a seamstress, it took nearly two years to locate a job. Knowing relatively little English, and a single mother with a sixth-grade education and no professional training, she started working at the Victoria Dress Company in Springfield in 1951. Fast and efficient, Sidonia's talent was recognized, and she was promoted after a few years to forewoman. This promotion increased her self-esteem as well as her income.

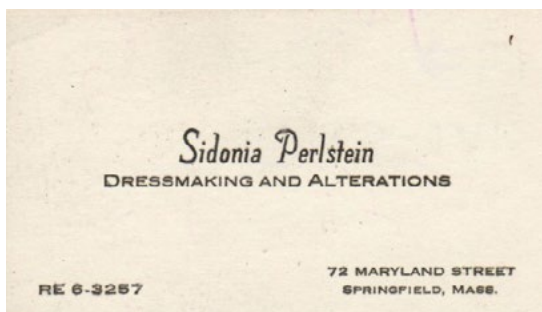


Sidonia (Left) and Hanna's
(Right) visa photographs

Her boss, Charles Podell, respecting her skill and resilience, made sure that Sidonia and Hanna's basic needs were met. He often gave Sidonia advice regarding how to navigate through her new life in America, especially how to cope with the hostile attitudes that many of the refugees faced. Sidonia assimilated into American life in part due to her job at the Victoria Dress factory, where she continued the development of her skill and expertise as a seamstress and a leader.

While she sewed pre-cut pieces into clothing items during the day at the factory, at home she created one-of-a-kind clothing with Hanna as her favorite model. Her careful attention to the look and feel of fabric, and to the placement of patterns on her chosen fabric pieces, allowed her to design perfectly fitting clothing items for Hanna to wear throughout her life. She was able to maintain accuracy while quickly completing garments, supplying Hanna with a plentiful wardrobe while testing her ideas regarding modern fashion.

When Mr. Podell retired and sold the factory, Sidonia was devastated that the new owner would not honor her position as forewoman. She chose to leave the factory and, taking a leap of faith but trusting her expertise, she began her own design and tailoring business. Within weeks, she proudly showed Hanna her business cards pronouncing her new enterprise: "Sidonia Perlstein, Dressmaking and Alterations."



Sidonia's business card

Her clients grew from a few customers to many, as she became widely known throughout Western New England. Sidonia reinvented herself again, and became a confident, popular and well-respected member of her community, keeping all of her customers' information carefully handwritten in her four by six spiral notebooks, written both in Hungarian and English. While at a fitting, they all confided in her and asked her for advice, appreciating her ability to "peer into a person's soul" while designing clothing that made them feel special. She always managed to make a living and provide for her daughter, even helping others with loans when they were in need. Sidonia never married and never lost her charming Hungarian accent. She continued to design and sew until the age of ninety, only a few years before her death at ninety-three in 2006.

Activities

Essential Question

- How can ordinary people do extraordinary things?

Activities

Students can complete the following activities individually or in small groups.

1. Make a three-column chart either digitally or on paper. Go back through the overview of Sidonia's life, and make a list of times when Sidonia faced adverse circumstances in the left column. In the middle column, list what actions Sidonia took, along with any other outside factors, to deal with each circumstance. In the third column, list attributes or character traits that would be needed in order to deal with circumstances such as these. If needed, consult the link to the left for attribute/trait ideas.

Underneath the chart, write at least a paragraph reflection describing the difficult circumstances that Sidonia faced in her life, and the ways in which she managed to overcome them. What was remarkable about her story?

2. How and why do ordinary people do remarkable things? Read the three articles linked to the left by Laurel Dalrymple from [npr.org](https://www.npr.org/2014/06/06/319404315/heroes-among-us-when-ordinary-people-become-extraordinary), social psychologist Philip Zimbardo from the Facing History and Ourselves website, and Dr. David Sack from *Psychology Today*. What characteristics do they believe takes a person from ordinary to extraordinary? After reading all three, make a list of these characteristics, and then compare them to your list in the third column of the chart you made for Sidonia's story. What makes someone a hero? Is a hero a perfect person? Can anyone be extraordinary?

Narrowing down the list of characteristics from the third column of the chart regarding Sidonia, and the list from the three articles, decide what the MOST significant and necessary characteristics or traits are that makes an ordinary person extraordinary. Try to narrow it down to 1-3 characteristics or traits. Write a reflection about why these are the most important, and also why a hero, and/or an extraordinary person, is not a "perfect person." What can we learn from these traits? How can an ordinary person lead an extraordinary life?

3. Finally, consider a person you believe to be ordinary that did something extraordinary or lived an extraordinary life, or research a person who fits this ideal. If you do not know a person, looking up biographies is an interesting way to find stories about remarkable people. There are several links on the next page that may help locate a name to research. Once a person has been chosen, locate information about this person online, or in the

<https://examples.yourdictionary.com/examples-of-attributes.html>

Laura Dalrymple:
<https://www.npr.org/2014/06/06/319404315/heroes-among-us-when-ordinary-people-become-extraordinary>

Philip Zimbardo:
<https://www.facinghistory.org/rescuers/philip-zimbardo-what-makes-hero>

David Sack:
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/where-science-meets-the-steps/201503/the-5-traits-extraordinary-ordinary-people>

Websites with biography suggestions and information: Biography.com
<https://www.biography.com/people>

Encyclopedia of World Biography:
<https://www.notablebiographies.com/>

Time 100
<https://time.com/collection/100-most-influential-people-2020/>

A+E Biography
<https://www.aenetworks.com/brands/biography>

Book Riot (recommendations for biographies):
<https://bookriot.com/best-biographies/>

Also, researching Holocaust survivors provides for remarkable stories as well. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum is a good place to locate Holocaust survivor testimonies: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum link to testimonies:
<https://www.ushmm.org/remember>

To connect to the overall theme of this exhibit, two Holocaust survivors who had a family history in the garment and fashion industry before the war, and who became notable fashion designers after the war, are Lucie Porges and Renee Firestone. See links below:
 Lucie Porges:
<https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/porges-lucie>
<https://vimeo.com/9628493>

Renee Firestone:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mCjd3lYuJq8>
https://jewishjournal.com/current_edition/177290/

school, university, or local library. Choosing a local individual and completing an oral interview would work as well. See tips for completing oral interviews here: <https://www.oralhistory.org/best-practices/>.

Using your research, document the background of the person, and the circumstances that made his or her life extraordinary. A three-column chart as described in #1 would also be appropriate for processing this research. Are the characteristics or traits noted for Sidonia, as well as those noted by the articles in activity #2, present in the actions and choices of the person you researched? Why or why not? Share your stories with classmates or partners, and compare traits.

4. As a final activity, make a digital product such as a brochure, slide presentation, digital poster, or similar application that can be shared with others, or a bulletin board display for the classroom, hallway, library, or other area of the school or university to showcase the stories of the remarkable people that were discovered through your research, including Sidonia Perlstein. Search for photographs of each person, and place important information near their photograph. Finally, scatter the characteristics and traits of extraordinary people, which were discovered through the research and the article links, prominently throughout the display or digital product. If desired, use more than the 1-3 traits that were reflected upon for activity #2. Once completed, the display can be used as a motivational tool especially with discussions related to resilience. It can also be a way to honor local heroes, or provide a foundation to create a personal or collective Code of Ethics.

Resources

The following resources were either consulted for the narrative introductions to each of the five sections of this guide, or they are resource recommendations for that section. For resources related to the educational activities, please see the suggestions included with the activities for each section.

Resources for Part I

Marcus, Hanna Perlstein. *Sidonia's Thread: The Secrets of a Mother and Daughter Sewing a New Life in America*. New Charleston: Create, 2012.

Surviving Remnant: Memories of the Jewish Greenhorns in 1950s America. Middletown: Buttonhole Publishing, 2017.

Resources for Part II

Braham, Randolph L. *The Politics of Genocide: The Holocaust in Hungary*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2000.

Haraszti, György. "Hungary from 1918-1945." *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*. https://yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Hungary/Hungary_from_1918_to_1945

"Historical Background: The Jews of Hungary During the Holocaust." *Yad Vashem*. <https://www.yadvashem.org/articles/general/jews-of-hungary-during-the-holocaust.html>

Marcus, Hanna Perlstein. *Sidonia's Thread: The Secrets of a Mother and Daughter Sewing a New Life in America*. New Charleston: Create, 2012.

Silber, Michael K. "Hungary before 1918." *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*. https://yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Hungary/Hungary_before_1918#id0e1pak

Weiner, Rebecca. "Hungary Virtual Jewish History Tour." *Jewish Virtual Library*. <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/hungary-virtual-jewish-history-tour>

Resources for Part III

Bazarov, Valery. "HIAS and HICEM in the System of Jewish Relief Organizations in Europe, 1933-41." *Eastern European Jewish Affairs* 39:1 (2009): 69-78. doi: 10.1080/13501670902750295.

Cohen, Beth. *Case Closed*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2007.

Diner, Hasia R. "American Jewish Identity and the Garment Industry." *In A Perfect Fit: The Garment Industry and American Jewry, 1860-1960*, edited by Gabriel M. Goldstein and Elizabeth E. Greenberg, 29-40. Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press for Yeshiva University Museum, 2012.

The Jews of the United States. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004.

Helmreich, William B. *Against All Odds: Holocaust Survivors and the Successful Lives They Made in America*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1996.

Marcus, Hanna Perlstein. *Sidonia's Thread: The Secrets of a Mother and Daughter Sewing a New Life in America*. New Charleston: Create, 2012.

Surviving Remnant: Memories of the Jewish Greenhorns in 1950s America. Middletown: Buttonhole Publishing, 2017.

"Post War Years." *US Citizenship and Immigration Services*. <https://www.uscis.gov/about-us/our-history/overview-of-ins-history/post-war-years>

Segev, Zohar. "Remembering and Rebuilding: The World Jewish Congress, In the Shadow of the Holocaust." *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 14, no. 2 (July 2105): 315-352. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14725886.2014.957917>.

Stone, Dan. *The Liberation of the Camps: The End of the Holocaust and its Aftermath*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015.

Wilson, Jennifer. "Creating Beauty in the Wake of the Holocaust: Jewish Holocaust Survivors and their Post-War Careers in the Clothing Industry." MHGS Thesis. Gratz College, 2019.

Resources for Part IV

Gabriel M. Goldstein and Elizabeth E. Greenberg, ed. *A Perfect Fit: The Garment Industry and American Jewry, 1860-1960*. Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press for Yeshiva University Museum, 2012.

Kaplan, Marion. *Between Dignity and Despair*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999. (Quotation "Sewing Knows No Language" page 114)

Kremer, Roberta S. ed. *Broken Threads: The Destruction of the Jewish Fashion Industry in Germany and Austria*. Oxford, Berg: Vancouver Holocaust Education Association, 2007

Martin, Sean. *A Stitch in Time*. Cleveland: The Western Reserve Historical Society, 2015.

Newman, Johanna. "Modern Jewish History: From Ghetto to Glamour-How Jews Redesigned the Fashion Business." *The Jewish Virtual Library*. Accessed March 15, 2019. <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/from-ghetto-to-glamour-how-jews-redesigned-the-fashion-business>.

Postrel, Virginia. *The Fabric of Civilization: How Textiles Made the World*. New York: Basic Books, 2020.

Wilson, Jennifer. "Creating Beauty in the Wake of the Holocaust: Jewish Holocaust Survivors and their Post-War Careers in the Clothing Industry." MHGS Thesis. Gratz College, 2019

Resources for Part V

Lambros Fatsis. "The Importance of Studying People." *The Sociological Review*.

<https://www.thesociologicalreview.com/the-importance-of-studying-people/>

Stearns, Peter N. "Why Study History (1998)." *American Historical Association*.

[https://www.historians.org/about-aha-and-membership/aha-history-and-archives/historical-archives/why-study-history-\(1998\)](https://www.historians.org/about-aha-and-membership/aha-history-and-archives/historical-archives/why-study-history-(1998))

Glossary

The majority of the following terms were defined using the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum website (ushmm.org), unless noted otherwise. Glossary terms are listed in alphabetical order.

Adolf Eichmann

Eichmann was a crucial figure in the implementation of the Nazi's Final Solution, which eventually became the mass murder of the Jewish population of Europe. Eichmann had experience with organizing emigration and forced deportation of Jews in the early years of World War II, and continued to do so until the end of the war. He was the main figure involved with organizing and managing the deportation of Hungarian Jews starting in 1944. He escaped US custody at the end of the war in 1946, but was discovered in Argentina in 1960 and brought to Israel, where his trial was widely publicized, bringing attention to the events of the Holocaust. He was hanged for his crimes in 1962.

Affidavit

A sworn statement in writing. In order to emigrate during the Nazi era, German Jews had to obtain many documents, including affidavits. Affidavits were also necessary for Holocaust survivors who wanted to emigrate after the war.

American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee

Also known as "The Joint" or the JDC, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee was created in 1914 in New York from forty Jewish organizations, which met to provide relief efforts for Jews in Eastern Europe and the Middle East. The JDC continued its efforts throughout World Wars I and II, providing money and food to European Jews in peril, even while their European offices were ransacked or closed. They helped to facilitate the escape and emigration of Jewish refugees during the Nazi era, as well as supplied aid to rescuers like Raoul Wallenberg and Carl Lutz. After the war, the JDC continued to operate, often working in conjunction with other agencies to provide aid to Jewish Holocaust survivors.

Angel Island

Sometimes called the "Ellis Island of the West," Angel Island is located in California's San Francisco Bay, and was the point of entry for Asian immigrants. It processed approximately one million Asian and other immigrants between 1919 and 1940.

Antisemitism

The belief or behavior hostile toward Jews just because they are Jewish.

It may take the form of religious teachings that proclaim the inferiority of Jews, for instance, or political efforts to isolate, oppress, or otherwise injure them. It may also include prejudiced or stereotyped views about Jews. Hostility toward Jews dates back to ancient times, perhaps to the beginning of Jewish history.

See the following link for the documents required by Nazi Germany in order for Jews to leave:
<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/documents-required-to-obtain-a-visa>

National Park Service, US Department of the Interior:
<https://www.nps.gov/places/u-s-immigration-station-angel-island.htm>

Anti-Defamation League:
<https://www.adl.org/anti-semitism>

In the late 19th century, Jews were associated with modernity and liberalism, ideologies that were at odds with the growing trends of conservatism and nationalism. Hatred and discrimination of Jews, however, predates the 19th century and can be traced back hundreds of years. Antisemitism during the Nazi era was especially associated with Nazi racial ideology, where Jews were considered an enemy race.

Smithsonian Institution:
<http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/idealabs/ap/essays/looking.htm>

Artifact

An object created by and used by people, allowing researchers to make connections between history and people. Artifacts have a way of bringing the past back to life.

Merriam-Webster:
<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/assimilation>

Assimilated/Acculturate

Assimilation occurs when groups from different cultures absorb the dominant culture by acquiring its habits, language, and modes of life.

Acculturation is a process of social, psychological, and cultural change that stems from the balancing of two cultures while adapting to the prevailing culture of the society (Google Dictionary).

The Jewish Virtual Library:
<https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/bar-bat-mitzvah-and-confirmation>

Bar/Bat Mitzvah

A ceremony for Jewish children where they formally are obligated to observe the commandments, usually around age 13 for males, and age 12 or 13 for females.

National Geographic:
<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/health-and-human-body/human-diseases/the-plague/>

Black Plague

After starting possibly in China and spreading along trade routes in the early 14th Century, the Black Plague killed about twenty-five million people in Europe, and continued to appear for centuries. The cause was later discovered to be fleas infecting rats with the *Y.pestis* bacteria. However, during the 14th century, when the cause was unknown, Jews were often blamed for the Black Plague.

Wikipedia:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Casual_wear

Casual Culture

Also called casual wear, or leisure wear, casual culture clothing includes comfortable, relaxed everyday wear that is not formal. Casual culture became especially popular in Western society starting in the 1960's.

Code of Ethics

A set of guidelines for moral or ethical conduct for personal and/or professional use.

Nazi Concentration Camps

Camps where people targeted by the Nazis were imprisoned and confined in harsh conditions without legal processes. Concentration camps served to incarcerate people considered a security threat, often involving forced labor. Concentration camps also resulted in the killing of groups targeted by the Nazis. There were tens of thousands of Nazi concentration camps. Sidonia

Perlstein was in Auschwitz, which was both a concentration camp used for slave labor and a Killing Center. She was also in Dachau and Bergen Belsen.

Dámóc

A small, agrarian town where the Perlstein's lived, near the border of northeastern Hungary and Czechoslovakia, at the foothills of the Carpathian Mountains. (Information taken from *Sidonia's Thread*, by Hanna Perlstein Marcus)

Killing Center

The Nazi camps designed specifically for large-scale murder. While some victims sent to these camps were kept alive for various reasons, the main task of these camps was to use a systematic and industrial program to put to death, often upon arrival, the victims who were sent there. There were a handful of Killing Centers, including Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka, Chelmo, and Auschwitz Birkenau.

Deportation

The removal of Jews from their existing home and their subsequent relocation to ghettos, camps, or killing fields. Once Jews were removed from their homes, their property was often confiscated by the Nazis and/or looted by non-Jewish community members. Deportation involved a mass coordination especially of railways, involving Nazis, military personnel, and civilians (like train engineers) from various countries.

DP Camp/Displaced Persons Act

The end of World War II revealed around ten million “Displaced Persons,” or “DPs,” who were often forced laborers, prisoners, or concentration camp survivors left on German soil. During the process of sending them back to their home countries, called repatriation, camps called “DP camps” were set up to house the DPs until they acquired the necessary paperwork to leave. Among the millions of DPs were Jewish Holocaust survivors, who often had no home to return to. Thus, their situation often resulted in emigration. In 1948, the United States passed the Displaced Persons Act, allowing 400,000 DPs (68,000 of which were Jews) to immigrate into the United States between 1949-1952.

Einsatzgruppen

These were Nazi mobile killing groups that followed the German army in its march eastward and murdered over one million civilians to “secure” the occupied territory. The invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941 intensified the number of killing squads as well as the amount killed, the vast majority of which were Jews. The mobile killing squads by then consisted of a variety of collaborating groups including the Nazi SS, army and police, along with local officials.

Ellis Island

Located in New York Harbor, Ellis Island served as an immigration station for 62 years, starting in 1892. During this time, 12 million immigrants especially from Europe were processed at

Ellis Island in a series of inspections that lasted around three to five hours. All but around two percent made it through to start a new life in America.

Wikipedia:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_sample_

Fabric Swatch

A small piece of fabric left over from an existing project, or ordered as a sample from a textile company or other retail establishment.

Final Solution

The Final Solution was the name of the Nazi plan to solve what they deemed the “Jewish problem.” The “solution” changed over time, from forced emigration of Jews out of Germany, to the mass murder of the Jewish population. The specific point when the Nazis decided to switch from forced emigration to mass murder is unclear. However, somewhere between 1941 and 1942, the steps towards the annihilation of the Jewish population (and other Nazi targets, especially the Roma population) began, which included deportations, gassing, shooting, acts of terror, disease, and starvation.

Case Western Reserve:
<https://case.edu/ech/articles/garment-industry>

Garment Industry

Usually a reference to the creation and growth of ready to wear clothing that emerged in the mid-nineteenth century, especially due to the mechanization of clothing production by the sewing machine. Trends in urbanization and immigration often contributed to the growth of the garment industry.

Genocide

Coined by Polish lawyer Raphael Lemkin in 1944, the term genocide comes from the Greek word “genos,” for tribe, and the Latin word “cide,” for killing. Legally the term genocide means the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group as such, by killing, causing serious bodily or mental harm, inflicting conditions of life to bring about the group’s destruction, preventing births, or forcibly transferring children from one group to another group.

Ghetto

The name “ghetto” comes from the Jewish quarter created by authorities in the sixteenth century in Venice, Italy. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Jewish quarters called ghettos were created in various cities around Europe. During World War II, the Nazis created ghettos, starting in Poland, to concentrate and isolate Jews from non-Jewish populations. The conditions of life were designed to cause great suffering.

Jewish Virtual Library:
<https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/hapsburg-monarchy>

Hapsburg Empire

The Hapsburg Dynasty ruled a multi-national empire centered in Austria for centuries, from the late thirteenth century until the end of WWI. Within the Hapsburg Empire were areas with considerable Jewish populations. Jews experienced an ebb and flow of restrictions during the

centuries of Hapsburg rule; towards the end of the nineteenth century, they began to gain civil equality within the empire, until it fell after WWI.

Holocaust

The Holocaust was the state sponsored, systematic persecution and killing by the Nazis of six million Jews, two-thirds of them **European Jews**, as well as other targets considered inferior or a threat by the Nazi party. The Nazi regime led Germany starting in 1933 until 1945. Legal restrictions and discrimination marked the beginning of the Nazi regime, until the violent events of Kristallnacht in 1938, the beginning of World War II in 1939, and the invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941 which resulted in the mass murder of Nazi targets by bullets and in killing centers. Holocaust survivors often found themselves in DP camps awaiting immigration into the United States and other countries.

Horthy, Miklos

Miklos Horthy, who had been an officer in the Austro-Hungarian navy, came to power at the head of a conservative-nationalist coalition, which unraveled most of the democratic reforms created in Hungary immediately after World War I. Horthy presided for the next 24 years over an authoritarian, almost feudal system of aristocratic rule.

Hungary

A country located in Europe surrounded by Austria, Czechoslovakia (at the time of World War II), Romania, and Yugoslavia (at the time of World War II). The Jews of Hungary were a diverse set of communities including modern and traditional Jews, which were by and large still alive in the middle of 1944. Despite the impending loss of Germany and the Axis Powers, and despite world leaders acknowledging the mass murder of Jews prior to 1944, the Jews of Hungary were still deported and put to death in large numbers in the last year of the war. (DO Arrow Cross Party)

Immigration/Emigration

Immigration is the process of moving to a new country while emigration is the process of moving from another country. Immigrants trying to move to the United States after World War I faced quota limitations and had to obtain many documents including an American immigration visa. Jews trying to emigrate from Germany in the 1930s as the Nazis increased their restrictions often found it incredibly difficult to do so, due to emigration requirements.

Isolationism

The policy of reducing involvement with foreign affairs. The United States practiced isolationist policies after World War I by not joining the League of Nations, creating new laws with immigration restrictions, and passing Neutrality Acts.

Jewish Virtual Library:
<https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/kapos>

Kapo

Supervisors in Nazi concentration camps, some of which were Jews. They were sometimes as harsh as their German non-Jewish counterparts, creating an ethical dilemma in the aftermath of the war among Jewish Holocaust survivors.

Liberation

In the context of World War II, liberation meant the freeing of survivors in Nazi concentration and killing centers by Allied troops starting in July of 1944.

Nazi

The name for the National Socialist German Workers Party, a far right, nationalist, racist, and anti-democratic political party in Germany led by Adolf Hitler. Created right after World War I, it especially gained followers due to the Great Depression. The meaning of the word “socialist” for Nazis was not the same as the socialistic movements elsewhere; socialism for the Nazis meant a unified country based upon Nazi racial ideology, with a German community of people (the Volk) that were devoted to the state.

Numerus Clausus Law in Hungary

This law was enacted in Hungary in 1920 and severely restricted the number of Jews in institutions of higher learning. It is considered the first antisemitic piece of legislation put forth by a European country after World War I. (Peter Tibor Nagy, The Numerus Clausus in Interwar Hungary, *Eastern European Jewish Affairs*, Volume 35, No.1, June 2005).

Operation Margarethe

In March of 1944, Operation Margarethe began in Hungary; German Wehrmacht paratroopers followed by occupation forces, which included Einsatzgruppen, SS and Gestapo, invaded and took over Hungary without resistance from the Hungarian military, or the civilian population. Once the military operation was deemed successful, the Wehrmacht soldiers were dispersed to the front within a month, and the government of Hungary was reorganized to align with both German military goals and the goals of the Final Solution. Adolf Eichmann and his Special Commando led the effort towards the latter with the help of certain departments within the Hungarian police. (Jennifer Wilson—see citation in Resources, Part III)

ORT Impact Through Education:
<https://www.ort.org/en/>

Organization for Rehabilitation and Training

Created in Russia in 1880, the ORT provided skills training for impoverished Jews. It grew throughout Europe and provided loans, training, and equipment to Jews, especially refugees, and continued to grow worldwide, helping Jewish DPs after World War II. The ORT continues its work today providing vocational training around the world.

Ottoman Empire

Founded in 1299, The Ottoman Empire grew to dominate the area around the Mediterranean Sea with a multilingual, multiethnic empire. The Ottoman Empire ruled southern and central

medieval Hungary during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Hungarian portions of the Empire were taken over by the Hapsburgs in the eighteenth century. Already faltering on the eve of World War I, the Ottoman Empire collapsed after the war, resulting in the creation of the Republic of Turkey in 1923 and other states in the Middle East.

Peddlers

Individuals who traveled the countryside, selling goods to customers often from a sack that was carried on their back. It was common for young Jewish men to do this in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, especially due to restrictions that prohibited other occupations for European Jews.

Refugee

A person outside of their native country who cannot return due to fearing for their life because of persecution due to their race, religion, nationality, or affiliation with a certain group.

<https://www.apa.org/topics/resilience>

Resilience

Defined by the American Psychological Association as the means to adapt and even achieve personal growth in the face of adverse circumstances and traumatic events.

Sátoraljaújhely

Located at the base of the Sator Hills at the foot of the Carpathian Mountains, Sátoraljaújhely was at one time the capital city of the region that included Dámóc. Prior to the war, the Perlstein family visited this town frequently. During the war, it became a ghetto, where the Perlstein family was sent before their deportation to Auschwitz. (Information taken from *Sidonia's Thread*, by Hanna Perlstein Marcus)

Seamstress/Tailor

A seamstress typically sews items; a tailor alters items to fit. It is generally accepted that both seamstresses and tailors can alter and create clothing, so their occupational titles are often grouped together.

SS (Schutzstaffel)

Originally Hitler's personal bodyguard unit, the SS was made up of elite, "pure" German party members and became the leading enforcement organization that oversaw internal security and the execution of Nazi racial policies. The SS ran the Nazi concentration and killing camp system, and the intelligence branch of the SS (the SD) participated in the Einsatzgruppen.

Diane von Furstenberg,
Master Class:
<https://www.masterclass.com/articles/natural-vs-synthetic-fibers>

Synthetic versus natural fabrics

Synthetic fabrics are man made; natural fabrics are made from animal or plant-based fibers.

UNRRA

United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, created in the United States in 1943. It was designed to help European nations after World War II with their massive refugee and displaced persons population. It helped millions of refugees and displaced persons with a variety of services and administered displaced persons camps.

YIVO Archives:

<http://www.yivoarchives.org/index.php?p=collections/controlcard&id=32628>

USNA

The United Service for New Americans, created in New York in 1946 that assisted immigrants, especially Holocaust survivors, with integrating into American society.

See the USHMM link here to learn the steps for this process:

<https://exhibitions.ushmm.org/americans-and-the-holocaust/what-did-refugees-need-to-obtain-a-us-visa-in-the-1930s>

Visa

The necessary documentation to enter into a foreign country, issued by the foreign country. For Jewish refugees trying to leave Europe, obtaining a visa to enter into a new country was particularly difficult.

Wallenberg, Raoul and Lutz, Carl

Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg and Swiss diplomat Carl Lutz worked in Budapest, Hungary, to provide tens of thousands of Jews their certification papers claiming they were under the protection of neutral powers. Lutz and Wallenberg worked with local Jewish agencies as well to gain protective papers and shelter for the Jews in Budapest.

Wehrmacht

The official German military, which often assisted the SS in perpetrating Nazi crimes.

World War I/World War II

World War I was the first significant international conflict of the twentieth century, occurring from 1914-1918. The devastation and destruction from World War I, coupled with the unease and economic crises of the interwar period, gave rise to dictatorships and eventually World War II, which occurred from 1939 to 1945.

Yellow star of David

The yellow Star of David was the “Jewish badge” that the Nazis forced the Jews of Germany and occupied territories to wear, in order to label, humiliate, segregate, and control their movements. While the yellow Star of David was common, other areas had variations, such as the white armband with a blue Star of David in areas of Poland.