

Holocaust and isis: bright examples of violence

[Society](#), [Terrorism](#)



Holocaust and Isis

At some point while sitting in class perhaps this thought came to mind; why am I learning about this or why do I need to know this? I can admit that this question comes to my mind while I am in any history class. The reason history class is required in school is because it tends to repeat itself.

Learning about how issues were solved in the past will help us prevent or solve future problems. There are plenty of examples of repeating historical events; one topic that came to mind was the Holocaust and Isis. The Holocaust was a “ genocidal and traumatic event of the twentieth century” (Andrews 16). This event led to long-term affects on its survivors and their families. Similar to the Holocaust, exercising modern day genocide is the Islamic extremist group, ISIS. ISIS is a current issue in the Middle East, the group seeks to attack and kill Christians. The Holocaust and Isis have had a major impact on millions of people and continue to affect people’s lives today.

Every day was a surprise for the victims of the Holocaust. Lucille Eichengreen, a Holocaust survivor, was interviewed in 2002 about her life during Word War II and her experiences in each concentration camp. When her family was told to leave their home they were told to pack “ one suitcase. Little bit of clothes...and you will be taken east.” The feeling of loneliness overwhelmed her, “ there was no family, there was nobody; there was no reminder from home.” Lucille says, “ We waited the whole day until they made us march to the train. “ They loaded the train, there were over one thousand and fifty people”(Eichengreen). Her and her family were

uprooted and taken away. This is dehumanization. She says the trains “ moved very slowly, and nobody knew the destination”(Eichengreen). They were deprived from food and had no knowledge of where they were being taken or what was going to happen to them. Every day was a surprise, no one ever knew what to expect.

Lucille said that even though there were people sitting with her on the train she felt “ so depressed and insecure that she didn’t talk.” She also said “ in such a situation when you are covered in fear, you stop talking” (Eichengreen). The depression and verbal abuse lead to loneliness and ultimately anxiety from lack of knowing what was going to happen, each day was a fear filled mystery. The lack of hygiene resulted in lice along with other diseases. She says, “ My mother dies of hunger. And when you withdraw from food completely over a long period of time you swell, and it is all water. And this swelling goes down to a degree, and then you just die”(Eichengreen). She buried her own mother when she was seventeen and realized at that moment that this “ was a sense of knowing that this was inevitable for all of us”(Eichengreen). Lucille was liberated from the camp in April of 1945 and her initial thought was “ I need to get out of here”. She was weak, thin and could not get herself to eat.” She also stated that, “ There was not one person who survived who did not suffer tremendous losses” (Eichengreen). Lucille’s family did not survive. These are just a few of the disturbing memories Lucille experienced.

A similar event to the Holocaust is the modern day Islamic extremist group ISIS. The ISIS group, also known as the Islamic state is known for public

murders and crucifixions. As the Holocaust aimed to exterminate a specific religion, ISIS aims to exterminate Christians or anyone who disrespects God. This year alone millions have been forced from their homes, beat and thrown in prisons. ISIS is continuing to take control of new areas in the Middle East. In June of 2014 “ ISIS militants massacred hundreds of army recruits” (Hussein Kadhim). A man named Ali Hussein Kadhim, the only known survivor, was interviewed by The New York Times this September. Ali said, “ I am married and I have two children. We don’t have anything. No work, no salary, no land. So I joined the Army.” He stated that twelve days after he had joined he was lying on a field surrounded by corpses awaiting a bullet to the head” (Hussein Kadhim). His account was verified by eyewitness accounts and videos online. When Ali’s base was seized all the recruits including him self “ expected them to come”(Hussein Kadhim). The recruits tried to escape but “ 100 men approached them and told they will be taken to their families,” but they were tricked (Hussein Kadhim). They had no idea where they were being taken to or what was going to happen, as the victims of the Holocaust had no knowledge as well. The recruits were “ separated into cars” like the Holocaust victims were shoved into trains (Hussein Kadhim). Victims of both felt the helpless because “ nobody could do anything” (Hussein Kadhim). The recruits were then lined up and marched to their death and piled into trucks.

Similar to Lucille seeing her mother dead gave her reason to believe that was going to be everyone’s fate and there was nothing to worry about anymore, Ali saw the first man on his line get shot and he “ thought that was the end for me. There was nothing more to fear” (Ali Hussein Kadhim). The

man sitting next to Ali was shot however he fell down as well, fooling them into believing he was dead. At night was his only way to escape across the river into an area ISIS had not controlled. Ali also states the people were starved. The interviewer states, “ After three weeks of hiding he was finally reunited with his family.” This did not just affect Ali, it had an affect of his whole family. They were worried, they had no contact with him and when he returned home his own daughter didn’t recognize him.

The Holocaust and ISIS have more in common than disparities, however there are a few. The Holocaust took place in Europe; ISIS is spreading throughout the Middle East. When other countries discovered the concentration camps they stopped the act immediately and provided aid to all victims. ISIS has been known for ten years. The U. S has taken many actions to put a halt to this crisis, however they have not had complete success in ending this; ISIS is continuing to expand and grow stronger. The Holocaust was more difficult to discover because there was no social media back then. Today social media informed us of the exact date ISIS was established. There are only these few differences between the Holocaust and ISIS; genocide is the same concept and causes the same effects, the time period doesn’t change much.

According to Laurie Anne Pearlam, “ Genocide and other forms of group violence create a wide range of negative aftereffects for individuals, communities, and societies” (111). The Holocaust has left its survivors suffering from long- term mental health issues. An experiment conducted by Marinus H. Van Ijzendoorn, Ayala Fridman, Marian J. Bakermans-Kranenburg

and Abraham Sagi-Schwartz called “ The Aftermath of Genocide: Holocaust Survivors’ Dissociation Moderates Offspring Level of Cortisol.” These scientists “ examined the effects of the Holocaust” (Marinus H. Van Ijzendoorn et al. 64). Their research study was designed specifically to examine Holocaust survivors. Survivors of the “ Holocaust display posttraumatic stress symptoms almost 70 years after the traumatic event” (Marinus H. Van Ijzendoorn et al. 65). PTSD is an anxiety disorder often developed after a traumatic event. They also discovered that Holocaust survivors are extremely vulnerable “ to psychological stress, under extreme stressful life circumstances” (Marinus H. Van Ijzendoorn et al. 66). Survivors also suffer from dissociation, which causes the same symptoms as amnesia, forgetting or unable to retrieve the memory of a traumatic experience. To conclude their study, “ traumatization gets under the skin, at least in the case of genocidal traumas” (Marinus H. Van Ijzendoorn et al. 77). Traumatic experiences, specifically genocide, cause psychological issues and intense anxiety.

The definition of genocide is a mass killing of a specific group of people or nation. I believe genocide, occurring in the past or present are very similar. I think the characteristics of any mass killing are the same. It is the extermination of a nation or race, led by a powerful leader and involves abuse or starvation. According to Laurie Anne Pearlam who wrote the article “ Restoring Self in Community: Collective Approaches to Psychological Trauma after Genocide” says, “ Violence has profound effects on all parties: victims of violence, predators or harm doers, and bystanders or witnesses” (118). I agree with this quotation violence, abuse and suffering can have a major psychological

effect on everyone, even the people who are witnessing it. News reports and social media show us that genocide is still an issue, as I have mentioned, ISIS. Other than a few details including location, media, group of people and each survivor's personal story, genocide today is no different than genocide in the past.

To conclude all observations I strongly believe the concept of genocide concrete, today advanced technology and media dramatize events and change the way society views violence. Obviously there is no solution to genocide being it has been occurring in different nations throughout history. We have not found an effective way to end genocide. According to Pearlam, in order to “ prevent future violence, we must learn how to heal psychological wounds” (111). I agree with Pearlam, it is important to heal the psychological wounds so future generations acknowledge the wrong in genocide.