

Essay on the holocaust

[Sociology](#), [Racism](#)



Washington DC is a hub of handful wonderful places among them museums which appeal to quite a wide range of interests. They range from big and large public funded institutions to small private yet historic homes that carry a rich history of not only America but also rich histories of other parts of the world. One such museum is The Holocaust Memorial Museum which I visited on the 26th of May 2013. It is located just across from the National Mall in Washington DC. To say this is a place rich with history is an understatement for it is indeed a memorial that showcases how millions of people died during the Nazi regime in Germany under Adolf Hitler (Stier 2003). If only I knew I would have tagged along a friend or two because I regret having gone there alone.

Before going there, I had tried to visualize and think of what I would expect to see and true enough I was not disappointed of myself because indeed I got grasp of a rich history, much of which I had not known about the Holocaust and the devastating experiences of the European Jews. Upon arrival, I was meted with a wide range of artifacts, quite a number of video monitors and also theatre films that contained video footage of testimonies from eye witnesses. But of all the artifacts that I laid my eyes on, I was drawn to two of them which are the casting of Majdanek gas chamber door as well as the rope that was used for hanging those who did escaped the gas chambers.

These two artifacts helped me understand how the Jews were incarcerated. Those who were “ lucky” enough not to go through the devastating gas chambers could die by hanging and there was this artifact of a rope that was used to hand them (Liss 1999). The rope specifically is thick and made of

very strong material which could ensure that once one was tied to by it, around the neck region; it could withstand the weight and ensure that the mission that it was made for was to be accomplished.

The Majdanek gas chamber door in particular was made with a very strong iron material that could withstand very strong heat. This meant that even with very high degrees of heat the door could not open and this meant that those trapped in the gas chambers could not escape whatsoever. Secondly, the door was made in such a way that it had a handle to the outside and it could only be closed to the outside to ensure that the victims were properly secured behind them so as to make sure that they could remain in there without chances of escaping.

I went through the museum studying one artifact to another and at the end of it all, learnt the stories of individuals, families and even groups that were executed during the holocaust. My knowledge about the holocaust was widened as I came face to face with all that I have learnt during my history lessons. It took me about three hours to go through it. I must say that the whole experience awakened in me bitter emotions upon seeing and thinking about what the Jews had to go through in the hands of Hitler and his henchmen.

References

Liss, A. (1998). *Trespassing Through Shadows: Memory, Photography, and the Holocaust*. Minneapolis: Uni. Of Minnesota Press.

Stier, O. B. (2003). *Committed to Memory: Cultural Meditations of the Holocaust*. Boston: Univ. of Massachusetts Press.