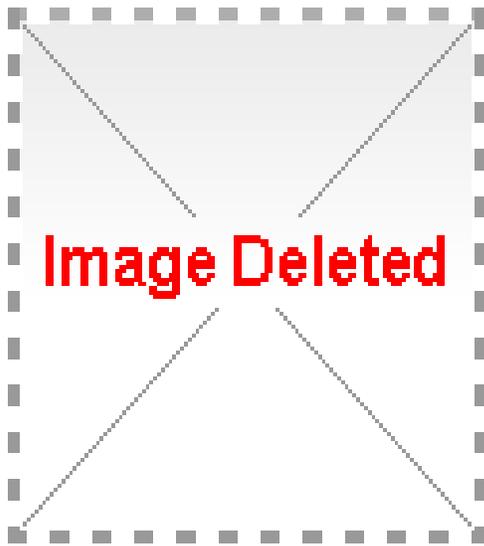


March 2015 Newsletter

Dear Deborah,



Dr. Walter Ziffer of Weaverville, NC remembers his liberation from [Gross Rosen](#), 70 years ago, like this:

"We were standing in the morning to go to work. We waited and waited. I looked up in the towers where the Germans had the machine guns and the lights and there was no one there. It did not register. Then suddenly the triple gates opened and the Commandant SS came in and had a big smile on his face. He walked up to the Kapo, to a German prisoner commandant, and said something. And then turned around and walked out of the gate. He took his key chain off his belt and threw it back into the camp. They had big keys to lock these big gates. We just stood there and didn't understand anything. We didn't know what was going on. Then there was a rumbling sound and it came closer and closer and it was a Russian tank. One tank drove into the fence and smashed it. By that time we were free. The tank never stopped. Still we stood there for another 1/2 hour or so and then the man next to me, an Austrian fellow, said "I think it is over. Let's go into town and get some food."

Dr. Ziffer was 18 years old and weighed 87 pounds.

70 years ago? I often remind myself, that talking with youth about something that happened 70 years ago is harder than talking to me about the Spanish American War given my birth year of 1953. Making it relevant through personal narratives and contemporary context is still the critical need.

The impact of the contemporary stories resonates through the generations. Most recently, [Miranda Richmond Mouillot](#), who grew up in

Asheville, wrote [The Fifty Year Silence](#) about her grandparents escape and imprisonment in Switzerland during the Holocaust along with her grandfather's service as an interpreter during the Nuremberg Trials. The story does not end with the witnesses and survivors but echoes through out the succeeding generations.

And still basic research and location of atrocities is taking place. Since 2004, [Father Patrick Desbois](#) has been traveling to Ukraine and the surrounding region to interview villagers who were children in the 1940's. Folks who are now in their 70's are taking him to the mass grave of their classmates and their families and describing what they remember. Heretofore, these were all undocumented mass executions conducted by the Nazi's as mobile killing squads.

In March, the UNC Asheville Center for Diversity Education will host the exhibit "In Her Father's Eyes" with complementary programming as part of the continuing effort to document and learn the lessons of the Shoah including a lecture by Dr. Mark Gibney, survivor testimony by Dr. Walter Ziffer, and archival music by Bandana Klezmer.

In this country, there are those that believe we should not teach about the ways we as Americans have fallen short of the principles of our Constitution and the Bill of Rights. On Tuesday, Feb. 24 [National Public Radio](#) reported on "The Great US History Battle" which involves challenges to Advanced Placement US History classes. "Georgia state Sen. William Ligon, an outspoken critic of the AP redesign, much preferred the old framework, which he says emphasized American exceptionalism. To him, the new course 'looks at America through the lens of race, gender and class identity' and doesn't pay enough attention to 'the things that unite us and set us apart from much of the rest of the world.'".

According to the report, citizens have until Feb. 28 to give their [feedback on what AP US History should or shouldn't include](#). I hope you will take the time to encourage The College Board to enable our high school students to know the full range of what does it mean to be a citizen of this country, as well as global citizen - warts and all.

Sincerely, Deborah Miles

In Her Father's Eyes: A Slovak Childhood in the Shadow of the Holocaust - March 2 - April 3

Thursday, March 5,

Opening Reception, 6:00 pm, Karpen Lobby

Opening Lecture, 7:00 pm, 038 Karpen, Dr. Mark Gibney

Did We Learn Anything?: Reflections of the Holocaust 70 years Later

The UNC Asheville Center for Diversity Education will host the traveling exhibit from Kennesaw State University ["In Her Father's Eyes Her Father's Eyes: A Slovak Childhood in the Shadow of the Holocaust"](#) in Karpen Lobby. This moving exhibit documents the short life of Kitty Weichherz, a Czechoslovakian girl born in the same year as Anne Frank. Kitty's father, Bella Weichherz, kept a detailed diary of Kitty's short life that offer a window into the everyday life of a child- birthday parties, the first day of school, a first boyfriend. Told through the loving eyes of her surviving father, Kitty's story paints a portrait of a young girl's innocence in the face of increasing anti-Jewish sentiment on the eve of World War II. The touching story of just one girl, one family, emphasizes the humanity of millions just like Kitty who were lost in this tragic war. Also on display will be [Choosing to Remember: From the Shoah to the Holocaust](#) which includes local stories of people from western North Carolina. **Choosing to Remember** (one of 11 exhibits that travel free of charge) is also available to travel to area schools.

In Her Father's Eyes exhibit is available for docented tours for small school groups (under 30 at a time).

(Teachers, all of [Kennesaw State University Holocaust Museum](#) exhibits are available to travel free of charge. Call now to bring one to your school including Rosie the Riveter and Tuskegee Airman).

Music of the Holocaust with Bandana Klezmer and Dr. Walter Ziffer

Wednesday, March 25, 7:00pm,
Highsmith Student Union Alumni Hall

Prior to the Holocaust, [Klezmer musicians](#) were an integral part of life in the shtetls of Eastern Europe. Sometimes termed "Jewish celebration

music" Klezmorum traveled from village to village to play at weddings. As many of the melodies were in the oral tradition and passed from one musician to the next, much was lost when the Klezmorum were murdered. [Bandana Klezmer](#) will share some tunes of the musicians that survived, including [German Goldenshteyn](#), and the revival that has taken place in the shadow of the Shoah.

Dr. Walter Ziffer will join Bandana to talk about the intertwining of Yiddish and Klezmer music in the life of Jews of Eastern Europe. As a 14 year old boy in Ceske Tesin Czech Republic, Dr. Ziffer was captured and imprisoned in a series of slave labor munitions camps. Dr. Ziffer will share his story of liberation by the Soviet Army from Gross Rosen and how he came to be reunited with his family.



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Teaching About Slavery and Developing an American Identity

With funding from UNC Asheville Key Center for Engaged Learning and the Education Department Teacher Recruitment Office, we are pleased to invite local educators in grades 6 - 12 for a professional development workshop:

Friday, March 27

8:00 - 3:00

Highsmith Student Union, UNC Asheville

This workshop will include both scholarship on slavery in WNC including the Buncombe County Slave Deeds as well as scholarship on how both white and black students incorporate this information into their sense of identity as citizens and residents of the United States. Scholars include

[Dr. Darin Waters on Slavery in WNC](#)

[Dr. LaGarret King on Teaching All Youth American History](#)

In addition, educators and students will be introduced to "Shared Annotation", "Beginning with the Compelling Question", and other strategies for taking it back to the classroom. Teachers will receive a certificate for .5 Renewal Credit. A few scholarships for sub pay are available.

This project was recently including in [Teaching Tolerance](#) magazine with an article by UNC Asheville professor Dr. Trey Adcock. The magazine is read by 450,000 educators across the US.

Resources for Anti Bias Education

Last week there was an excellent article in the [New York Times](#) about the responsibility of white youth to learn the skills of allies as a way to challenge discrimination and prejudice.

Recently an educator asked for resources of how to do that kind of systematic anti-bias education with elementary school students. Here are some excellent on line resources for k-12th grade:

The Anti-Defamation League has a good collection of lesson plans for k-12

under "Current Events"

These are timely topics including Ferguson and unconscious bias. They all have good learning objectives with vocabulary, etc.

Teaching Tolerance is another great resource. I strongly recommend that every teacher sign up to get their own personal magazine - that comes out free twice a year.

This is an overall frame work that could be instituted at each grade level - and gives an age appropriate idea for 5th grade.

These are specific lesson plans that can be sorted by grade level and subject.

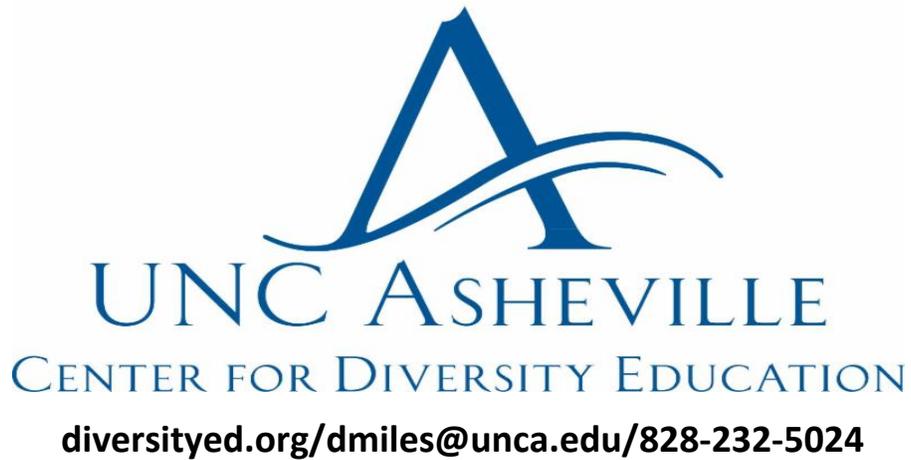
Additional resources include "beliefs assessments" that kind help or hinder an educators work with students of color and what neuroscience tells us about teacher relationships with students and their ability to absorb information.

Holocaust Teacher Education Symposium

Each year the Appalachian State University Center for Judaica, Holocaust and Peace Studies hosts a free week long symposium (50 hours for 5 full credits). Scholarships are also available for room and board. This year's symposium will take place July 11 - July 17, 2015.

Facing History and Ourselves Grants

Facing History and Ourselves has doubled the size of their [Margot Stern Innovation Grants](#) to \$6,000 for five winners. Deadline to Apply is March 20, 2015.



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Center for Diversity Education | 213 Highsmith Student Union | 1 University Heights, CPO 1200 | Asheville | NC | 28804