

Holocaust education as experiential encounters focused on human rights

Piotr Toczyski

To cite this article: Piotr Toczyski (2023) Holocaust education as experiential encounters focused on human rights, *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 10:2, 2286734, DOI: [10.1080/23311983.2023.2286734](https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2023.2286734)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2023.2286734>



© 2023 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.



Published online: 04 Dec 2023.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)



Received: 13 March 2023
Accepted: 17 November 2023

*Corresponding author: Piotr Toczyski,
Institute of Philosophy and Sociology,
Maria Grzegorzewska University,
Warsaw, Poland
E-mail: ptoczyski@aps.edu.pl

Reviewing editor:
Lincoln Geraghty, School of Media
and Performing Arts, University of
Portsmouth, United Kingdom

Additional information is available at
the end of the article

CULTURAL STUDIES | REVIEW ARTICLE

Holocaust education as experiential encounters focused on human rights

Piotr Toczyski^{1*}

Abstract: There were many debates and concepts of how to educate about the Holocaust. Scholars bring different perspectives and the experiential Holocaust education has been a prominent one for decades. Between opportunities and threats of Holocaust education, there are also concepts of psychoeducation, story-telling education and human rights education. Their review leads me to the conclusion of the need to design such workshops, meetings and dialogues, which can be deep and meaningful encounters, and at the same time psychologically safe. This review may be a good starting point for designing not only new forms of Holocaust education but also educational experiences connected to other difficult conflict transformations and to educational movements focused on deep emotional exchange and reconciliation.

Subjects: Multicultural Education; Drama Education & Drama Therapy; The Holocaust

Keywords: holocaust; encounter groups; dialogue groups; human rights; empathy

1. Introduction

Only a few years passed between the symbolic date of the liberation of Auschwitz extermination camp on 27 January 1945 and establishing the Drafting Committee for the international Bill of Human Rights in February 1947 (to become the Universal Declaration of Human Rights ratified on 10 December 1948). These two events in global history of the 1940s are reflected in two educational strands which overlap. The focus of this article is to show their connections in the current educational endeavors, namely to present an investigation of Holocaust education as an experiential learning activity focused on human rights. Educational programmes may be run in an experiential learning setting. This way they may bring the benefits of experiential learning and be more intensive and challenging for both educators and participants. Usually, participants in such programmes may expect less traditional classroom learning and more of an engaging and immersive experience. Such experience may facilitate deeper insights, such as finding and embodying humane connections between the lessons learned from the Holocaust history for the establishment and pursuit of the human rights culture.

Before asking whether experiential education is desired in the field of Holocaust education, I will briefly focus on the notion of Holocaust education. According to European Union's Fundamental Rights Agency, Holocaust education is understood as "education that takes the discrimination, persecution and extermination of the Jews by the National Socialist regime as its focus, but also includes Nazi crimes against other victim groups, both for the purpose of deeper understanding and contextualisation of the Holocaust and out of a desire to acknowledge and commemorate the

suffering of numerous non-Jewish victims of the Nazi era.” (European Commission, 2012). Whereas the Holocaust education may be defined more broadly by scholars and educators in United States and more narrowly in some European countries (e.g. Germany) and in Israel, the quasi-official pan-European definition is applicable to the research goal of exploring Holocaust education as an experiential learning activity.

And what is human rights education? The EU Fundamental Rights Agency in the same summary report connects the Holocaust education to human rights education understood in its broadest sense as “education, training and information aimed at building a universal culture of human rights, which not only provides knowledge about human rights and the mechanisms that protect them but also imparts the skills needed to promote, defend and apply human rights in daily life.” (European Commission, 2012). Such a relatively broad approach may be much more highlighted in the works of Western European and British scholars than in American academic scholarship. Similarly, human rights education and its connection to the Holocaust and human rights may be almost absent from some non-European scholarly cultures, even if the above mentioned definition of human rights education is in line with the World programme for Human Rights Education by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

Nonetheless, with such definitions, the overlap between Holocaust education and human rights education may be worth exploring in both the global educators’ universal narratives of tolerance, peaceful social coexistence, humanitarianism, on the one hand, and limited narratives referring to specific events of the Shoah on the other. I will review literature focused on Holocaust education and attempt at integrating different scholarly perspectives. My main focus will be non-formal experiential education. As early as in 2001, Mary J. Gallant and Harriet Hartman, while considering Holocaust education for the new millennium, referred to Holocaust education designed according to the principles of active learning (Gallant & Hartman, 2001). Carol Clyde, David A. Walker and Deborah L. Floyd value Holocaust education activities focused on reflection, so they see space for experiential learning in it (Clyde et al., 2005). However, as Felicitas Macgilchrist and Christophe (2011) remind, also within the context of experiential Holocaust education, “shock and revulsion is unlikely to constitute a worthwhile learning experience” (Macgilchrist & Christophe, 2011). Taking the above into consideration, “experiential learning bridges the gap between what is learned in a classroom and what is learned by doing” in the Holocaust education context; it can take place through the activities taking many forms and through the possible changes of focus with each programme (Clyde, 2010). Experiential learning, as Clyde writes, is an educational philosophy rather than teaching strategy, with the teachers providing for students opportunities resulting in interactions with “the environment, the subject matter, other students, and the instructor.” In the experiential Holocaust education participants learn “about the Shoah in a manner that cannot be created in a classroom setting or by merely reading texts” (Clyde, 2010). The challenge is to remember that while an idea of experiential education brings deep processes and opportunities, in designing experiential learning spaces and situations, the threats of such education should also be taken into consideration.

2. Methodological approach

Reading all literature on Holocaust education ever published would be a challenge. When Carrier et al. (2015) compiled the bibliography of works about the Holocaust education that had been published in many languages, until the time of their report publication it amounted to almost one thousand. So how and why the literature that was reviewed within the current article was chosen? My methodology is simple. Using search engines and databases of literature, I identified the convenience sample of articles, which most probably would refer to the Holocaust education in specific terms and theorems. I focused on the elements of existing literature that would presumably theorize educational situations as potentially leading the participants to deeper insights and understanding than just learning about factography. In terms of represented values, the selected literature refers to a rather immersive educational experience combined with personal or

interpersonal reflection on human rights, with a minimum of own studying declarative knowledge. Such focus leads to achieving the goal of advancing research and discussions within the field of Holocaust education around the benefits and limits of informal experiential Holocaust education.

As in the current article the “what” and “why” of Holocaust education is minimized and the “how” of Holocaust education is highlighted, the scope of research that is represented in the article is broad. In many different areas of study related to Holocaust education some remarks on the methods of how to teach about it have been included. Authors working from different perspectives suggested that the method is the message. Thus, the research reviewed within this article cuts across a number of educational settings such as: concentration camp memorial sites; other memorial sites; community spaces; schools; universities; other educational contexts. Such broad learning spaces reflect a number of topics: study trips to Poland (or within Poland in the case of Polish participants); active learning; storytelling. The national contexts are Poland, Germany, Israel and the United Kingdom. Learners are adults, young adults or youth. The human rights education context is either explicitly stated or implied within the attitudes of educators. Such a landscape of formal and non-formal Holocaust education, with the involvement of either non-governmental and civic society organizations or the official educational system, is worth further explorations of its own. It is beyond the scope of this review article to categorize the many educational institutions working in the field of Holocaust education locally and globally.

Despite providing a thorough review and analysis of the literature that explicitly engages with experiential Holocaust education, some aspects of Holocaust education are beyond the scope of this particular review. Even if not explicitly addressing or situated within experiential education, many works address experiential Holocaust education when belonging to the literature on memorial site pedagogy or interactive education around simulations. The most prominent strand of reflection on Holocaust education is the one focused on memorial sites pedagogy and the responses it generates. With many new empirical works from many detailed country contexts on several continents, it constitutes the sub-field of its own (see for instance: Ballis, 2022; Grimm & Bauer, 2018; Jaeger, 2023; Kuchler, 2021), which only in its German keyword (*Gedenkstättenpädagogik*) produced to date more than 700 studies which mention Holocaust. Studying these works alone could result in detailed classifications, comparisons and multi-directional conclusions. Most readers will also be aware of another emblematic debate: about Holocaust simulations in education, which remains open and non-conclusive, with continuously expressed sensitivity to the participants’ psychological safety. There are guidelines, and the search for education expert consensus is renewed in the international debate, between European, Israeli and American scholars (Adamson, 2023; Ben-Peretz, 2003; Cowan & Maitles, 2011; Fallace, 2007; Schweber, 2003; Totten, 2000). Most probably the effectiveness of simulation in terms of sensitive and psychologically safe reflection is dependent on the number of factors connected to the specific situation, especially the psychological and emotional field of the group, the group process and the participants selection or self-selection. These variables are currently difficult to describe, measure and quantify.

The aforementioned literature concerning on the one hand memorial site pedagogy and on the other educational simulations is excluded only for the reason of research economics. Scoping the current research within other strands allows focusing on the theorems, which also after the detailed examination of memorial site or simulation pedagogy could show the existence of the experiential learning concepts among others more prominent. As they are more significantly highlighted in other works, I decided to find the shorter and more confident route to highlight them. Instead of analytical classifications, I search for and deliver the synthesis of the under-emphasized theorems already existing in the literature on experiential Holocaust education. Such research design is not systematic in terms of the data collection process being used and method of analysis. The task of systematic review stays for the next scholarship advancing the suggested framework. Not attempting systematic review, this article has the characteristics of a mini-review, an essay and a reflection paper.

Located between them, it does not in detail develop or explore the new insights into methodological approaches. Even such limited study connects the dots and advances knowledge in the field of Holocaust education in terms of further directions worth exploration.

3. Holocaust education: between opportunities and threats

As simulations and memorial sites pedagogy are not necessarily the options for in-depth immersion and learning from cognitive-emotional experience. Ben-Peretz and Shachar (2012) write that “experience and emotions are especially significant in learning about traumatic historical events,” so the “experiential extracurricular activities (...) serve Holocaust education.” Despite the hope of “transformative impact on students, emphasizing historical understanding that is based on critical thinking and multiple perspectives” as well as emotional experiences related to national events being “powerful agents in shaping the identity of young people,” the risk is that such experiences “might detract [students] from their commitment to universal values, like the strive for peace and the resistance against racism.” Thus, “promoting universal and humanistic attitudes, and a personal commitment to moral values, have to be part of this transformational process” (Ben-Peretz & Shachar, 2012). Ben-Peretz and Shachar suggest that Carl Rogers’ ideas of significant learning combining “intellect and feeling, concept and experience” have to be cautiously applied within Holocaust education, because “teaching about the Holocaust demonstrates the strong effect of experiential and emotional learning opportunities in teaching history, accompanied by the danger of bypassing cognitive and critical mechanisms” (Ben-Peretz & Shachar, 2012).

The Holocaust education example mentioned by Ben-Peretz and Shachar as both promising and risky experiential approach is The Journey to Poland, having since 1988 credentials of the Israeli Ministry of Education as an elective extracurricular activity in Holocaust education. Nitza Davidovitch (2013) writes that throughout this trip pedagogy, education, cognition and emotions meet by “evening gatherings led by group instructors and by cognitive and emotional work on the events experienced during the day in conversations between students.” The staff are available to deal with what participants encounter and “to generate a transformation among them, by creating new insights.” Instilling values in learners is driven by nurturing their sensitivity and delivering tools for ethical considerations as well as creating meaningful experiences “from which learners can learn about the sensitivities of others.” Thus, “Holocaust studies and the trip to Poland in particular [are]an attempt to use experiential learning as a way of imparting ethical goals.” (Davidovitch, 2013). Although emotional responses in Holocaust education reach full potential “only with appropriate preparatory activities and meaningful concluding activities,” there is some research suggesting that “the trip does not change one’s perception of the Holocaust” – “it adds an experiential dimension, but with no transformation!” (Davidovitch, 2013).

On the other hand, case studies of teaching about the Holocaust on primary and secondary level, as Cowan and Maitles (2007) write, show Holocaust education as a factor contributing “to pupils’ citizenship values in a positive way,” although only in short-term perspective. Thus, both the “immediate and longer term effects of Holocaust education on pupils’ values and attitudes” should be researched (Cowan & Maitles, 2007). However, from Michał Bilewicz, Marta Witkowska and their co-authors’ work we know that “current forms of Holocaust education in Polish and German school programmes are, in fact, not effective in eradicating antisemitism and making students more tolerant.” They name school education “inappropriate,” immersed in governments’ defensiveness and affected by “psychological processes involved in learning about negative history of one’s national group” such as German perpetratorship or Polish passive bystandership. The latter work contains both up-to-date diagnosis and recommendations, on which we would like to focus in a little bit more detail. The authors write that “people can use the whole system of emotion regulation in order to downregulate negative emotions resulting from such confrontations with history,” among which one can mention contact avoidance, national history detachment, questioning textbooks or historians, engaging in victimhood competition with Jews or even conspiracy theorizing engagement (Bilewicz et al., 2017).

Thus, when national identities, national-level emotions and national-level responsibilities are in the process, the desired educational effect becomes more difficult to achieve. On the other hand, empathy-based experiential education in memorial sites, during site visits such as to the Auschwitz Museum, “has to be carefully prepared by the teacher or facilitator working with the students intensively prior to a visit in a memorial site” as it may even lead to secondary post-traumatic stress disorder syndrome related to the visit, even despite the overall attitude improvement towards victims of the Holocaust (Bilewicz et al., 2017). The dilemmas resulting from the above mentioned mechanisms are whether in order to achieve attitude change educators should attempt at inducing feelings such as guilt or shame, inducing empathy, or not overburdening their learners emotionally. Considering these options, the authors suggest three alternative educational strategies: firstly, well-prepared empathic education; secondly, use of heroic helpers’ narratives free from simplifications, not ignoring aggression or passivity of others; thirdly, inclusion of victims into the common local identity through acknowledging the losses in the local Jewish population. In conclusion, they also mention an experiential aspect of Holocaust education:

“Holocaust education is often considered not only a part of historical education, but also an important experience that could prevent future crimes, cruelty and conflicts. The success of such endeavour lies in the ability of educators to utilize the psychological knowledge in their teaching about the Holocaust, in order to better understand potential obstacles and being able to overcome them”. (Bilewicz et al., 2017)

The above evidence-based suggestion can be applied not only in the formal but also in the informal settings. Jolanta Ambrosewicz-Jacobs and Robert Szuchta show that the contents of new history textbooks published after 2008 in Poland do not reflect the research on Holocaust state-of-the-art. They warn that “in many European countries, disparities have grown between history and the memory of the Holocaust,” and the “debates on Polish—Jewish relations during the Holocaust and empirical studies in the field of education reveal that there is a gap between research and education” (Ambrosewicz-Jacobs & Szuchta, 2014). As we already know from the already classical essay of Theodor W. Adorno (1966), there is a constant need for informal education. Adorno wrote about education after Auschwitz that “the only education that has any sense at all is an education toward critical self-reflection.” Among the goals of education, he saw “debarbarization” preceded by a study of the conscious and unconscious of the rural population which he would like to see debarbarized. Adorno imagined mobile groups of educators or even convoys of volunteers undertaking discussions and leading courses around the country, apart from the formal educational settings.

4. From psychoeducation and storytelling to human rights education

Reexamining and broadening the study of immersive Holocaust education offer valuable chances to analyze and more effectively express the objectives and more complete potential of Holocaust education, alongside significant connections to human rights education. Connecting at least three approaches may be beneficial for further inquiries of Holocaust education, namely: psychoeducation, in-depth storytelling and retelling, and finally human rights education. It is worth checking, if combining them may optimize potentials and limits of experiential Holocaust education.

4.1. Psychoeducation and retelling of the stories

Holocaust education extended beyond learning factography is usually a psychologically moving process. Thus, the question arises: what about the psychoeducation related to the Holocaust education? In European societies such as those of Poland, Ukraine or Germany, the next-generations-descendants of victims, victimizers, bystanders, and less numerous true heroes live next to each other. In the context of informal Holocaust education Kathy Livingston (2010) writes that the second generations of perpetrators may experience secrecy, anger, and shame caused by their knowledge of their parents’ involvement in the Holocaust. In the past even psychotherapists happened to reject these clients’ need to mourn. Similarly, the children of those uninvolved—of neither non-victims nor non-victimizers nor bystanders—may experience silencing whenever they ask questions

about parents' role during the Holocaust. This may contribute to their lifelong sense of emptiness and chronic loneliness with unexpressed anger, sadness, confusion, guilt, or hope. The acts of listening to the stories and struggles of others may be helpful. Kathy Livingston mentions dialogue groups facilitated by trained therapists, bringing together Holocaust victims and descendants of victimizers, focused not only on telling stories but enabling the mourning of grief through...

“... descendants reaching out to their siblings or other relatives to learn more about their family history; approaching their parents and grandparents to broach the subject of previously taboo topics; attempting to improve communication with their own children and becoming more available to them; answering their childrens' questions about ancestors' involvement in the Holocaust; starting a support group for survivors in their own countries; and becoming involved in Holocaust education opportunities”. (Livingston, 2010)

Similarly, Florence W. Kaslow (2008) describes the 12-year dialogue group of descendants of Holocaust perpetrators, victims, and liberators held within family therapy context, “hopefully with members having derived both new perceptions of the ‘other’ and some deep and lasting healing through personal reexperiencing of the Holocaust having been incorporated and integrated differently into their lives.” (Kaslow, 2008). Psychoeducation may take the form of developing the stories, usually ones related to family or group (local, regional, national, supranational) stories (histories, herstories). Schell-Faucon (2001) examined the frameworks for storytelling and remembrance education work. She focused on educational work, using storytelling for conflict transformation and telling the stories of “lives and communities apart from dominant discourses” in non-formal cultural and educational initiatives (Schell-Faucon, 2001).

Telling family stories and compiling local history can take place in various informal and formal settings both in youth and adult education. Such acts of collective remembrance through facilitation and even community mediation may result in endeavors such as memorials dedicated to victims, but it is also inducing “feelings of unease and resistance (...) then passed onto the younger generations.” In order to deliver the well designed remembrance project either in encounter group and community centre setting, one needs to take care of factors such as: safe space, overcoming the barriers, non-violating personal boundaries, including the gender-related ones, seeing context-related opportunities for remembrance and continuity in the present, balancing power asymmetries (Schell-Faucon, 2001).

4.2. Human rights education and the context of holocaust education

Monique Eckmann (2010) would like to see more sponsored “experimental projects and research studies, in order to develop new pedagogical concepts and materials, as we do not know enough about the methods and outcomes of joint learning Holocaust education as human rights education.” From the Swiss perspective, “more and more educators, especially in the upper grades, tend to teach [Holocaust education] within the context of comparing genocides, or within the context of topics like racism, totalitarianism, and colonialism.” However, for Eckmann, the interconnection of Holocaust education and human rights education is “particularly promising when it is used to address adult target groups, such as policemen, social workers, and medical staff, in their professional training or in service training.” She asserts that Holocaust education should not be limited to “formal or school education,” but it “should address informal education as well, including municipal or community initiatives, community work, and neighbourhood initiatives.” She pays attention to the focus of teaching on Holocaust:

“Each teaching module, each project or programme dealing with the Holocaust, each memorial place or museum, has a specific potential and deals in a specific way with a specific combination of these three dimensions: closer or more distant to history, to commemoration, or to HRE, according to its specific context. But no educational approach can fully address all three of them at once, so teachers must make some choices”. (Eckmann, 2010)

There are three interconnections of Holocaust education and human rights education, which should be distinguished. The first is focused on “learning about, knowing, understanding, and valuing.” As Eckmann (2010) writes, “Holocaust education also helps students see the need to protect human rights. A limitation here is that all these topics can only be touched upon within Holocaust education. It is often difficult to delve into them more deeply within the timeframe available to teach about the Holocaust or while visiting a memorial.” The second is “learning for,” with “the emphasis (...) on respect, responsibility, and solidarity,” which requires “attitude of dignity and solidarity,” and leads to “recognizing human rights violations, and learning to protect and reestablish these rights” as well as “knowing about one’s own rights; as part of knowing about, respecting, and defending the rights of others.” However, Holocaust Education is not an opportunity “to experiment with the various competencies required for action and intervention, such as lobbying or advocacy.” Thirdly, “learning with (or within) the framework of human rights” is a learning process taking place in “learning conditions that must be framed by human rights considerations.” The important part of such a learning process is that it “must be coherent, connecting the content and the pedagogical methods of the process to the students’ learning situation” and “pedagogically, this requires that teachers use active methods such as learning by experience and peer education,” at the same time guaranteeing “respect for human rights and for the rights of the child as a frame for learning, for all children or students.” Within the framework of Holocaust education for human rights, the human rights attitudes are included in learning systems, settings are adjusted for active learning, and the general pedagogical approach is democratic, with strong emphasis on peer education as a basic tool. Given the three above modes of Holocaust and human rights teaching, “even if it seems difficult to really learn for humans in the context of Holocaust education, it is nevertheless crucial to learn a few things about human rights and learn within a framework of human rights.” Monique Eckmann writes:

“These pedagogical approaches must give students the space to deal with their personal or family experiences with rights and discrimination. Building on personal experiences is a powerful motivation for learning, whether those are personal experiences of discrimination, or experiences of witnessing discrimination against others. Such incidents and experiences often emerge during lessons about the Holocaust, or while visiting a memorial or watching a movie about it, and they enable students to establish links between past and present kinds of discrimination”. (Eckmann, 2010)

The above concept of learning within a framework of human rights is in line with what Geert Franzenburg (2017) names sustainable adult education. Such education may be informal learning in “a situation and learner oriented way,” combining “individual and collective experiences in a contextual way, in order to develop empathy for traumatic experiences,” intercultural and focused on human dignity, contextually adjusted, aiming at understanding “the political, historical and economic backgrounds of regionally observed situations.” It integratively combines tradition and innovation, drawing “benefits from encounters between very different approaches, attitudes or belief systems” and combining “the conscious and unconscious sphere of personality in a holistic way, in order to become aware of emotions, stereotypes, visions, fears, traumatic and resource oriented experiences, and to integrate them into a multidimensional approach (including intercultural and intergenerational learning).”

In educational practice, the three above mentioned sections may be interconnected. The presence of a psychologist, counselor, crisis interventionist or psychotherapist may bring psychoeducation to the same workshops, to which an educator focused on creative writing or journalism brings the perspective of storytelling, and the human rights educator the HRE perspective. In fact, educational goals may often not be clearly stated in advance and educators may just follow the group and the process. Such an approach may be a desirable way of dealing with possible criticisms of Holocaust education, such as moral pressure embedded in it or overpowering of the participants.

5. Concluding remarks: towards integrative approach to Holocaust education

There is a place in Holocaust education for the application of active learning concepts. There are interconnections between Holocaust education and human rights education. The other side of the coin, consequently, is the context of such topics as racism, totalitarianism and colonialism. Knowledge of the participation and role of ancestors in the Holocaust can be found in informal cultural and educational initiatives with creative conflict transformation and storytelling outside dominant discourses. Telling family stories and creating local history can take place in informal as well as highly formal settings. Holocaust education processes bring generations together, with descendants of victims, persecutors, bystanders and a few heroic rescuers living side by side. Holocaust education activities can also be simultaneously oriented toward reflection, along the lines of experiential learning, that is, in ways not achieved in the classroom and not achieved by simply reading texts. Pedagogy can meet cognitive-emotional education, and the methods for this can be workshops, meetings and dialogues. Informal conversations among participants between activities provided for in the program will play an important role in such a process. What is important in Holocaust education is the place for creating meaningful experiences and learning situations aimed at building one's own sensitivity and learning about the sensitivity of others, building civic values and creating spaces for encounters between different national identities. After all, an important aspect is building such an exchange and educational space that does not emotionally overload participants, students and educators.

I intended the current article to importantly contribute to an insufficiently explored and theorized aspect of Holocaust education. Even such a limited review may be beneficial for researchers and individuals working in the domains of Holocaust and genocide education, as well as those involved in human rights education and related fields. However, it is important to stress that this review is not complete without more quantification, even if automated, in meta-analytical works. Such attempts should follow, given the vast number of works in Holocaust education already published across societies and cultures.

The further reviews of literature on Holocaust education may help to expand the current literature review in several directions. They may refer to the literature which directly or indirectly addresses the topic of experiential Holocaust education, even if in most cases it will not use the term experiential education. The other direction is searching for literature focused on emotions in teaching and learning within the context of Holocaust education. Finally, the human rights scholarly literature referring Holocaust may be fruitful for understanding the many options of current and future possible curricula. Which, in fact, may even be named the curricula of humanity. I suggest even integrating several directions simultaneously in future works, with the aims of studying and reinventing Holocaust education in ways that acknowledge more perspectives to teach and sensitize participants in deepened educational processes around the Holocaust. It may be assumed that method is the message, when psychoeducation with embedded storytelling activities contributes to developing human rights culture in group settings.

Acknowledgments

I am grateful to the journal anonymous reviewers for their valuable remarks, which allowed me to ground the current work more awarely. The scope of this work also owes to my teachers, inspiring facilitators and collaborators in non-formal educational endeavors since the 1990s, mostly within the framework of EU-funded projects focused on human rights education (i.a. Polis, United, Kreisau).

Author details

Piotr Toczyski¹
E-mail: ptoczyski@aps.edu.pl
ORCID ID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-1218-5623>
¹ Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Maria Grzegorzewska University, Warsaw, Poland.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

Citation information

Cite this article as: Holocaust education as experiential encounters focused on human rights, Piotr Toczyski, *Cogent Arts & Humanities* (2023), 10: 2286734.

References

- Adamson, D. (2023). From theory to praxis in genocide education: To what extent are IHRA guidelines reflected in the opinions and classroom experiences of independent-school educators? *Holocaust Studies*, 29(2), 197–222. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17504902.2022.2058726>
- Adorno, T. W. (1966). Education After Auschwitz (working document), <https://josswinn.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/AdornoEducation.pdf>
- Ambrosewicz-Jacobs, J., & Szuchta, R. (2014). The intricacies of education about the Holocaust in Poland. Ten years after the Jedwabne debate, what can Polish school students learn about the Holocaust in

- history classes? *Intercultural Education*, 25(4), 283–299. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14675986.2014.926156>
- Ballis, A. (Ed.), (2022). *Tour Guiding at memorial sites and Holocaust museums: Empirical studies in Europe, Israel, North America and South Africa*. Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden. <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-658-35818-1>
- Ben-Peretz, M. (2003). Identifying with horror: Teaching about the Holocaust—A response to Simone Schweber's "simulating survival". *Curriculum Inquiry*, 33(2), 189–198. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-873X.00256>
- Ben-Peretz, M., & Shachar, M. (2012). The role of experiential learning in Holocaust education. *Social and Education History*, 1(1), 5–27. <https://doi.org/10.4471/hse.2012.01>
- Bilewicz, M., Witkowska, M., Stubig, S., Beneda, M., & Imhoff, R. (2017). How to teach about the Holocaust? In C. Psaltis, M. Carretero, & S. Čehajić-Clancy (Eds.), *Psychological obstacles in historical education in Poland and Germany. History education and conflict transformation* (pp. 169–197). Palgrave Macmillan. <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-319-54681-0>
- Carrier, P., Fuchs, E., & Messinger, T. (2015). *The international status of education about the Holocaust: A global mapping of textbooks and curricula*. UNESCO Publishing.
- Clyde, C. (2010). Developing civic leaders through an experiential learning programme for Holocaust education. *Prospects*, 40(2), 289–306. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11125-010-9150-x>
- Clyde, C., Walker, D. A., & Floyd, D. L. (2005). An experiential learning program for Holocaust education. *NASPA Journal*, 42(3), 326–341. <https://doi.org/10.2202/1949-6605.1511>
- Cowan, P., & Maitles, H. (2007). Does addressing prejudice and discrimination through Holocaust education produce better citizens? *Educational Review*, 59(2), 115–130. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131910701254858>
- Cowan, P., & Maitles, H. (2011). Teaching the Holocaust: To simulate or not? *Race Equality Teaching*, 29(3), 46–47. <https://doi.org/10.18546/RET.29.2.12>
- Davidovitch, N. (2013). Experiential Holocaust education – what are the options? *Studia Europaea Gnesnensia*, 8, 29–54. <https://pressto.amu.edu.pl/index.php/seg/article/view/2466>
- Eckmann, M. (2010). Exploring the relevance of Holocaust education for human rights education. *Prospects*, 40(1), 7–16. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11125-010-9140-z>
- European Commission. (2012). *Discover the past for the future: The role of historical sites and museums in Holocaust education and human rights education in the EU: Summary report*. Publications Office of the European Union.
- Fallace, T. D. (2007). Playing Holocaust: The origins of the gestapo simulation game. *Teachers College Record*, 109(12), 2642–2665. <https://doi.org/10.1177/016146810710901203>
- Franzenburg, G. (2017). Learning from the past for the future: How to make adult education sustainable. *Discourse and Communication for Sustainable Education*, 8(2), 57–65. <https://doi.org/10.1515/dcse-2017-0015>
- Gallant, M. J., & Hartman, H. (2001). Holocaust education for the new millennium: Assessing our progress. *The Journal of Holocaust Education*, 10(2), 1–28. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17504902.2001.11087125>
- Grimm, M., & Bauer, U. (2018). Challenges of human rights education at concentration camp memorials: An explorative empirical study. In N. A. Dellal & W. Stankowski (Eds.), *Education and human rights. Lambert* (pp. 1–13). Lambert Academic Publishing LAP. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/336349604_AKPINAR_DELLAL_Nevide_STANKOWSKI_Witold_2018_Edt_Education_and_Human_Rights_November_Book_of_International_Scientific_Research_November_Lambert_Academic_Publishing_LAP_Dusseldorf_Germany_p_508_ISBN_97
- Jaeger, S. (2023). Visitor emotions, experientiality, Holocaust, and human rights: TripAdvisor responses to the Topography of Terror (Berlin) and the Kazerne Dossin (mechelen). In I. P. Diana (Ed.), *Visitor experience at holocaust memorials and museums* (pp. 31–45). Routledge.
- Kaslow, F. W. (2008). Dialogue groups between descendants of holocaust perpetrators, victims, and a liberator: A retrospective account. *Journal of Family Psychotherapy*, 19(3), 205–241. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08975350802269202>
- Kuchler, C. (2021). *Lernort Auschwitz. Geschichte und Rezeption schulischer Gedenkstättenfahrten 1980–2019*. Wallstein Verlag.
- Livingston, K. (2010). Opportunities for mourning when grief is disenfranchised: Descendants of Nazi perpetrators in dialogue with Holocaust survivors. *OMEGA—Journal of Death and Dying*, 61(3), 205–222. <https://doi.org/10.2190/OM.61.3.c>
- Macgilchrist, F., & Christophe, B. (2011). Translating globalization theories into educational research: Thoughts on recent shifts in Holocaust education. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 32(1), 145–158. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2011.537080>
- Schell-Faucon, S. (2001). *Conflict transformation through educational and youth programmes*. Berghof Research Centre for Constructive Conflict Management.
- Schweber, S. A. (2003). Simulating survival. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 33(2), 139–188. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-873X.00255>
- Totten, S. (2000). Diminishing the complexity and horror of the Holocaust. Using simulations in an attempt to convey historical experience. *Social Education*, 64(3), 165–171.