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To Resist or To Collaborate?

A Look at Children's Holocaust Literature and Its Historical Connections

By
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ST. CATHERINE UNIVERSITY SENIOR HONORS PROJECT

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“Holocaust literature for children can be conceived as having greater moral obligation to be historically accurate than historical fiction dealing with less catastrophic events.”¹

A ten year old girl delights in remembering what life was like before the war, when items such as shoes and cupcakes with pink frosting were readily available. Another girl is tired of remembering; but, when circumstances land her in dire straits, remembering ultimately could save her life. Death uses his memories of yet another young girl to tell the story of her life in Nazi Germany. A young man is told by his mentor that to overcome the evil plaguing his world, he must always remember who he is. All these characters belong to historical children's literature that has ties to one of the most horrific events in modern history: the rise of Nazi Germany and the mass genocide that is known today as the Holocaust. The memories and experiences of these characters are used to help impart the memory of the Holocaust and the Third Reich as a way to teach children about the events that occurred in Europe during the mid-twentieth century.

Historical fiction is a genre that uses historical figures or events to portray a time period through a fictional story. Some stories may use fictional characters placed in a historical event, while others may use historical figures to reflect the conditions of the time period. While this is a common way of representing history, authors do have the liberty to take creative leaps. The result of this is that historical accuracy may be lost. This concept is generally accepted by readers because it conveys historical ideas in an accessible manner. Despite historical inaccuracies, the overall tone of the novel allows readers to accept it as representation of

¹ Lydia Kokkola, *Representing the Holocaust in Children's Literature* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 3.

historical ideas. In a general fiction novel, with no claims to be historically accurate, the standard of historical accuracy is much lower; interpretations of history are much more abstract and creative than would typically be seen in historical novels. However, history, as a whole, is a series of interpretations of the facts: the facts providing detail as to what happened, and the interpretation being how the historian and the reader understand what happened.² In history books, ideally, the need to be historically accurate is of the utmost importance. Historians rely on historical facts to create their own interpretation of historical events; this leads to their work being completely immersed in historical evidence. A good history novel takes both the accepted historiography and creative writing to convey the story in a historically accurate fashion. Historical fiction has to be both “good history” and “good literature” in order for it to accurately convey the context of the time period the novel describes.³

When children’s Holocaust literature is written, its purpose is to remember the Holocaust. However, as an author of Holocaust fiction, the author has an enormous task to complete, because writing fiction about the Holocaust gives the him or her two incredibly important obligations. First, the author must be well-versed in history in order to truthfully convey the events that occurred to demonstrate that the Holocaust was an actual historical event. The second obligation an author faces when writing fiction about the Holocaust and Nazi Germany is a moral one. Authors of Holocaust fiction are morally obligated to educate children about why these events happened because it is their readers’ generations who will continue to preserve the memory of the Holocaust. When those who actually did live through the Holocaust and Third Reich have passed on, it is up to younger generations to continue the legacy these events have left. When a Holocaust novel is written for children, while the fictional story is there for creative

² Kokkola, *Representing the Holocaust in Children’s Literature*, 49.

³ *Ibid.*, 47.

purposes, it is especially important to impress upon youth the significance of the Holocaust and the effects that it had on the world. The significance of the event in question, in this case the Holocaust, will assist a child's understanding of such a horrific time in history. Literature is a method of teaching, that when used correctly, can educate youth of the horrors of the catastrophic events in the 1940s and the reverberating effects it has had on the world, as well as give incentive to help prevent future events like it from happening.

Today, preserving the memory of the Holocaust and Nazi Germany is of the utmost importance. As it has been over sixty-five years since the events of the 1940s, many of the people who lived during the time period have begun to pass away. This leads to the question, how do we as non-witnesses attempt to preserve the memory of such tragic events so that they can be prevented in the future? Is it through non-fiction? Can it be done completely through education? Does fiction have a place in such a horrible subject? Preservation of memories is a subject that is especially controversial amongst Holocaust survivors, for some think that using fictional means to tell the story of the Holocaust is disrespectful to the memory of those who perished, while others think it is memorializing the dead. In *Representing the Holocaust in Children's Literature*, Lydia Kokkola states that there are three categories that arguments for Holocaust writing fall into: silence, nonfiction, and literature.⁴ Those who argue for silence say that complete silence about the Holocaust is the most "appropriate response" because the horrors were too great to put into words.⁵ It is also argued for because it is felt to be the most respectful way to honor those who perished. However, the argument for non-fiction disagrees with that. Those who argue non-fiction say that because of the historical horrors, only facts and eyewitness accounts should be used to create works of nonfiction, such as textbooks and non-fiction

⁴ Kokkola, *Representing the Holocaust in Children's Literature*, 16.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 16.

narratives that describe the Holocaust.⁶ This is because it is believed that an “artistic” rendition of the events of 1943-1945 is also disrespectful to the dead; only through fact and narrative can such an ordeal be told.⁷ Finally, some argue that the use of fiction to convey the story is the most compelling way to convey what happened to non-witnesses.⁸ This is because it is easier for a person, especially a child, to connect to a character in a novel or story through images, words, and imagination, rather than excessive facts. It is for this reason that this paper focuses on the use of literature to help educate about the Holocaust, specifically children’s literature.

Children’s literature with a plot grounded in a very dark part of history such as the Holocaust has to contain an element of encouragement that things will get better for the characters; there has to be a resolution.⁹ This does not necessarily mean that a novel has to have a happy ending; at the very least, however, it does need a message of hope.¹⁰ In Holocaust novels, it is easy to lose the hopeful message amongst the death and destruction. Authors who choose to write about this subject toy with a fine line. While it is important to educate about the Holocaust, there are many graphic actions, ideas, and images that are seemingly unfit for children. For example, Samuel Totten, a professor of curriculum studies, and Stephan Feinberg, Director of National Outreach in the Education Division of the United States Holocaust Museum, in their book, *Teaching and Studying the Holocaust*, suggest that teachers who use literary works as a teaching accompaniment on the Holocaust do not overwhelm students with graphic and “horrifying images, scenes, incidents, and events” from the time period.¹¹ However, at the same time, the significance of the Holocaust must be shown, without romanticizing the Holocaust in

⁶ Kokkola, *Representing the Holocaust in Children’s Literature*, 22.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁹ Virginia A. Walter and Susan F. March, “Juvenile Picture Books About the Holocaust: Extending the Definitions of Children’s Literature,” *Publishing Research Quarterly* 9, no. 3 (Fall 1993): NA, *MLA International Bibliography*.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, NA.

¹¹ Samuel Totten and Stephan Feinberg, *Teaching and Studying the Holocaust* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2001), 163.

anyway.¹² They suggested that when a child reads a Holocaust novel, it is important to discuss the novel with the child.¹³ Talking about the novel and the event that it is based on will also help to give a greater depth to the preservation of the memory of the Holocaust and why that is important. After discussing a Holocaust story with a child, then it is important to back up the information in the books with historical knowledge and background.

The historical perspectives this paper will be using to examine children's holocaust literature are the ideas of resistance and collaboration. The resistance theme contributes to the overall idea that children's holocaust literature must have an element of hope. Resistance becomes that element of hope that the character will overcome the adversity that they face in the novel. However, when studying resistance, the theme of collaboration, or why people went along with the Nazi regime, must also be explored. To know why resistance against the Nazi regime was warranted, the collaborative efforts of those who supported the Nazi regime must be understood as well. Essentially, it is hard to understand one theme without the other. It is through these perspectives that four children's novels will be analyzed for their historical accuracy.

For the purpose of this paper, four books have been chosen for analysis: *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry, *The Devil's Arithmetic* by Jane Yolen, *The Book Thief* by Marcus Zusak, and *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* by J.K. Rowling. Both *Number the Stars* and *The Devil's Arithmetic* were chosen for analysis because they are both books which deal exclusively with the Holocaust. They are also commonly found in primary school curriculums, classrooms, and libraries; both were published in the late 1980s, written simultaneously. *The Book Thief* and

¹²Totten and Feinberg, *Teaching and Studying the Holocaust*, 163.

¹³Walter and March, "Juvenile Picture Books About the Holocaust: Extending the Definitions of Children's Literature," NA.

Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows are more novels regarding life under the control of Nazi Germany. These two were picked for analysis because they are newer books, both having been published since 2005; both are popular, but not necessarily a common teaching tool. All four books will be analyzed for their historical accuracy through how each present resistance and collaboration.

Number the Stars will be analyzed specifically for the theme of resistance. Set during an actual event, the book's characters demonstrate resistance against the invading Nazi Army in Denmark in 1943. The novel is very black-and-white when it comes to the characters; the protagonists and antagonists are clearly delineated, making the "good" characters very much opposite of the "bad" characters. While *Number the Stars* is used for looking at resistance, the theme of collaboration will be examined in the novel *The Devil's Arithmetic*. While the main focus of the novel are Jewish prisoners who have been relocated to a fictional death camp, instances of collaboration with the enemy occur often throughout the novel, from both German soldiers as well as those living in the camp. Again, the novel's opposing forces are collaborators which creates black and white image of resistance and collaboration. Both novels are very basic introductions to the events of the Holocaust during the Second World War, and to themes of resistance and collaboration.

The young adult novels, *The Book Thief* and *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, consider both resistance and collaboration. These novels are set between the two extremes of resistance and collaboration, in a gray area where the two are not always clearly defined. Both resistance and collaboration are committed by different characters; at times, both are being committed simultaneously by the same character. Instead of a basic understanding of the time period as the other books give, it gives a complex, interweaving tale using the more intricate

details found in the history books. *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* by J.K. Rowling is a representation of a Nazi-like government interwoven with resistance and collaboration themes. The parallels between the reigns of Voldemort and Hitler are striking. While not a historical novel, it the feeling of good vs. evil that compares *Deathly Hallows* to the Nazi regime. It is a fantastical look at the events during the 1940s, which is a way of viewing how literature today has been influenced by historical events that happened over sixty-five years ago.

Each of these four novels will be analyzed for how each present resistance and collaboration. The presentation of resistance and collaboration themes will then be analyzed for its historical value as an instrument of teaching children about Nazi Germany and the Holocaust. I argue that in a children's novel the age old struggle of good vs. evil is played out using resistance and collaboration themes. However, the historical backgrounds of resistance and collaboration are not clearly defined at all, while in the novels, it can take a black and white approach to the subject, leaving out vital historical information which could ultimately give a child the wrong impression regarding the events of the Holocaust.

What is Resistance?

The term resistance brings to mind practices of good Germans who hid Jews or died as political prisoners who stood up for their beliefs, but historians give a slightly different version of what resistance meant during the Nazi regime by expanding the overall picture of resistance to include several variations of what resistance looked like. A general consensus of the term "resistance," as applied to the Second World War, is generally agreed upon as "unco-ordinated groups which tried by multifarious means to undermine control by the German occupying

forces.”¹⁴ This means that historians generally define resistance as groups of people with few connections who essentially attempted to undermine the Nazi regime during the 1930s and 1940s. However, this definition can be broken down into several definitions of the word, which vary depending on the historian. Conservative historians generally say that resistance was a means of bringing back conservative politics to the Germany government, meaning returning to the government to its previous state before the Nazis took over.¹⁵ More liberal historians have defined resistance as defiance within the socially lower classes in the Third Reich, where resistance began due to promises that were not met by the government.¹⁶ Ultimately, some people resisted the Nazis, yet they still supported the murder of innocents. Still others resisted because they disagreed with the ethnic cleansing that was occurring.

As the previous paragraph shows, resistance was quite messy and because of that, there were many different ways to resist. According to Martin Broszat, resistance generally meant the “effective warding off” and “delimitation” of the National Socialist regime, regardless of background and motive for taking on the Nazi party.¹⁷ There were many different manifestations of defiance throughout European society. Men and women opposed the National Socialist Party for political reasons, religious reasons, and moral reasons.¹⁸ Political resisters did not agree with the policies set by the Nazi party, while religious reasons for resisting varied based on the denomination. People also resisted for moral reasons, though, these people were generally thought of as self-serving because they did it to save their own souls. In his article “The

¹⁴ Jill Stephanson, “Review Article: Resistance and the Third Reich Under the Shadow of the Swastika. The Moral Dilemmas of Resistance and Collaboration in Hitler’s Europe by Rab Bennett; On the Road to the Wolf’s Lair. German Resistance to Hitler by Theodore S. Hamerow; The Third Reich. The Essential Readings by Christian Leitz; Resisting the Holocaust by Ruby Rohrlich,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 36, no.3 (July 2001): 507, *JSTOR*.

¹⁵ Neil Gregor, *Nazism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 238.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 238.

¹⁷ Martin Broszat, “Resistenz and Resistance,” in *Nazism*, ed. Neil Gregor (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 241.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 242.

Holocaust as a Literary Experience” Henryk Grynberg states, with particular emphasis on those who rescued Jews, that some resisted because it was a moral obligation to do so, and it would save a person’s “dignity” to defy the administration.¹⁹ Whatever the reason for defiance, undermining Nazi authority was vital and has caused many discussions about what it meant to resist in historical circles today.

There are two arenas which resistance took place in; at home in Germany, and in the occupied countries. Resistance on the home front generally had to be done in secret, for many feared being turned into the SS should they be caught denouncing the Nazi party. Men and women who chose to resist the Nazis had various methods of defiance available to them. One of the most obvious methods was to hide Jewish people but this was not always the case. Acts of defiance could also be accomplished by putting up and handing out pamphlets which condemned the government, not saying “Heil Hitler” in public, buying goods from Jewish markets after *Kristallnacht*, or not sending children to Hitler Youth organizations. The oral history book, *What We Knew: Terror, Mass Murder, and Everyday Life in Nazi Germany* by Eric A. Johnson and Karl-Heinz Reuband give several first-hand accounts of what resistance looked like on the home front. One woman, Gertrude Sombart, mentioned that even listening to “enemy radio” was considered to be resistance; to listen, one had to “set the volume really low” and “cover it with something” so that neighbors and people passing the house could not hear it.²⁰ Another example of resistance on the home front, was from Marta Hessler, whose whole family disagreed with Nazi politics, watched as her brother was branded “a communist” because he was “left wing politically” and did not agree with the party, and was eventually accused and arrested for

¹⁹ Henryk Grynberg, “The Holocaust as a Literary Experience,” *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum: Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies*, Last modified May 12 2004, 8, <http://www.ushmm.org/research/center/publications/occasional/2004-08/paper.pdf>

²⁰ Eric A. Johnson and Karl-Heinz Reuband, *What We Knew: Terror, Mass Murder, and Everyday Life in Nazi Germany* (Massachusetts: Basic Books, 2005), 160.

handing out anti-government pamphlets.²¹ These methods were just a few of the various ways to resist on the home front.

Resistance also occurred in the occupied countries, such as France, Poland, and Denmark, as well. Resistance in France, for example, took place over the rounding up of Jews and deporting them to concentration camps. During these round ups, resistance organizations began to attack members of the police organizations participating in the round ups.²² In Poland, as the “Final Solution” got underway, resistance organizations in the Polish ghettos armed themselves by stealing weapons, explosives, and using guerilla warfare, fought against the many arrests and executions of Jews in late 1942.²³ Ultimately, these ghetto organizations revolted in 1943, and it took the trained Nazi army several months to put down the resistors, which showed how powerful the resistance was at the time.²⁴

The choice to resist came with heavy risks, no matter how small their actions of obstruction were. Resistors risked exposing their families to the harsh treatment of the Nazis, not to mention becoming political prisoners themselves, or even being killed for their resistance of the party. People who chose to resist had to be very careful about what they told their families and friends as it could possibly lead to their downfall. Johnson and Reuband’s book, *What We Knew* also gives insight to the risks that resistors took. Marta Hessler describes a time when her mother, who did not support the Nazis, was at a friend’s house verbally abusing the Hitler regime when the friend’s husband came home wearing the brown Nazi Garb, leaving them to think they would be reported as resistors: “My mother turned completely pale. We felt completely terrible.

²¹ Johnson and Reuband, *What We Knew*, 151.

²² Peter Longerich, *Holocaust: The Nazi Persecution and Murder of the Jews* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 273.

²³ *Ibid.*, 377.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 378.

We both thought that this was the end, that they'd be coming to get us."²⁵ While she was never reported for their indiscretion, it was a close call. Hessler also admitted that "not very many" people were involved with resistance movements for those who were openly against the state could be taken and publically embarrassed or punished.²⁶ Hessler's family was also put "under surveillance" for their connections to her brother, who was arrested for being a communist and handing out anti-Nazi pamphlets.²⁷ In Hessler's case, the whole family was implicated, though they were not all arrested for indiscretions against the government. Anna Rudolph, stated in her interview that her "father had hidden a Jew."²⁸ In her case, however, her father never talked about how or where he hid the man so his family would not tell people nor be implicated should something happen to him.²⁹ This was a private act of resistance on the home front, though both private and public acts of resistance occurred. On a larger scale, in France, retaliation of the government in response to resistance, mean that resistors taken hostage were executed for their attacks on military officials.³⁰ In Poland, those who were part of the revolt in 1943, were either killed in action or transported to concentration camps, where they were led to the gas chambers.³¹ Sometimes, the resistance also led the Nazis to retaliate against the "innocent civilians" who had no part in the resistance movement, such as taking family members of known resistors hostage, and murdering these hostages.³² Overall, people who chose resist had to be careful so they would not get themselves, their family members, or other civilians into trouble.

Resistance during the Third Reich was not strictly black and white by any means. It was a messy, interwoven network of people who were working against the Nazi regime. For

²⁵ Johnson and Reuband, *What We Knew*, 152.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 153.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 151.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 171.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 171.

³⁰ Longerich, *Holocaust: The Nazi Persecution and Murder of the Jews*, 273.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 378.

³² Stephenson, "Review Article: Resistance and the Third Reich," 509.

example, Hessler's mother threatened to turn her friend and husband in for purchasing clothing from a Jewish merchant if they turned her in for talking about anti-Nazi ideas.³³ Though she was trying to give herself some cover, Hessler's mother threatened to do exactly what she thought her friend's husband was going to do to her; turn her into the authorities. So even though she was "resisting" because she denounced Nazi ideals, Hessler's mother was not above "collaboration" with the Nazis by threatening to denounce her friend and her husband to save herself and her family. Though it is generally thought that people who resisted did it because of the Holocaust and the killing of so many people, most of the time this was not the case. Instead, many people did not care for the Nazi regime itself, and chose to resist because they did not agree with the political background the Nazis had created. It was a complex and difficult choice to resist, but an important one because it proved that not everybody was in support of Nazi law and order.

What is Collaboration?

While the term "resistance" constructs a hopeful picture in the mind of the reader, the term "collaboration" constructs vividly horrible images such as German soldiers marching millions to their death, the looting of Jewish homes and stealing of land, and many mass graves. Historian Neil Gregor, in his book *Nazism*, makes a point of showing that while members of the SS were "motivated by radical anti-Semitism," other people collaborated for other reasons.³⁴ As the Jewish community is usually associated with the Holocaust, it is easy to forget that the Romani, the mentally handicapped, the physically disabled, and gay men and women were also among the millions who perished in the 1930s and 1940s. Most of these people who perished were killed because they did not fit the ideal "Aryan" profile, and were considered to be useless

³³ Johnson and Reuband, *What We Knew*, 152.

³⁴ Gregor, *Nazism*, 239.

in the matter of carrying on the Aryan race. Gregor also notes that while anti-Semitism was a leading factor in the Aryan ideology, racism in general, nationalism, peer pressure, and submitting to authority all had a role in what made a person chose to collaborate with the Nazis.³⁵

The common definition of collaboration in Germany agreed upon by historians is acts which helped to further the Nazi cause. In the occupied countries, however, the definition is slightly different, because those in the occupied countries who “facilitated control” of the occupier were considered to be collaborators.³⁶ This means that people who helped the occupier, in this case the Nazis, were considered collaborators because they allowed the Nazis to further their cause. The concern that participation with the Nazi party raises, according to Gregor, is that everyday people “were co-opted into committing crimes of almost unimaginable proportions.”³⁷ German citizens considered to be perpetrators but were not high ranking members of the SS or the Party’s government is the everyday people Gregor talks about. Collaborative efforts on their part were small, yet effective enough to keep the Nazi party in power until Germany surrendered at the end of the war. Some examples of this would be joining the Nazi party and sending their children to Hitler Youth camps.

What We Knew, while it contains examples of resistance, also has several examples of collaboration, both on the home front and in the occupied countries. Hubert Lutz, whose father was an *Ortsgruppenleiter*, a Nazi party local branch leader.³⁸ It was his father’s job to handover denunciations made by the people to the authorities.³⁹ This was an act of collaboration, because it was his job to hand over those who opposed the Nazi party, or look into the claims made

³⁵ Gregor, *Nazism*, 239.

³⁶ Stephanson, “Review Article: Resistance and the Third Reich,” 508.

³⁷ Gregor, *Nazism*, 240.

³⁸ Johnson and Reuband, *What We Knew*, 144.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 144.

against these people. Those who chose to denounce others did so because they thought it was their patriotic duty to do it.⁴⁰ Another example of collaboration comes from the recollections of Hiltrud Kuhnel, who attended the University of Frankfurt during the war. At the time, she had an anatomy professor named August Hirt, whose “hobby” was “measuring skulls,” with a special interest in Jewish skulls; he went to concentration camps and had Jews killed so that he could measure their skulls.⁴¹ When Professor Hirt announced this to the class during lecture, there “were people, students, who applauded him.”⁴² While this is a very extreme case of collaboration, it is important to realize that the professor adhered to anti-Semitism, and was therefore furthering the Nazi agenda when he went into camps to do this. However, the students who applauded his actions were also collaborating because they were pleased with what he was doing in the camps, killing people just to look at their skulls. These two examples just skim the surface as to what constitutes as collaboration as collaboration on the home front.

Collaboration in the occupied countries does not necessarily mean they were furthering Nazi ideals; instead, the term is applied to those whose actions enabled the Nazis to carry out their actions. For example, in France, French police joined up with the German occupation authorities and conducted raids all over Paris, sending over four thousand French and other foreign Jews to concentration camps.⁴³ In Poland, the Nazis were enabled through the actions of Polish people, who claimed that the occupation of Poland brought about the “corruption of human relations” which is why nobody was able to stand up and fight the Nazis as they slaughtered their Jewish neighbors.⁴⁴ An example of Polish collaboration is the case of a young

⁴⁰Johnson and Reuband, *What We Knew*, 145.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 189.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 189.

⁴³ Longerich, *Holocaust: The Nazi Persecution and Murder of the Jews*, 273.

⁴⁴ John Connelly, “Poles and Jews in the Second World War: The Revisions of Jan T. Gross,” *Contemporary European History*, 11, no. 4 (2002): 642, *JSTOR*.

woman who hid her Jewish employer's children, but was hounded by her neighbors to get rid of them because they were concerned that should she be discovered, the whole neighborhood would be punished by the Gestapo; they left the woman alone once she claimed to have drowned the children.⁴⁵ Fear is an enabling factor when it comes to perpetration; if a person is scared enough, then they can be made to do anything. Even if it is forced collaboration, it is still nonetheless, collaboration.

Overall, collaboration is thought of as acts which further the Nazi cause and ideology. Like resistance, however, collaboration is not a black and white issue; there is a gray area for this theme as well. For example, Marta Hessler and her mother, both who claim to have been resisters, yet when her mother felt threatened by a friend's husband, she deliberately said that should she get reported, she will turn on her friend and denounce them because her friend bought clothing from a Jewish store. By saying this, she was collaborating because it would mean that she was adhering to Nazi protocol to report people to the government should they be unpatriotic. Hessler's mother claims to be a resister, yet she is willing to turn her friend into the authorities in order to save herself. Examples such as this one show that collaboration was not clear cut by any means. It was just as messy as resistance was. Collaboration helps to explain why people resisted, because to understand one side of the argument, the other side must be examined as well.

Number the Stars

Number the Stars by Lois Lowry is generally classified as a book for preteen readers in grade six through eight.⁴⁶ Though it is a very short book at only a hundred and thirty-two pages,

⁴⁵ John Connelly, "Poles and Jews in the Second World War: The Revisions of Jan T. Gross," 643.

⁴⁶ Totten and Feinberg, *Teaching and Studying the Holocaust*, 171.

it is generally used as an entry level introduction to Nazi-Occupied Europe and the Holocaust. Even though the ending is a happy one, contrary to the fate most of those involved in the Holocaust, *Number the Stars* is an introduction for preteens to life during the Second World War. It is also an introduction to resistance and collaboration, while focusing heavily on the resistance side of the events in Denmark. The essence of the novel suggests that resistance at that time was a good thing, while the coinciding collaboration was bad. The problem with it is that, while in Denmark there were definitive resisters and collaborators, in reality, most of Europe during the time did not have definitive resisters, or definitive collaborators. The simplicity of the novel itself is cause for concern on whether it can actually count as a good piece of Holocaust literature.

Number the Stars is the story of Annemarie Johansen, a young Danish girl living with her family in Copenhagen, Denmark in 1943 during World War II. Her best friend, Ellen Rosen and her family are Jewish. However, when the Jewish people of Denmark are threatened by the invading Nazi army, the Johansen family takes in Ellen to protect her from the Nazis. They take her to Mrs. Johansen's childhood home along the sea coast. There Ellen and her parents are taken to Sweden by Annemarie's uncle, where it will be safe for them to live until the war is over. When Mrs. Johansen is injured and unable to deliver a packet of handkerchiefs that have been soaked in a drug which will ruin a dog's sense of smell if they smell it while searching for hidden bodies, Annemarie has to take over for her mother. While attempting to get down to the boats, Annemarie is stopped by Nazi forces and is forced to lie to the men, in order to get her uncle the package. In the end, Annemarie is able to complete her task, and the Rosens are safely taken to Sweden, where they stay until the war ends in 1945.

The plot in *Number the Stars* is based on an actual event, which makes it different from the other three novels. While the situation and the characters are fictional, the mass rescue of Jews in Denmark was factual. The Danes themselves were not very anti-Semitic in the 1930s and 1940s. Judaism was the second largest religion in the country, with an especially large population in Copenhagen.⁴⁷ Jewish people living in Denmark were part of society. When news of a mass deportation of the Danish Jews was received by the Danish government, the Danes came up with a plan to circumvent the German invaders. On September 29, 1943, Rabbi Marcus Melchior alerted his congregation to the imminent deportation and advised them to leave and warn others.⁴⁸ Led by Preben Munch Nielson, Danish resistance members hid Jewish Danes along the northern sea shore and, over the month of October 1943 in secret and at night, helped nearly seven thousand people flee to Sweden, a neutral county.⁴⁹ During the escape from Denmark, policemen, fishermen, hospitals, and schools participated in the action.⁵⁰ When Nazi forces attempted to round up the Danish Jews in October 1943, they entered Jewish residences and found that many of them were completely empty, as most Jewish people had gone into hiding or had left the country.⁵¹ As a result of the actions against the Nazis taken by the Danes, only 481 Jewish persons were captured and sent to camps.⁵² The events in Denmark in 1943 gave thousands of Jewish people happy endings, which was very unusual for the time period.

The story of *Number the Stars* is told through the actions of a ten-year-old, which gives the novel and its background a very childlike feel, because the story follows Annemarie exclusively. Annemarie is aware that the German forces have invaded Denmark; she is also very

⁴⁷ Andrew Buckser, "Modern Identities and the Creation of History: Stories of Rescue Among the Jews of Denmark," *Anthropological Quarterly*, 72, no. 1, (1999): 3, *JSTOR*.

⁴⁸ Deborah Dwork and Robert Jan van Pelt, *Holocaust: A History* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2002), 326.

⁴⁹ Dwork and Jan van Pelt, *Holocaust: A History*, 327.

⁵⁰ Buckser, "Modern Identities and the Creation of History: Stories of Rescue Among the Jews of Denmark," 5.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 5.

aware that there is a war raging on all over the continent that has effects her own life. Due to the war, the Johansen family has made certain lifestyle changes. To make clear to the young reader what changes the war causes for the family, simple items that are taken for granted today are used to show how different war time was in the 1940s. For example, when Annemarie's little sister, Kirsti, asks for butter on a piece of bread, her mother says no as there is not enough to spare.⁵³ Another example is when Kirsti says that she wishes she could have a "big yellow cupcake, with pink frosting" and her mother laughs and replies that "there hasn't been any butter, or sugar for cupcakes, for a long time...a year at least."⁵⁴ Invoking something as simple as a cupcake, the book sends the message that life in the 1940s during the War was difficult. Detailed examples such as this help to show what life was like during the time period.

Resistance in *Number the Stars* plays a very large role as the plot essentially is about resistance to the Germans and helping out those who are in danger. As a result, every character in the novel is involved in the resistance movements in some form, including the children, like Annemarie who ends up having to lie to Nazi soldiers to help save the Rosen family. In a novel such as this, resistance takes on the persona of the protagonist and the opposite of resistance, collaboration, takes on the persona of the antagonist, and examples of resistance both big and small are plentiful. One smaller example is the reading of the resistance paper, *De Frie Danske*. Annemarie's parents read the *De Frie Danske*, ("The Free Danes"), an actual historical illegal newspaper, which is generally brought to the family folded in between "ordinary books and papers."⁵⁵ It is brought to them by Peter, a family friend who is very involved in the resistance movement. He is the one who brings the newspaper to Mr. and Mrs. Johansen, by traveling after

⁵³ Lois Lowry, *Number the Stars* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1989), 9.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 7-8.

the 8:00 PM curfew imposed on Copenhagen by Nazi Martial Law.⁵⁶ This is a brave move on Peter's part, because if he is caught, then he can be arrested, and quite possibly executed because he is carrying materials which prove he is part of the resistance. Mr. and Mrs. Johansen also run the risk of being found out while the paper is in their possession. After they are done reading the paper, it is "burned" so that they are not caught with illegal objects should they be subject to a search by the Nazis. Though it is a small part of resistance, it is an act of resistance none the less.

Another example of resistance in the novel is when word reaches the Johansens of the impending deportation of their Jewish people, they are concerned for their neighbors and good friends, the Rosens. While Mr. and Mrs. Rosen go into hiding, the Johansens take in Ellen Rosen and hide her with them. It was quite common for children to be split up from their parents when they went into hiding. First, children were a lot easier to hide as they could be claimed as relatives; children were also not examined as closely as adults were for their heritage.⁵⁷ Hiding a single person as opposed to several people was also easier, because hiding more people meant greater risk to those who had taken them in.⁵⁸ The Johansens risk being caught by taking Ellen in for a few days, which nearly happens when the Nazis come to the Rosen's apartment looking for them. When questioned by Nazi soldiers as to the whereabouts of the Rosen family, the Johansens lie and claim Ellen as their daughter.⁵⁹ However, the German soldiers do not believe them as there are physical differences between the Ellen and the Johansens as Ellen has dark, curly hair, while the Johansens all have blonde, straight hair. Despite these differences, a photograph of their deceased eldest daughter, who had dark hair, gives enough evidence to make

⁵⁶ Lowry, *Number the Stars*, 22.

⁵⁷ Deborah Dwork, *Children with a Star: Jewish Youth in Nazi Europe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 34.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 34.

⁵⁹ Lowry, *Number the Stars*, 47.

the soldiers leave. Despite the consequences of what would have happened should they have been discovered, the Johansens were willing to claim Ellen as their own to save her life.

However, people who chose to resist made the choice to do so understanding there is danger to defiance. Peter, the family friend who brings the Johansens the paper, is one such young man. Peter is active in the resistance; for example, he is instrumental in helping to move the Rosen family, as well as several other Danish Jews out of the country. His actions show that he is involved in some sort of resistance organization. Though the extent of his resistance is never known, based on other clues in the novel, it is clear that he is strongly involved. As a result of his defiance of the Nazi party, at the end of the novel, it is revealed that because of his actions, Peter is publically “executed by the Germans.” It is also revealed, that his fiancé, the Johansen’s oldest daughter, Lise, who is deceased in the novel, was also killed for being part of the resistance. Though Peter and Lise knew the risks of resisting, they still did it. As Peter wrote in a letter to the Johansens on the night he was killed, “he was proud to have done what he could do for his country and for the sake of all free people.”⁶⁰ Peter was ready to pay the consequences of his actions because he truly believed he was in the right.

Collaboration in the novel is very limited to Nazi soldiers, who remain completely static characters throughout the novel; they are big, mean men who are looking to hurt the Jewish people of Denmark. The word “Nazi” and “German”, in the eyes of Annemarie, have the same connotation because both mean collaborator. However, it is the images painted by author of the Nazi soldiers in the novel that are very dark and forbidding. For example, in the first chapter, Annemarie and Ellen are racing home from school when they run into a couple of German soldiers on patrol. The two men, in the mind of Annemarie, equal “two helmets, two sets of cold eyes glaring at her, and four tall shiny boots planted firmly on the sidewalk, blocking her path to

⁶⁰ Lowry, *Number the Stars*, 129.

home.”⁶¹ The images invoke fear, and in later parts of the novel, their actions invoke more fear, as evidenced when the soldiers barge into the Johansen’s home when they find the Rosen’s apartment empty. By questioning the Rosen’s neighbors for their whereabouts, they are adhering to the Nazi ideals, and furthering their cause, which in *Number the Stars*, is rounding up Jewish people. The same goes for when Annemarie is running to deliver the package of handkerchiefs, which have been soaked in a drug that will ruin a dog’s sense of smell, to her uncle and is stopped by a German Patrol of “four armed soldiers” with “two large dogs,” who are watching the shoreline for people attempting to leave the country.⁶² They are abusive to Annemarie; they talk down to her, insult her mother and uncle, and take the food in the basket she is carrying. The soldiers know that something is up, as most of the Danish Jews have gone missing at this point. They are trying to stop the flow of Jewish people leaving the country, and therefore, are collaborating because they are trying to put a stop to the resistance movement. While not an overly vital aspect of the novel, collaboration is shown in small segments throughout the story.

Overall, *Number the Stars* is a novel which heavily emphasizes resistance against the Nazis, and clearly defines a line between resistance as good and collaboration as bad. Even Annemarie is educated as to what resistance means: “The Resistance fighters were Danish people—no one knew who, because they were very secret—who were determined to harm the Nazis however they could.”⁶³ Resistance is strongly encouraged as a good thing in this novel. While there is historically accurate information in the novel regarding the actions in Denmark, it does not give any information about what is happening across the rest of Europe. For example, what is happening in Denmark is a far cry from what is happening in Poland at the time. However, historical accuracy in this novel focuses heavily on the good, taking creative liberties

⁶¹ Lowry, *Number the Stars*, 2.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 112.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 8.

which can lead to confusion, such as the idea that everybody wanted to resist the Nazis. Overall, the creative liberties overshadow the historical correctness, leaving much wanted. It is in these areas that historical accuracy would have added to the story to make it less confusing for children. This is a novel, that if not taught properly, can lead to confusion, because it gives the idea that rescuing Jews was happening all over the continent. In actuality, this was not the case. Though there were attempts to rescue Jews, many failed. Ultimately, while the information about life during the war is there, the overall effect as a Holocaust novel is lacking in *Number the Stars*.

The Devil's Arithmetic

The Devil's Arithmetic by Jane Yolen, like *Number the Stars*, is generally classified for young adult readers in grades six through eight.⁶⁴ It is also a very short read at one hundred and sixty-six pages. However, where *Number the Stars* gives a basic introduction into everyday life during World War II and the Holocaust and focuses on a successful rescue of Jewish people, *The Devil's Arithmetic* gives a completely different perspective into the Holocaust by telling the story of life inside the concentration camps in Poland. Heavier topics of death and destruction are constant throughout the novel, which are both historically accurate themes from the 1940s. Also, whereas *Number the Stars* focuses on resistance, with little emphasis on collaboration, *The Devil's Arithmetic* focuses on collaboration, with little emphasis on resistance.

The Devil's Arithmetic follows the story of Hannah, a young Jewish girl celebrating Passover with her family, who is tired of listening to her family talk about the past. However, when she is mysteriously transported from 1980s New York to 1942 Poland, where she becomes

⁶⁴ Totten and Feinberg, *Teaching and Studying the Holocaust*, 171.

Chaya,⁶⁵ a young Polish girl, Hannah is introduced firsthand to life during the Holocaust. Chaya is a young orphan who is living with her Aunt Gitl and Uncle Shmuel in rural Poland. When Nazi soldiers come to relocate them to a Jewish settlement, Hannah knows that relocation means being deported to a death camp. As the novel progresses, Hannah begins to lose her memories of life in the future, and becomes Chaya, not knowing that she will have a happy ending while many around her will not. When she makes the ultimate sacrifice for her friend Rivka, who is actually her great-aunt in the future, by entering a gas chamber, she is sent back to her own time period with a better acceptance of her family, their customs, and the past.

While resistance in *Number the Stars* is front and center in the plot, resistance in *The Devil's Arithmetic* is not nearly as vibrant. The main plot is more focused on the collaboration, but instances of resistance are scattered throughout the novel. One of the first instances of resistance in the novel is when Hannah attempts to warn the people of the *shetl*, a small rural Jewish village, about the Nazis that have interrupted her uncle's wedding to pack them up for resettlement. As Hannah is from the future, she has learned about the Nazis and the Holocaust in school. She knows that the brown uniforms and types of automobiles do not mean good news. She tried to warn the people, saying "the men down there, they're not wedding guests. They're Nazis. Nazis! Do you understand? They kill people. They killed—kill—will kill all the Jews. Hundreds of them. Thousands of them! Six million of them."⁶⁶ The enormity of her words is ignored. One man says, "There are not six million Jews in all of Poland."⁶⁷ Regardless of the struggle Hannah puts up, the *shetl* is still herded into trucks and trains, where they are taken to the fictional concentration camp that they will be working in for the rest of the novel. Hannah's

⁶⁵ For the purpose of this paper, the main character will be referred to as Hannah, except when indicated to show that character Chaya lives a different life from that of Hannah.

⁶⁶ Jane Yolen, *The Devil's Arithmetic* (New York: Puffin Books, 1988), 64.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 64.

protests, though ignored, can be considered an act of resistance because she is attempting to undermine the Nazis by warning the Jewish people about what is going to happen. It obviously fails, but it is still an attempt to undermine the Nazis.

Another example of resistance in this novel is that of Rivka, a young girl in the camps, who attempts to show the new girls, Hannah, Esther, and Shifre, how to survive a Nazi prison camp. It could be considered collaboration, because at times the advice it so do whatever the people in charge tells them to do. Yet, the overall goal is to last long enough to get out of the camp alive, so it is still undermining the Nazis, because death camps are specifically designed to make sure that people do not come out alive. She thinks of it as a game, saying “I play the man’s game. I play the Devil’s game. I play God’s game. And so I stay alive. Alive I can help you. Dead I am no help to you at all.”⁶⁸ She survives to help others survive and, therefore, follows the rules of the game that the collaborators have set for her; she plays to survive. The rules the death camp sets are crazy and difficult to follow because they are made to hurt. Rivka teaches the other girls that to survive, they must learn to let people go, know when to fight and when not to, who to talk to and who to avoid, and to listen to camp officers. When the other girls point out that those are not rules, Rivka overrules them saying, “Nevertheless, you must learn them.”⁶⁹ She knows that to get herself and others out of the camp alive, it is of the utmost importance to follow the rules. Rivka is telling them to collaborate, yet by collaborating, they have a better chance of staying alive, and beating the system that is designed to kill. Although resistance themes are in the novel, the collaboration themes are much more prominent in the story.

The collaborators in *The Devil’s Arithmetic* are the antagonists of the novel. The collaborative characters are presented by the author so that the reader dislikes them immediately.

⁶⁸ Yolen, *The Devil’s Arithmetic*, 114.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 115.

The cruel disposition of the Nazi characters of the book, not to mention image of the Nazi is meant to frighten. One example of such ruthlessness is when the wedding of Chaya's uncle is interrupted by the Nazis. The collaborators are causing the problems by entering this small community because they essentially are clearing out the Polish Jews, though most of the people in Chaya's *shetl* do not realize it.⁷⁰ The people from the *shetl* are also at a huge disadvantage when the Nazis come marching into town; first, because they seemingly have no knowledge of the invading army, despite the fact the Nazis had occupied Poland for almost four years at this point; second, there is a language barrier between the German side and the Polish side. This intrusiveness on the part of the collaborators lends itself to the image of the "bad guy" or antagonist. The way the author portrays it, those living out in the rural areas of Poland had not heard the news of the ascendance of the Nazi party. Historically, many of the Polish Jews who lived in the rural Poland did not speak German, making communication between the Nazis and *shetls* very difficult. For example, there was no unique term for a "Nazi."⁷¹ They were simply referred to as Germans, because they "walked and talked like Germans" did.⁷² No one from the *shetl* uses the term "Nazi," except for Hannah.⁷³ None of the Jewish people understand why they are being "resettled for the duration of the war."⁷⁴ Men, women, and children who spoke only Yiddish were most at risk, for they could not understand orders given by the invaders.⁷⁵ A collaborative effort such as detaining people despite the language barrier again is just furthering the Nazi cause.

⁷⁰ Yolen, *The Devil's Arithmetic*, 64.

⁷¹ Grynberg, "The Holocaust as a Literary Experience," 3.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 3.

⁷³ Yolen, *The Devil's Arithmetic*, 64-67.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 68.

⁷⁵ Grynberg, "The Holocaust as a Literary Experience," 4.

Collaboration is not shown just in the actions of the characters, but by the country the story takes place in, which is 1942 Poland. The Nazi invasion of Poland of 1939 has already occurred by the start of the novel. It is important to note that while few non-Jewish Polish characters are in the novel and governmental proceedings are never shown in the novel itself, collaboration between the Polish and the Nazi governments existed. The involvement of Poland during the war has led to some controversy over whether or not they were collaborators or resisters. Many Polish historians will animatedly say that Poland had no history of collaboration during the Second World War.⁷⁶ Their version of what happened states that because Polish Jews were the first peoples that the Germans went after, the Poles, who had been completely destroyed by the state, “had no real opportunities to assist those scheduled to die.”⁷⁷ At the same time, it can also be hard to tie Poland to the collaborative efforts because Germany had invaded them first. While the initial motivation behind the invasion of Poland was to regain German land lost in the Treaty of Versailles, it turned into a slaughter of Polish Jews.⁷⁸ Eventually, Polish authority over the country “was abolished completely.”⁷⁹ However, once German control was established in the occupied countries, they chose to use the native countrymen instead of other Germans to govern. At certain death camps, large numbers of German soldiers were not used; instead, local auxiliary forces patrolled the areas.⁸⁰ By using them to control the areas, the Germans are using collaboration to complete their work. In *The Devil's Arithmetic*, other Polish people are never seen; the only characters in the novels are Polish Jews, other camp prisoners of unknown origin, and Nazi soldiers. This shows that the Polish government has completely lost

⁷⁶ Klaus-Peter Friedrich, “Collaboration in a “Land without a Quisling”: Patterns of Cooperation with the Nazi German Occupation Regime in Poland during World War II,” *Slavic Review*, 64, no. 4 (2005): 712, *JSTOR*.

⁷⁷ Connelly, “Poles and Jews in the Second World War: the Revisions of Jan T. Gross,” 641.

⁷⁸ Dwork and Jan van Pelt, *Holocaust: A History*, 133.

⁷⁹ Friedrich, “Collaboration in a “Land without a Quisling”: Patterns of Cooperation with the Nazi German Occupation Regime in Poland during World War II,” 716.

⁸⁰ Ruth Bettina Birn, “Collaboration with Nazi Germany in Eastern Europe: The Case of the Estonian Security Police,” *Contemporary European History*, 10, no. 2 (2001): 181, *JSTOR*.

control in the novel. Poles that still live free are now under the control of the Third Reich, and, even if the collaboration is forced, it is still collaboration with the Nazis because it is enabling them to further their cause.

Another way to look at collaboration in the novel is the power given to other prisoners in the concentration camp. Other prisoners, who do not have Jewish connections, hold a significant amount of power over the Jewish inmates of the camp. For example, when Hannah enters the camp for the first time, it is a woman prisoner who is preparing them for life in the camps. Though never stated what type of prisoner, she makes it clear that she is “not a Jew.”⁸¹ The bounds of anti-Semitism extend into the camp from other prisoners who are in the camps, but who are not Jewish. Though she is a prisoner, she does nothing to help those who are also in her position. She makes sure that Hannah and the other women know that they are “*zugangi*” or newcomers.⁸² This also has historical ties, as some prisoners did gain power in the camps, based on their willingness to cooperate with the higher power; they were called Kappos, and give credence to the collaborative efforts of the prisoner woman in the book. The collaborative efforts of this woman not further carry out the Nazi cause by using anti-Semitism, but give her power, that as a camp prisoner, she would normally never have. She is a collaborator because, despite being a camp prisoner, she is bettering her life by participating in murder.

Overall, *The Devil's Arithmetic* gives a semi-accurate version of life in the camps. However, the victims are portrayed as being completely helpless and innocent of the events going around them. In reality, three years into the war, had the *shetl* in the novel been real, it would be extremely unlikely they would not have known about the Nazi invasion or the mass “resettlement” of Polish Jews. While it is important for youth to realize that Polish Jews were

⁸¹ Yolen, *The Devil's Arithmetic*, 89.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 89.

targeted in horrible ways and millions of them were killed in concentration camps, they were not as helpless and ignorant of the situation as the author leads the reader to believe. Ultimately, this novel is more about the collaboration of the enemy, and what they did to make the lives of the Jewish characters in the novel absolutely miserable. Instances of resistance in the novel are few and far between, but still give an element of hope that Hannah will pull out of the situation in one piece, that the characters are not willing to just sit and accept their dark fate, but are willing to do something about it. *The Devil's Arithmetic* works as a teaching tool about the Holocaust, despite some historical inaccuracies and creative liberties, because the resistance and collaboration ideals are close to the time period itself.

The Book Thief

The Book Thief by Marcus Zusak is a novel in which both resistance and collaboration have an active role. It is a look at an everyday German family that does not necessarily support the Nazi regime, but adheres to certain aspects of the Nazi party in order to help a young Jewish man hide from the Jewish persecution that is happening across the country. Unlike the other novels, *The Book Thief* does not reflect a precise historical event. It takes place over a series of years and covers many events. It is the characters and their reactions to the changes around them that lead to them to make the choice to resist or perpetrate. There is not a straight line between good and evil in this novel. Instead, the novel's resistance and collaboration themes meld together, creating a gray area where the themes become synonymous with each other, for there is evidence of both resistance and collaboration committed by many characters in the novel.

The Book Thief is the story of Liesel Meminger told through the perspective of Death. Liesel Meminger is a young girl growing up in the suburbs of Munich, Germany during the years

of 1938-1945. After the death of her younger brother and the disappearance of her mother, Liesel is sent to live with Hans and Rosa Hubermann, who become her adoptive parents. Bonding with her adoptive father, Liesel convinces Hans to teach her to read, something that she has wanted to do since she discovered *The Gravedigger's Handbook* at her brother's grave. She begins to steal books from Nazi book burnings and the mayor's house, earning her nickname "the book thief." However, life at the Hubermann house is thrown into an upheaval with the arrival of Max Vandenburg, a Jewish man, who is seeking refuge with the Hubermann family, once they agree to hide him. The family takes every precaution against the discovery of Max by the party, but when Hans makes a critical mistake while hiding Max, Liesel's family life starts to unravel slowly as the Second World War continues to rage on.

The Book Thief is about what everyday life in Germany during the war. Many of the characters from the novel live normal, everyday lives; for example, Hans Huberman makes his living as a painter. The street the Hubermann family lives on is full of everyday folk; there is a little grocery store, a tailor, etc. Most of these families earn very little income to support themselves. Working class neighborhoods and families like the Hubermanns provided much of the home front resistance against Hitler and the Third Reich ignored the bottom levels of society and only worked to assist the middle and upper classes.⁸³ Resistance in this novel is often overlapped with collaboration, though there are examples of both separately throughout the novel.

One of the most important examples of resistance in *The Book Thief* is the Hubermann family agreeing to hide Max Vandenburg in their basement. It is interesting that the author chose to have the Hubermanns hide Max, as during the actual time period, few Germans

⁸³ A.W. Stargardt, "Allies Inside Germany: The German Resistance Movement Against Nazi-Fascism," *The Australian Quarterly*, 16, no. 3 (1944): 24, JSTOR.

attempted to hide Jews because although not everybody agreed with the Nazis political agenda, they could still be anti-Semitic. Many Germans also refused to hide Jew because it was dangerous, especially in Germany, to hide Jewish people, and because most of the time the two parties, like the Hubermanns and Max, did not know each other.⁸⁴ Regardless of these reasons Hans and Rosa Hubermann still take Max in because it is the right thing to do. However, the rescuers have a duty to the people they are hiding. They still need the basic amenities of life such as “food, clothing, medicine, and news,” to survive, and had to depend on their rescuers for this.⁸⁵ This is the ultimate resistance move, because the Hubermanns are hiding what Hitler and the Nazi party have deemed “the enemy;” they are hiding a Jewish person to save his life. When Max first arrives on Himmel Street, the Hubermanns are initially afraid, because “when a Jew shows up at your place of residence” especially if you live “in the very birthplace of Nazism” fear, anxiety, and paranoia run through the Hubermanns.⁸⁶ The Hubermanns know that they are probably one of Max’s last chances to survive the camps. Hans also owes Max, as Max’s father had saved his life when they served together in World War I. When they take in Max, there are also many variables that have to be taken into consideration; first, they have to figure out how to makes sure their adoptive daughter will not tell anybody. Second, what happens when their older children come home, especially their son, who takes party policy very seriously? Since they still take Max in, the risks were outweighed by the benefits. For the resistance theme in *The Book Thief*, this example is huge when it comes to showing resistance, because it is the ultimate way to hinder the Nazis agenda to exterminate the Jews.

Another act of resistance is performed by Liesel, when she steals a book from the book burning she attends as a member of the Hitler Youth. Book burnings were common during this

⁸⁴Dwork and Jan van Pelt, *Holocaust: A History*, 349.

⁸⁵*Ibid.*, 349.

⁸⁶ Markus Zusak, *The Book Thief* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005), 199.

time period, especially during rallies, and were expected to be carried out by students.⁸⁷ At the rally in the novel, books are referred to as the “disease” of Germany, because they have spread lies and unsafe ideas.⁸⁸ In the 1940s, there was a list of undesirable books which was put together by nationalistic librarians and members of Goebbel’s administration.⁸⁹ However, this speech makes Liesel sick, as she finds the smoking pile of books to be sad.⁹⁰ This action makes her dislike for the *Führer* deepen, and when she is about to head home, she looks into the pile and sees books that have not been burned. She takes the book *The Shoulder Shrug* and saves it from the pile.⁹¹ As she is saving a book that has been said to be unsafe, Liesel is resisting the government’s attempt to control what its citizens, and is therefore undermining government authority.

Finally, the act of resistance that Hans Hubermann commits is based on his place in society; he is a lower class man with no party connections. Hans is described by Death in the novel as follows: “He was not well-educated or political, but if nothing else, he was a man who appreciated fairness. A Jew had once saved his life and he couldn’t forget that. He couldn’t join a party that antagonized people in such a way.”⁹² He purposefully does not join the party because he does not believe in Nazi values. However, his place in society is also a very important thing piece of resistance history in Germany. In the novel, Hubermann is a painter, a job where he makes just enough to barely support his family. According to the article “Allies Inside Germany” by A.W. Stargardt, resistance to the Nazi party started in the working classes of Germany because their problems were ignored by the government, even though Hitler promised

⁸⁷ J.M. Ritchie, “The Nazi Book-Burning,” *The Modern Language Review*, 83, no. 3 (1988): 627, *JSTOR*.

⁸⁸ Zusak, *The Book Thief*, 110.

⁸⁹ Ritchie, “The Nazi Book-Burning,” 635.

⁹⁰ Zusak, *The Book Thief*, 115.

⁹¹ Zusak, *The Book Thief*, 122.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 180.

not to forget them.⁹³ The working classes struggled throughout the War, as is illustrated in the novel, and yet the Nazis still ignored their struggles in favor of the middle and upper classes.⁹⁴

Hubermann's profession as a painter is struggling because of the war, not to mention his status as a non-party member. Despite the Reich's claims and ideology that the party would integrate the classes, the reality of the situation was that class "barriers" were not going to be dissolved.⁹⁵

Hans Hubermann feels the brunt of this because he is struggling to make ends meet. This is part of the reason he dislikes the party because despite their promises, he and his family are still hurting. This dislike explains his resistance to the party through his need to antagonize them by not joining the party, hiding a Jewish man, and assisting Jewish people after *Kristallnacht*.

Hans Hubermann's collaborative efforts with the Nazi party stem from the need to protect Max Vandenburg from the occurring genocide and demonstrate the gray area between resistance and collaboration. Despite his beliefs, Hans joins up with the Nazi party. Though he is doing this so that he can continue to hide Max without fear of the Nazis searching his house, he is still collaborating because he is adding one more name to the registry of party members. By joining the party, he is claiming that he follows the party ideals, one of which is anti-Semitism. This is a difficult choice, as he does not believe in the party ideals regarding Jewish people. Men chose to follow Hitler and the party based on their convictions about party beliefs, opportunities supported by the party, and the choice they make to be a party member.⁹⁶ Hans Hubermann, however, does not have these convictions. Though he makes the conscious decision to join up with the Reich, he knows, along with the members of the party at the local office, it is

⁹³ Stargardt, "Allies Inside Germany," 23.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 24.

⁹⁵ Omer Bartov, "The Missing Years: German Workers, German Soldiers," *Nazism*, ed. Neil Gregor (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 272.

⁹⁶ Claudia Koonz, "Mothers in the Fatherland," *Nazism*, ed. Neil Gregor (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 256.

highly unlikely he would be accepted into the party. Collaboration in this example is present because he joins up with the Nazis, even though he is doing it to continue resisting and hiding Max.

Another example of collaboration in this novel is when Liesel, at the age of ten, joins the *Bund Deutscher Mädchen*, or BDM, which is the Hitler Youth for girls.⁹⁷ It is interesting that Liesel joins the Hitler Youth because she absolutely hates the *Führer*, because she believes that he is the reason her family was split apart.⁹⁸ However, she still attends the BDM, which provides non-domestic leisure activities for girls to do.⁹⁹ Essentially, the Hitler Youth organizations were like camps for boys and girls; however, while they are doing leisurely activities, they are also being ingrained with the Nazi propaganda and values. This is shown in the first meeting that Liesel attends, where they are shown how to properly “heil Hitler.”¹⁰⁰ Perpetration in this example is attending these meetings, where she is continuously being ingrained with Nazi ideals.

A final example of collaboration in the novel is very small, but also reflects the gray area between resistance and collaboration. While in the square after the book burning, Liesel and Hans have a discussion about Hitler, and Liesel blatantly states “I hate him,” because he represents everything that was taken away from her before she came to live with the Hubermans.¹⁰¹ Instead of hugging Liesel, as he wanted to do, Hans slaps her across the face, with the warning “don’t *ever* say that again!”¹⁰² While Liesel is resisting because she speaks out against Hitler, Hans is collaborating because he does not want her saying something like that in public. If a German “patriot” had heard her, it was possible the whole family could be

⁹⁷ Zusak, *The Book Thief*, 40.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 115.

⁹⁹ Detlev Peukert, “Brown Revolution?” *Nazism*, ed. Neil Gregor (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 290.

¹⁰⁰ Zusak, *The Book Thief*, 40.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 115.

¹⁰² Zusak, *The Book Thief*, 116.

denounced to the authorities.¹⁰³ He follows his attack with “you can say that in our house, but you never say it on the street, at school, at the BDM, never!”¹⁰⁴ He then proceeds to teach how to correctly salute the Führer. The message he is sending to Liesel is saying that it is okay to say these things around your parents, but in public it is not safe. Although he is saying it to keep his family safe, he is furthering the Nazi agenda because he is not allowing his daughter, nor himself, to speak out against the Nazis in public.

Despite the narration that is provided by the figure of Death, *The Book Thief* is quite representative of what life was like during the 1940s in Germany. Marketed for youth age twelve and up, it also is more complex because it is specifically written for young adults. Intricate themes and a much more complicated story line make it challenging enough to bump up the grade level that it was written for. The resistance and collaborative themes are part of the reason the lines in *The Book Thief* are blurred, which makes it all the more complex. The historical accuracy of the novel cements the history amongst the creative liberties taken by the author, like the story being narrated by Death. For example, the resistance and the collaboration themes remain historically accurate than both *The Devil’s Arithmetic* and *Number the Stars*, yet the facts are not hindered by the creative liberties. *The Book Thief* as a novel has both the elements of creative liberties and historical accuracy, but it intertwines the two and ultimately comes up with a historically accurate fictional narrative.

Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows

The *Harry Potter* series by J.K. Rowling is one of the most popular children’s series of all time. However, unlike the three historical novels already discussed, it does not have any

¹⁰³ Johnson and Reuband, *What We Knew*, 144.

¹⁰⁴ Zusak, *The Book Thief*, 116.

direct connections to historical fact. Instead, the events in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, the seventh and final book of the series, parallel those that happened during the Third Reich. Many fans argue that the novel contains stories similar to life during the Holocaust and life in Germany under the Third Reich. This fictional method of presenting historical events in *Deathly Hallows* presents a new way of looking at how the reader “understands” the past.¹⁰⁵

There is a totalitarian dictator with a plan to restore order to the wizarding world by purging the realm of those he deems “unworthy” such as muggle-borns, mudbloods, half bloods, magical creatures, and of course, many muggles. It is similar to the story of the Holocaust in which a totalitarian dictator with a plan to restore Germany to its former glory creates a mass genocide of Jewish people, gypsies, mentally handicapped people, gays, and political prisoners. This connection to Nazi Germany is one that Rowling says she intended to make when she wrote the series.¹⁰⁶ Despite the lack of a distinct historical connection, the overwhelming sense of evil creates parallels between the two. It is also a contemporary way of remembering the Holocaust and Nazi Germany for non-witnesses, because the “trauma” of the Holocaust is not “confined” to its time period.¹⁰⁷ The events of Nazi Germany and the Holocaust provide a foundation for non-witnesses to understand what social evil is; the *Harry Potter* series expands that understanding of social evils.¹⁰⁸ Overall, the historical events that non-witnesses learn about, such as Nazi Germany and the Holocaust, give a perspective on of what evil is and help readers to recognize it in the novels.¹⁰⁹ Essentially, readers who understand what the Holocaust is can recognize it in

¹⁰⁵ Aida Patient, and Kori Street, “Holocaust History Amongst the Hallows-Understanding Evil in Harry Potter,” *Harry Potter’s World Wide Influence*, ed. Diana Patterson (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), 201.

¹⁰⁶ Nancy R. Reagin, “Was Voldemort a Nazi? Death Eater Ideology and National Semitism,” *Harry Potter and History*, ed. Nancy R. Reagin (Hoboken: John Wiley and Sons, 2011), 128.

¹⁰⁷ Patient, and Street, “Holocaust History Amongst the Hallows-Understanding Evil in Harry Potter.” *Harry Potter’s World Wide Influence*, 201.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 201.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 226.

the *Harry Potter* novels, because they can connect the evil of Hitler to the evil represented in the character of Voldemort.

In addition to creatively representing the events of the Holocaust, the *Harry Potter* series also demonstrates the themes of resistance and collaboration. In *Deathly Hallows*, there are collaborators and resisters with the chief leader of resistance against Voldemort being Harry himself and the leader of the collaborators is Voldemort. Just as in *Number the Stars* and *The Devil's Arithmetic*, some of the “good guys” and the “bad guys” are clearly defined; it is obvious who is going to be pitted against whom from the beginning of the novel. However, just as in *The Book Thief*, some characters fall into the gray abyss between the two themes, in which the lines between “good” and “bad” are blurred.

Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows is the seventh and final book in the Harry Potter series, picking up with Harry searching for Voldemort's Horcruxes, which will ultimately help to defeat the evil wizard. The goriest of all the books, *Deathly Hallows* finds Voldemort and his followers, the Death Eaters, are openly killing those he despises, with particular emphasis on “mudbloods,” which are witches and wizards who are from non-magical families, and “muggles,” or non-magical people. Eventually, all of this culminates in an epic battle fought on the grounds of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, where, ultimately good wins out over evil.

One of the most obvious examples of resistance in the novel is the journey that Harry, Ron, and Hermione take to find and destroy the Horcruxes, and, by extension, Voldemort. By going after Horcruxes, Harry is breaking the rules that Voldemort made; he is looking for the one thing that Voldemort is certain nobody but he himself knows about. The working definition of resistance is given as groups that attempt to undermine Nazi power, or in this case, Voldemort's

power, without coordinating their efforts.¹¹⁰ Harry, Ron and Hermione are a disconnected group at the beginning of the novel, yet they willingly take the journey to undermine Voldemort and give Harry an advantage in the final battle. At first, the trio does not have many ideas about where to start looking for the Horcruxes. While at breakfast one morning at the Weasleys' home, Ron asks Harry if he knows where the other "You-Know-Whats are" and Harry admits with a resounding "No" that he has no idea of where the objects are located.¹¹¹ They know that this task is important for the return of peace to the wizarding world, but they are unsure of exactly how to go about it, because they do not have any leads. It is the thought of resistance itself that guides them in the beginning. Once they start finding Horcruxes, however, they begin to get hopeful that they can beat Voldemort. This example of resistance parallels examples in *The Book Thief*, when the Hubermanns hide Max, and even in *Number the Stars*, when the Johansens hide Ellen because all three examples, with respect to the context of their novels, demonstrate the ultimate form of resistance. Harry is searching for a way to stop Voldemort and his agenda, just as the families in the other novels are resisting the Nazi cause.

Another example of resistance in *Deathly Hallows* is the use of *Potterwatch*, which is an underground radio show designed to inform the wizarding community of the Death Eaters' doings. *Potterwatch* is first brought up when Ron begins to fiddle with the radio one evening while he, Harry, and Hermione are out searching for Horcruxes. The point of resistance radio is to inform the listener of what is not presented to the public through other news outlets like the *Wizarding Wireless Network News* and the *Daily Prophet*.¹¹² Unlike the search for the Horcruxes, the use of the radio has a much more distinct parallel to the 1940s, in which many people, especially in the occupied countries listened to "enemy radio" to get the updates on the

¹¹⁰ Stephenson, "Review Article: Resistance and the Third Reich," 507.

¹¹¹ J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* (New York: Arthur A. Levine Books, 2007), 86.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 439.

war from more reliable sources, such as the English.¹¹³ While it is not a direct historical connection because *Deathly Hallows* takes place in 1997-1998, the fact that resistors use radio as a means of resistance is a clear parallel to Nazi Germany and those who resisted that regime. It can also be paralleled to the *De Frie Danske* in *Number the Stars*, as both are underground sources of news that has been censored by the government.

Potterwatch is an important part of the underground resistance movement against Voldemort in the novel. First, it takes into account the mounting death toll by releasing information on not just the deaths of witches and wizards, but also muggles and magical creatures that Death Eaters have killed. During the broadcast that Harry, Ron, and Hermione listen to, announcements of the deaths of Gornuk the Goblin and a muggle family in Gaddley are given because they are not “important enough” for the other news outlets to inform their readers about.¹¹⁴ This is a major resistance action because it undermines the Dark magic idea that muggles and magical creatures are beneath the magical community; instead, by listing them with the others that have died in the war, the resistors are saying that muggles and magical creatures alike are just as important. Second, it is an underground radio station. To access the broadcast, the listener needs to have a password, which they have to attempt to guess. The password also is a form of resistance, because it almost always has to do with Harry or the Order of the Phoenix. When Ron accesses the broadcast, the password at the time is “Albus,” which is just another sign of resistance as they are using the government’s “undesirable” people as inspiration.¹¹⁵ Finally, the real importance of *Potterwatch* is to pass along information regarding the doings of Voldemort and his followers. Commentators announce that “several of the more outspoken supporters of Harry Potter have now been imprisoned” which shows that resistors are being

¹¹³ Johnson and Reuband, *What We Knew*, 160.

¹¹⁴ Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, 439.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 438.

arrested for their support of Harry; just supporting Harry Potter is a sign of resistance.¹¹⁶ While only a short passage in the book, the idea of *Potterwatch* does a lot to show that resistance to Voldemort is widespread.

As in *The Book Thief*, the character's decisions and choices in *Deathly Hallows* to resist and collaborate are just as important as the themes themselves. One such character is Severus Snape, potions teacher at Hogwarts. From the beginning of the *Potter* series, Snape has been a leading figure in the resistance against Voldemort. The extent of Severus Snape's resistance is only discovered at the end of the series, though the reader knows from previous novels that Snape is a double agent. During the battle for Hogwarts, readers learn that Snape chose to resist when Voldemort killed Lily Potter, Harry's mother, in order to kill Harry. Though Snape begged for her life, Voldemort underestimated Snape's love for Lily Potter. During the last battle, Voldemort says that Snape "desired her, that was all, but when she had gone, he agreed that there were other women, and of purer blood, worthier of him," when Harry replies that "he was Dumbledore's spy from the moment you threatened her, and he's been working against you ever since."¹¹⁷ Snape's choice to resist is something that Voldemort could never understand because he is pure evil. Snape uses his position as a double agent to do other acts of resistance throughout the series. For example, in *Deathly Hallows* he puts the Sword of Gryffindor into the pond for Harry and Ron to find while on their search for Horcruxes. In doing this, he gives Harry and Ron a way to destroy Salazar Slytherin's locket, a Horcrux. Such small examples of resistance throughout this novel give readers hope that Harry and his friends will overcome evil.

On the other hand, collaboration is also important for people to see why the resistance is needed. Since *Deathly Hallows* is the last novel in the series, most of the reasons for resisting

¹¹⁶ Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, 442.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 741.

Voldemort have been explained in previous books. Ultimately, it is said that Voldemort's reign could cause the collapse of the wizarding world. Kingsley Shacklebolt's analysis of what should happen if Voldemort goes unchecked describes the problems they face: "It's one short step from 'Wizards first' to 'Purebloods first,' and then to 'Death Eaters.' We are all human aren't we? Every human life is worth the same and worth saving."¹¹⁸ *Deathly Hallows*, however, is focused on the collaborative actions which further Voldemort's cause. There are several examples of collaboration throughout *Deathly Hallows*. One of the most prominent examples in the novel are the witches and wizards who still work at the Ministry of Magic after Voldemort has overthrown the government. Although Voldemort is using a puppet to run the Ministry, it is no secret that he is the one in charge. Still, people continue to work for the government. Even characters such as Arthur Weasley and Kingsley Shacklebolt still remain part of the Ministry. Though they are doing it because they are spying for the Order of the Phoenix, maintaining their jobs with the Ministry of Magic is still considered to be collaboration because they are working for the very government that they reject.. By remaining at the Ministry, both Arthur and Kingsley are perpetrating Voldemort's cause, as they are supporting Voldemort's ideology as long as they keep their jobs at the Ministry.

Another example of a collaborator in *Deathly Hallows* is the character of Dolores Umbridge, who works at the Ministry of Magic. Introduced to the reader in *Order of the Phoenix*, she has a blind devotion to authority and authority figures. Even when the Ministry of Magic is overthrown and taken over by Voldemort and the Death Eaters, her blind devotion to authority does not change. She only changes who she works for, not what she stands for. Instead of being the Senior Undersecretary to the Minister of Magic, she becomes head of the Muggle-Born Registration Commission, which requires witches or wizards of muggle descent to

¹¹⁸ Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, 440.

register their wands with the Ministry.¹¹⁹ Umbridge also begins wearing a “family heirloom” in the form of a locket with an “S” on it, saying that “there are few pure-blood families to whom” she is not related.¹²⁰ Though the reader has no reason to doubt Umbridge’s blood relations, only now does she feel the need to show that she is indeed from pure-blood lineage, when having that lineage is so important for survival. This makes her a collaborator, because not only is she bullying innocent people over whether or not they have the blood connections to remain safe, but she is also making sure that she cannot be implicated and possibly lose her job or even her life. Again, she is furthering the pure-blood idea crucial to Voldemort’s ideology.

Finally, Severus Snape, discussed in this paper as a resistor, can also be considered a collaborator. Despite Snape’s work for the Order of the Phoenix and for Albus Dumbledore, he is still also working for Voldemort. In *Deathly Hallows* alone, he does several horrible deeds which furthers the pure-blood ethos. In the beginning of the novel, he watches as the Muggle Studies professor from Hogwarts is tortured to death for teaching students at the magical school about muggles. At one point, the former Muggle Studies professor even begs Snape to help her, saying “Severus...please...please...” but because of the role he is playing, he does not help her, and Voldemort kills her.¹²¹ This is just one instance where Snape’s actions of resistance do not completely exonerate him from the deeds he did while being a double agent. Another example of his actions as a collaborator is the actions he takes when he becomes headmaster of Hogwarts. He hires Alecto Carrow as the Muggle Studies professor, and her brother, Amycus Carrow as the Defense Against the Dark Arts professor.¹²² Both are known Death Eaters, who inflict incredibly harsh punishments at the school for students who cause problems, most of whom are involved in

¹¹⁹ Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, 250.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 261.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 12.

¹²² Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, 226.

mini resistance movements against the new authority. Though the reader does not find out about Snape's double agent role until the end of *Deathly Hallows*, his collaborative efforts throughout the novel help expand to further push the reach of the pure-blood propaganda created by Voldemort.

Overall, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, as well as the rest of the series, work well to tell the story of the Holocaust and rise of Nazi Germany. Though there are no direct historical connections between the events of the 1940s and the events in the novel, in a book which does not claim to be historically accurate, the historical ideas are presented in an abstract way. It is through these abstracts that the reader can interpret historical idea through the sense of absolute evil and the resulting despair, as well as the references back to resistance and collaboration, help non-witnesses in today's society make connections to the actual historical events.

Conclusions

The overall argument for this paper is that in children's holocaust literature, the age old struggle of good vs. evil is played out using themes of resistance and collaboration. However, unless the themes have a concise background in historical accuracy, vital information can be left out, which could ultimately give a child the wrong impression of the events of the Holocaust and Nazi Germany. Despite this, the creative liberties taken by the authors can either overpower the historical attributes of the story or work with them to tell an interesting tale. Historical accuracy that intertwines well with the creative liberties is what good historical fiction is made of. Of the four novels in this study, only three meet the requirements of useable materials to educate children about the Holocaust. While *The Devil's Arithmetic*, *The Book Thief*, and *Harry Potter*

and the Deathly Hallows have not only the potential, but the accuracy to give good information to children, *Number the Stars* does not, due to a lack of historical emphasis on what reality was during the time period.

Overall, the historical background of the novel is of the utmost importance because it adds ample grounding to the stories, such as the resistance and collaboration themes. This historical background provides a foundation which will help to support the story. In novels, like *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, historical accuracy is non-existent, but creative liberties allow for parallels between historical events, like the Holocaust and Nazi Germany, to the fictional wizarding world. The use of children's Holocaust fiction also is way to educate children on the importance of preventing such catastrophic events from happening again. Ultimately though, holocaust literature for children, when used correctly, has the potential to continue to pass down the lessons of the Holocaust for future generations.

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APPENDIX A
Student Prefatory Essay

The spark for this project came from an experience I had when I was reading Holocaust literature as a child. My elementary school had students read the book *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry as an introduction to a unit on the Holocaust. While reading the novel, hardly any historical background was given to students, nor were any themes of the novel explained or discussed in great detail. Unfortunately, for several years after this experience, I believed that everybody in Europe during the Holocaust was in fact attempting to save Jewish people from mass genocide. It was not until I reached junior high school that it was explained to me that this was not the case and that most people in Europe during the 1940s were not trying to save Jewish people. While thinking of a project that would combine my two academic interests, history and literature, this incident came to my mind, and I decided to look at the historical accuracy in children's holocaust literature, to see if other children's literature books were as confusing as *Number the Stars* was for me as a child.

To complete my project, I chose four novels to use as primary sources. Due to the connections I had with the book, I chose to read *Number the Stars* again. I also chose two popular children's novels about the Holocaust and Nazi Germany that I had never read before: *The Devil's Arithmetic* by Jane Yolen and *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak. Finally, I chose *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* as my last book to look at for this paper. As *Deathly Hallows* is a fantasy novel, there are no direct historical correlations with this novel, but there are many parallels between the events in *Deathly Hallows* and the rise of Nazi Germany and the Holocaust, making it appropriate to analyze for this project.

After choosing my primary four novels, I started searching for themes which would be a good perspective to look at the novels through. Due to the fact that Holocaust literature for

children must have some element of hope that the characters of the novels will overcome their adversity, I decided to focus my research on the themes of resistance and collaboration. In doing the research for this project, I began to realize just how much work had to be done. This stage of the process took about six months to complete. Besides my primary literary sources, I found several journal articles through online databases as well as inter library loan. Books were also important, and I read several history books on the subject of the Holocaust, looking for evidence to support my thesis and project. Once the research was underway, the process of writing began.

The writing process was very long and arduous, but I eventually overcame the seemingly impossible task of writing a forty-five page paper. This is where I experienced the most issues while working on this project. While writing, I could never seem to do enough research, nor did I seem to be making much sense regarding my topic. Life also interrupted the writing process several times, which deterred my writing. It is also very difficult to study something like the Holocaust for so long, making the final stages of writing very difficult because so much of the research I had been looking at was all about death and destruction. While in retrospect, the idea to writing about such a depressing topic was a poor life choice, ultimately, I learned a lot about the time period, the novels, and what the meaning of resistance and collaboration was.

This project would be interesting to continue using other children's novels centered around the Holocaust. During my research, I came across several other novels, such as *Maus* by Art Spiegelman, *Briar Rose* by Jane Yolen, and *Milkweed* by Jerry Spinelli. It would also be interesting to apply my thesis and research to short stories and poems written about the Holocaust, to find out if my theories hold up in shorter pieces of literature. A couple of the authors I chose to read have other books regarding this subject as well. It would be interesting to

see how those books lend themselves to the study of Holocaust children's literature, and how they compare to each other.

Overall, this project has prepared me for working hard in graduate school by preparing me for taking on challenges similar to the Senior Honors Program such as a Master's thesis or eventually a dissertation. It also has taught me the importance of time management, especially when I am taking other classes and have other work to do. I had to learn to do all the work for this class as well as all the other work from my other classes on time. I also learned the importance of revision, considering my paper went through several different phases before it reached the stage it is at now. Revision is most important because I can catch the little things that my professors or proofreaders missed. The process of the Senior Honors Project has helped me to become a better student because I know that the seemingly impossible, with a lot of work and effort, can become possible in the end.