

Changing World artifacts

Docent Training

Forbidden Book and Book Burning

Key Holocaust lessons for these artifacts:

- As early as 1933, Nazis eliminated the “Marketplace of Ideas” through terror, media manipulation, and by limiting access to information.
- Lives of all Germans changed; not just Jews.
- The Holocaust happened in stages: each stage isolating Jews and depicting them as dangerous, a threat to Germans.

Suggestions for generating discussions with students:

- I. Why would someone choose to ban a book? What are books that have been banned in some locations in the USA?
(*Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *To Kill A Mockingbird*, *Harry Potter*)
- II. Show picture of book burning. Have students describe what they see.
 - A. Point out that those are books burning in that pile
 - B. Take note of the peoples’ behaviors around the burning pile.
 1. Standing at allegiance, some people civilian, others in military uniform
 2. Nobody is attempting to put out flames
 3. This picture was taken in 1933, the year Hitler took power.
 4. They are burning ‘un-German’ books. 2,500 un-German titles were burned.
- III. What do you think un-German books means?
 - A. Only German authors, scientists, composers
 - B. Only content APPROVED by the Nazi Party. Things critical of the Nazi government were NOT approved.
- IV. No freedom of speech – what was available was controlled by the Nazi Party.
 - A. This causes ALL people living in Germany to view ideas that are un-German as inferior
 - B. Once again, one more stepping stone to say Jews (even if German) should not be allowed to contribute to the writings that are to be read by all Germans
- V. *Friedrich the Great and the Grand Coalition* by Thomas Mann.
 - A. Found locked up in a bookcase in Munich by Ernest Steifel, Holocaust survivor who escaped Germany in 1940 by way of Russia and arrived in Seattle from Japan. He returned to Europe serving with the Army Air Corps from 1943-1946 and was stationed in Munich after the war.
 - B. Big red “V” stands for Verboten (which means Forbidden)
 - C. This is an example of a book which was banned because it criticized the Nazi government

“Where they have burned books, they will end in burning human beings” – Heinrich Heine, 1823