

# Religion

## 'Holocaust' Workshop: Learning From Tragedy

By CAROL SALZLEIN  
UF Student Journalist

Suppose that today a powerful leader decided to rally the people against one percent of the population, say, people with long hair, and put them on a train and send them away.

All long hairs would be singled out, put on a train and sent not to a rock concert, but to work camps where they would die. The people would then have rid society of an "undesirable" segment of the population.

The same thing happened to the Jews less than 40 years ago, when the Nazis decided to pick out one percent of the population, the Jews, to implement their plan of the "final solution."

It is the final solution, not the half solution, not the quarter solution. The final solution was the Nazis' code word for the total elimination of the Jews.

A Holocaust Workshop held recently at the Florida State B'nai B'rith-Hillel Foundation brought about discussion and awareness of the "holocaust," the term Jews often use to refer to the killings of six million Jews before and during World War II.

Diane Roskies, a Jew and wife of the main speaker at the workshop, described her feeling about the holocaust as a "phantom limb." If a person had his arm amputated, she said, the hurt at the nub would still be painful for a long time, and the pain

does not end when the limb is severed — it remains.

David Roskies, Diane's husband and assistant professor of Hebrew and Yiddish literature at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York and special guest at the workshop, said, "You cannot live as if it never happened because it is a central factor, an overwhelming presence or fact."

Several University of Florida students responded in different ways when asked about the holocaust. Pedro Jose Greer, a chemistry major, said he can understand the holocaust because a similar thing happened to his Cuban relatives during the Cuban revolution on New Year's Eve, 1959.

John Loughran, a history major and a Catholic, said that both Christians and Jews have had tragedies. "The Roman Empire crucified slaves led by Sparticus," he said.

Cyndi Markovich, a Jew, said that Hitler wanted to wipe out the Jews, but it made the Jews more solid. The holocaust "brought out the Jewishness in the Jew," she said.

Kent Winter said he didn't know what the holocaust was by that name, but he said he thought people knew about it as concentration camps from history classes and the news media.

Curtis Gardner, who also is Jewish, said: "People think of the holocaust as history. History is a long time ago. The holocaust was just over 30 years ago; it is not like it cannot happen again or won't."

A 40-year-old Jew and civil rights activist, who did not want to be identified, said he once heard the holocaust referred to by a Jew as "our thing." The wording as "our thing" incensed him. He said that at the time of the holocaust it was referred to as a horror, then 10 years later it was referred to as an "incident." "Today it is 'our thing,' pretty soon it will be called a party," he said.

The activist continued, quoting from a survivor of the camps, Elie Wiesel:



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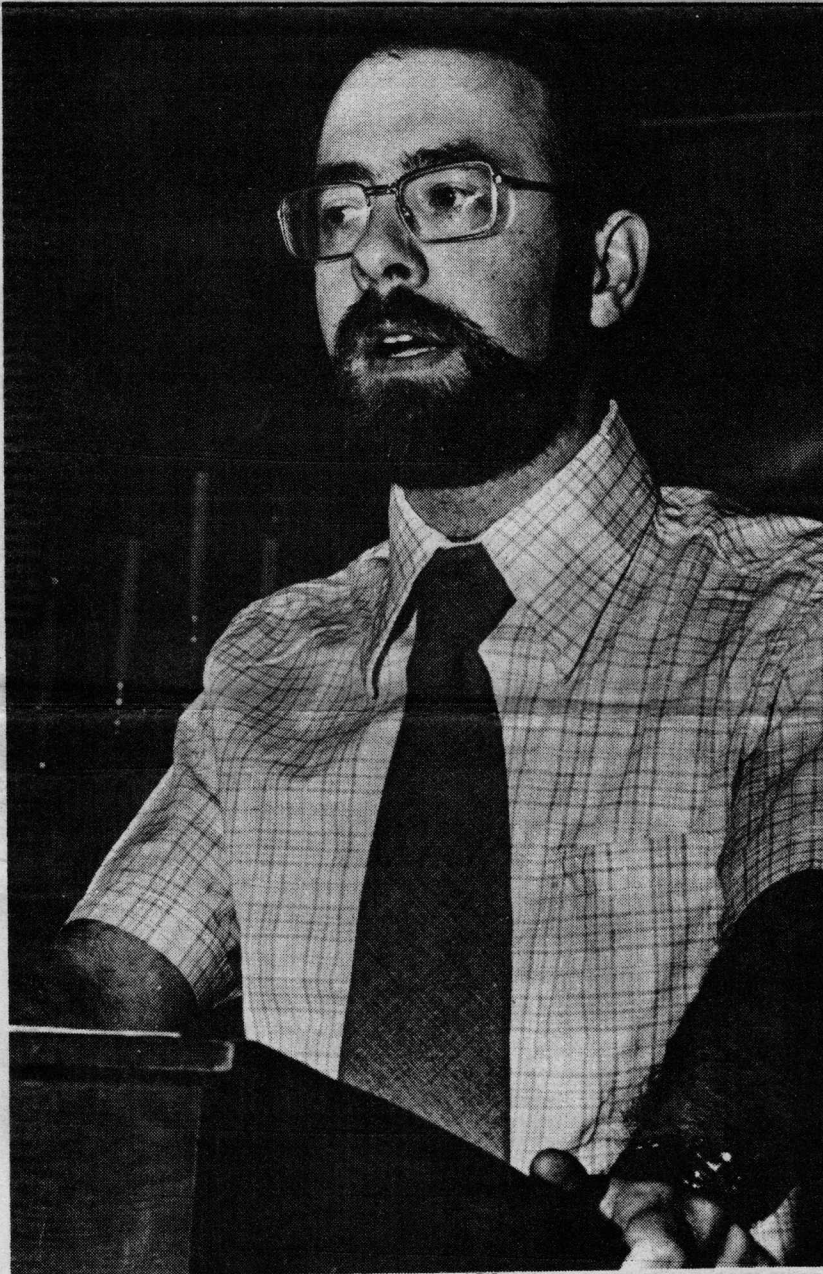
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The activist continued, quoting from a survivor of the camps, Elie Wiesel: "We must transmit to each succeeding generation the horrors and barbarism of the Nazis against the Jews."

The anonymous spokesman borrowed Martin Luther King's philosophy that if we all followed the "eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth" law, all men would be eyeless and toothless. He said love was the correct response to what Hitler did to the Jews because man should use his ability to reason.

Students who attended the workshop agreed they got something out of it.

Roslyn Schniadowski, who came from an Orthodox Jewish background, said she heard about the holocaust in many different ways. Of those ways, she had never been taught the holocaust on an unemotional level. The



DAVID ROSKIES WAS SPECIAL GUEST AT RECENT WORKSHOP  
Workshop Designed to Make People Aware of Horrors of Nazi Germany

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**Results of a survey by a national women's magazine contradict a number of popular myths about religion.**

— See RELIGIOUS, Below



(Sun Photos by Steve Dozier)

**"YOU CANNOT LIVE AS IF (THE HOLOCAUST) NEVER HAPPENED. . ."**  
**David Roskies Speaks During Workshop About the Nazis' "Final Solution"**

intellectual approach at the workshop was good, she said, "because it wasn't the same old junk all over again."

She added that the program was needed to get people to go to Hillel. Face it, the holocaust is not fun. The attitude is, 'Why should I go if I am having fun?' It is part of the total pathology that Jews and non-Jews really share."

Jay Jeffries, a Taoist, said the workshop taught him "why the Jews are wanting to keep the feeling of the holocaust alive."

Jeffries said when Roskies chanted songs, it reminded him of certain aspects of the Buddhist religion and he started to reciting a mantra with its

A holocaust seder, a symbolic dinner which featured a text written by UF religion instructor Hillel Schwartz, was also held during the weekend workshop. Weglowski attended and later described it.

"Everything was symbolic," she said. "We had to take off our shoes and jewelry symbolizing how everything was taken from the Jews. We had to count to 200 which symbolized 200,000; the Nazis stopped counting the dead at that number."

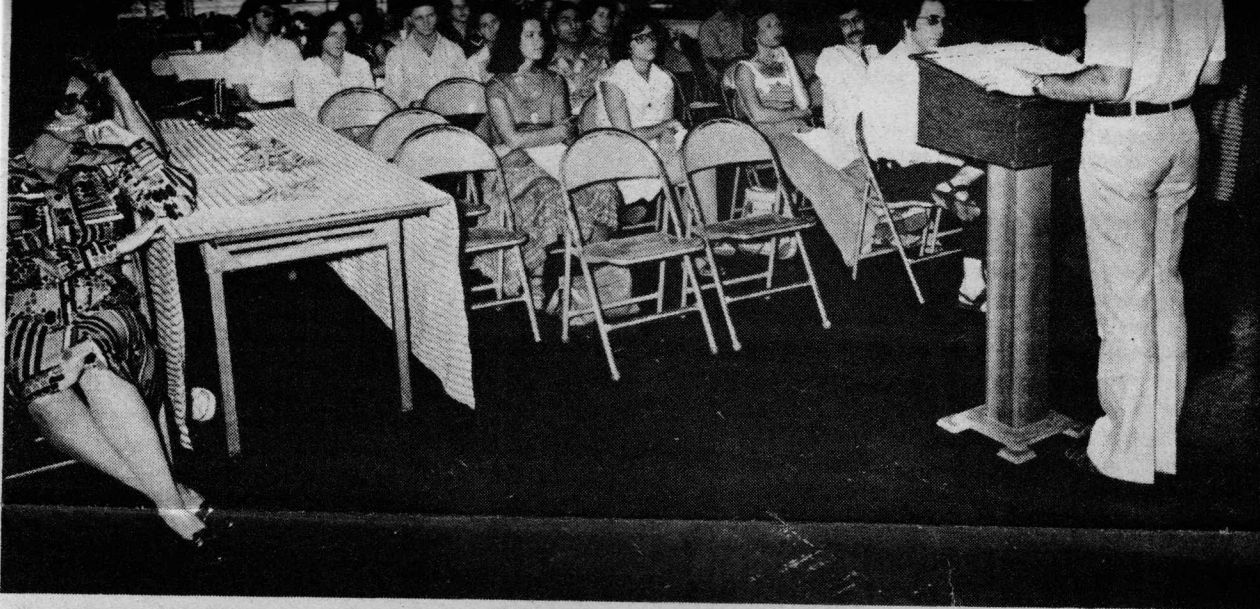
Schwartz explained that if a person counted to 200 everyday from birth, it would take 100 years to get to six million.

Those who attended the workshop

forgiving and forgetting: "An old Jew with a long beard got on a train. Some Germans got on the same train and began sharing salami and having a good time. They were making derogatory remarks about the old Jew which the Jew ignored.

Later, the old Jew got off the train and was greeted by persons who carried him off on their shoulders, because he was a very respected man. The Germans, embarrassed because they they did not think the old Jew was anyone at all, went to apologize.

They went to the Jew's office twice, to no avail. The third time they met and said, 'We're sorry, we did not know who you were.' The Jew, not accepting the



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Jeffries said when Roskies chanted prayers, it reminded him of certain aspects of the Buddhist religion and he related it to reciting a mantra with its calming and hypnotizing effects.

He added that he was reared as a Christian, ignorant of Jewish culture and therefore "prejudiced". "But after thorough immersion in the Jewish culture during the workshop, the 'us and them' distinction was gone," he said. He can relate to Jews now because he understands their culture more.

Vicki Weglowski, reared in the Catholic faith, said she can relate to the holocaust as a human being, and as a concerned person.

"A whole group of people were wiped off the earth," she said. "Other minorities should take warning because this is a threat to the whole world."

She added that history repeats itself and "they are going to get around to us sometime or other."

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Those who attended the workshop said they felt detached and intellectual when reading books on the holocaust. But during the workshop, they added, it was impossible to remain detached.

The first course during the seder, for example, featured a bowl of thin potato soup, symbolic of the meals fed to the imprisoned Jews during the Nazi reign. "I could almost visualize what was going on (in the death camps)," said Joyce McFarland, a Catholic who is taking a religion course at UF.

"It is unbelievable that they lived," she said. "We all carry the ability to fall into a situation like that."

"Most people," McFarland said, "say that kind of thing will never happen again. But the holocaust was only 30 years ago. We haven't changed that much."

Roskies told a parable about

forgiving and forgetting: "An old Jew with a long beard got on a train. Some Germans got on the same train and began sharing salami and having a good time. They were making derogatory remarks about the old Jew which the Jew ignored.

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They went to the Jew's office twice, to no avail. The third time they met and said, 'We're sorry, we did not know who you were.' The Jew, not accepting the apology, replied, 'No, not until you apologize to that old Jew.'"

The holocaust workshop included a poster display from "The Holocaust and Resistance — An Outline of Jewish History in Nazi-Occupied Europe," prepared by the American Federation of Jewish Fighters and which is on exhibit at the Reitz Union.

In an introduction to the exhibit, Wiesel, the death camp survivor, wrote: "There are so many reasons today for young Jews and non-Jews who are sensitive to these problems to choose anger as a response. My generation chose instead to use its experiences not against, but for man. We chose to remember the tale and tell it and transmit it, hoping that something can be learned from it...for the Jewish people and all of mankind.