



The Lodz Ghetto Photographs of Henryk Ross

A COLLECTION OF HOLOCAUST PHOTOGRAPHS

Henryk Ross (born Poland, 1910; died Israel, 1991) *Excavating the box of negatives and documents Henryk Ross buried in the ghetto at 12 Jagielonska Street, Lodz, March 1945, 1945* Gelatin silver print from half-tone negative, Gift from Archive of Modern Conflict, 2007 © 2015 Art Gallery of Ontario

Lesson Plan 3: Resistance

Can taking photographs be an act of resistance?

This lesson will engage students with the photography of Henryk Ross and ask them to consider whether photography is a form of resistance. Ross was made an official photographer by the Jewish

Council of the Lodz Ghetto, which required him to document labour in the ghetto for the Nazis. However, Ross also risked his life to take many unofficial photographs showing darker aspects of ghetto life. Students will analyze and interpret the photographs in order to gain a deeper understanding of the complexity of the concept of resistance. What is the meaning of resistance? Can taking photographs be an act of resistance?

LEARNING STRATEGIES

RELATED IMAGES Visit this link to see the photographs for this lesson: www.ago.net/ross-lesson-3

Defining Resistance

Begin the class by asking students, individually or in groups, to create a working definition for the word “resistance.” Working definitions are not found in the dictionary; rather, students create them based on what they know. To help the class reach these definitions, consider the following question: In what ways do people resist?

Have the students participate in a Gallery Walk of the photographs. To frame this gallery walk, ask the students

to think about how the photographs might change their definitions of “resistance.” When the students have completed their gallery walk, ask them to revise their working definition to include any new ideas they have gathered from the photographs. Have each group share their original working definitions and their new definitions. Ask them to explicitly identify the ways the photographs affected their definitions of “resistance.”

Debrief

Transition to a whole group debrief of the exercise using these questions: It was very risky for Henryk Ross to take and hide these photographs. Why do you think he chose to take this risk? How is photography, particularly Henryk Ross's, an act of resistance? What other examples of resistance occurred during the Holocaust? How are these acts of resistance similar to or different from Ross's actions?

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

Photograph of Henryk Ross and his photographs at the Eichmann Trial in Jerusalem.

http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/media_ph.php?MediaId=4975

The Ringelblum Archive was clandestinely compiled between 1940 and 1943 under the leadership of historian Emanuel Ringelblum in the Warsaw Ghetto.

<http://www.ushmm.org/information/exhibitions/permanent/secret-archives-warsaw-ghetto>