

Timothy J. Scott

The
HOLOCAUST

Its Relevance Today

Sponsored by

BAKKE ❖ NORMAN

BALDWIN

NEW RICHMOND

MENOMONIE

Our Youth ~ Voices of...

Hatred

Anger

Despair

Apathy

Pain

and

Hope

The voices heard in this pamphlet are excerpts from essays written by students from Wisconsin and Minnesota over the past 9 years. They were all written in response to my question, "How do you see the spirit of the Holocaust alive and well today in the world, in America, in your community, in your school, your family and yourself?"

"People in this town are very racist. It's too bad really. I myself am racist. Most people around here hate the Hmongs and the wiggers. Not because of the way they dress, but by the things they do. Wiggers are obnoxious people. They act very uncivilized and that should not be tolerated. Hmongs are poachers! They do everything illegal and people around here hate them for that. We have no niggers around here, so we can't be racist toward them. They are good people and should be treated well. I am trying to be less racist..."

--9th Grader



"I am a Native American at Ashland High School. No one here will dare say anything about the Indians here. They would be beaten bad if they did so. The problem here is with the whites and Indians. It's not big because everyone knows each other and the extent of what could happen to them if they say anything bad or racial towards Indians."

--9th Grader

"The presentation made me take a closer look at myself, and honestly, I'm not that proud of what I saw. I have never considered myself to be the least bit discriminatory or prejudiced against anyone. Now I see that some of the things I always thought were OK are just like the small flames, fires just waiting to be fed. I have never been a person to say any racial comments, but yet I've never stopped anyone either. I realized that I tend to judge people merely on looks and clothes, but during the presentation I looked around at all my friends and realized that the people I've cared the most about and have liked the most are people that I've never judged; they're the people that I've gotten to know and have come to love, no matter what they wear or what they look like. I think that's how I need to look at everyone, not just the people I know. Who knows, maybe one of the ones I had previously judged could turn out to be my best friend."

After the presentation, I wondered how my life would be if everyone had judged me on my looks. I wonder if I would even have any friends. I guess I've mainly realized that I'm not really as 'good' as I once thought I was. I, like everyone, still have a lot to learn and I have a lot of things to work on. I now see that I need to improve myself and speak up and stop others, in order to keep the spirit of the Holocaust from spreading."

--9th Grader



First they came for the Jews. I was silent. I was not a Jew. Then they came for the Communists. I was silent. I was not a Communist. Then they came for the trade unionists. I was silent. I was not a trade unionist. Then they came for me. There was no one left to speak for me.

**--Martin Niemoller, Minister
Concentration Camp Prisoner, 1938-1945**

"Yeah, some chinks are out to beat me up," he said. Upon hearing this today, I sat up startled. A week ago I would have said something to the effect that the comment was inappropriate. It never would have occurred to me, however, that it was comments like this 60-70 years ago that started the immense hatred in Europe that killed ten million people. Today, I didn't have to say anything. Instead, a friend Amy, commented, 'So, how is the spirit of the Holocaust alive in you?' I looked up in time to see the countenance of shame on his face. The spirit of the Holocaust is alive and doing quite well today. I try to look for the little 'flames' you talked about in your speech in myself. I think I mostly see it when I hear of people accused of a crime. I read in the newspaper that this Saturday two little girls died in Little Rock, Arkansas. Their father left them in a car for eight hours in 80 degree weather. When I read about that I wanted to kill those men. I wanted to put them in a car for eight hours and let them suffocate. I realized how cruel that made me. I realized that if I was taught that the Jews were responsible for the bad things happening I would want to get rid of them too."

"I was really glad that you came to our school. Now people are speaking out more when they hear racial slurs. Change is exciting."

--9th Grader



"I see the spirit of the Holocaust alive today when I see or hear of children being abused and treated like animals. In parents who tell their children that they are worthless, not good enough, a burden, stupid and useless and will never accomplish anything. Parents who leave behind a legacy of beer bottles and shattered dreams. Destroying children -- morally and physically -- is the worst thing humans are capable of."

"I see the spirit of the Holocaust alive at Memorial High School today in our attitude toward the mentally and otherwise handicapped kids. I don't know how many times I've heard someone say that they hate the 'speds' and wish they'd leave. I don't understand. The only thing I can think of that one of them has done to me is smiled. I've seen them physically mocked and verbally abused. And all for what? Living. Being different. Having the courage to walk through vicious halls day after day, constantly taunted by people who are under the misguided impression that they are somehow better or superior or worth more. One of my friends was telling me the other day how much that he hated prejudice, and how he was angry at some confederate-flag-waving-Mexican-hating people that he knew. In the same breath he was telling me how he couldn't stand the retards. Obviously there's a bit of hypocrisy here, and I pointed that out, but I couldn't get him to see it."

"But fear of these same people is the source of my own Holocaust flame. (And hypocrisy.) Mentally retarded people became absolutely real to me the other day at work."

"A mentally retarded young man, maybe twenty, came through my register at Wal-Mart. He was drooling, his face was twisted by his disorder, and he was unable to stand up straight, which made walking a challenge. But the thing that struck me was that he looked almost exactly like the man I looked up to the most (besides my father). And it was such a powerful reminder that not only was his condition not something he picked, to him it was not a disorder -- it is who he is. And who he is, is a man probably not a lot unlike myself. I have always been afraid of what I don't know. And mental disorders are something I don't understand at all. And I've done nothing about it. So I've denied myself the experience of being a friend to a large section of our school, and probably learning a great deal about strength of character."

--11th Grader



"I believe the Holocaust lives today through all the hate in our world. Every day I hear people say 'those goddamn fucking niggers.' And I don't say anything; I just stand there, sometimes laughing, sometimes smiling. I don't want to be different. I hear the way they make fun of other people. I don't want to be branded as a 'nigger lover'. I don't want to be different."

"Although the people who say these things are the source of the problem, I believe the real problem is with the people who do nothing. People like me. I know I have to change. Maybe someday I will be strong enough to stand up for what I believe."

--9th Grader

"I think the spirit of the Holocaust is very alive in our community, homes and even in classrooms. I constantly hear remarks about Hmong people and how everyone thinks we should kill them all...I really believe that if enough people started to follow these groups (KKK, skinheads) that the Holocaust could happen all over again, and that really scares me..."

--9th Grader



"Just last year a group of seniors had written 'KKK' all over our banner and they wrote 'niggers' on it. This was a banner for homecoming for school. I am in a special ed class and here kids say that I'm stupid, retarded, poor, a troublemaker, and other stuff. But this is not true -- all that it means is that I need help in a certain area, which is reading -- what might come easy for others. But I might be better at math than others."

--8th Grader

"Yes, all around me I see the hate against others. Like in World History class when we discussed the weapons inspectors and Iraq -- many people just wanted to kill them all. When we talked about gays, others wanted to just kill them all...Some people think it's fun to pick on those who are different from themselves, but we're all the same. When we're born, we're all helpless; when we die our bodies will all rot away...We all have feelings. We all feel sorrow, anger and joy...Yes, I see it all around. People hate the outside; they don't bother to see the inside. It's here, it's alive and it's growing."

--9th Grader



"I have no problems except for gays. Even the Bible says that gays are going to hell. We don't need to kill them, but keep them out of public places or gyms...I would have no problem if I did not have to see them. They are very sick and spread a lot of disease around our world. They have AIDS and some don't but they will get it eventually..."

9th Grader

"My family is racist. My brother and mom's boyfriend say 'nigger' whenever they see someone black on TV. I hate when they say it because it is not the right way to address a colored person. I don't think whites would like to be called 'white trash'...This was one of the best presentations I have ever seen that was educational at the same time. It opened my eyes. It made me realize that everybody should be treated the same and we are all on Earth for the same reason..."

--9th Grader



"Sure names hurt -- sometimes a lot, but you can boost yourself up by hurting someone else. Besides, there are always people 'lower down the food chain' that you can hurt or the people you hurt -- they can hurt them. If you don't vent all these angers on lower people, one day you will yell back at the people hurting you. If you yell back at them, you put yourself at risk. You become their sole person to torment. Sometimes an entire class will help the tormentor, just so they don't become the next victim. It sucks being the victim, but you can't help them. Never look down. If you look down, you see the actual person, and not just the object of your hate. If you get too attached to these objects, if you really look at them -- past the jeans they wear, what church they go to, what sports they're in, who they hang with, or even how they talk -- if you look at their eyes, you can't do it anymore. You can tell they are hurting, pleading for your help..."

--9th Grader

*He prayed ~ it wasn't my religion.
He ate ~ it wasn't what I ate. He
spoke ~ it wasn't my language. He
dressed ~ it wasn't what I wore. He
took my hand ~ it wasn't the color
of mine. But when he laughed ~ it
was how I laughed, and when he
cried, it was how I cried.*

--Amy Mattox

Franklin Community High School

"I see a form of the Holocaust every day as I walk down the halls in our school. Groups of girls gossiping about how fat and ugly another girl is, or how a new guy in class is such a nerd because he doesn't wear Tommy Hilfiger jeans everyday, and another group of 'cool' guys telling stories about how some other guy never goes out and drinks, and what a total loser he is. I have to admit I find myself doing the exact same things to other people, and even if I don't do that I wouldn't stand up to the people who are saying cruel things about someone who they probably don't even know...I see the spirit of the Holocaust everywhere, but I have chosen to attempt to stop the spirit within myself, and stand up to the oppressors and persecutors. Perhaps if we all started that simply and acted on it, the spirit of the Holocaust could be diminished."

 --12th Grader

"The belittling calls can be heard down these halls everyday, many could not care if some individuals lack tact; many do not see that foul words can truly shatter one's soul. After time elapses, individuals become familiar to those tasteless terms and fail to recognize their harm. It appears that many ignore the words of hate, allow them to roll off their backs. Some cringe at the sound of the filth and even fewer stand up and shout the two most important words that could be said at a time like that -- 'stop it!'. It is because of the lack of courage that the flame of hate burns, and to answer the question posed during your presentation -- the Holocaust does live on."

--11th Grader

"Is the (spirit of the Holocaust) still present in my small town of Osseo, my school, or even my own home? Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes! I'm surrounded by intolerance and hate for people. In my own town I watch as people come in and out of the grocery store where I work -- if your profession is not up to standards with some people you are side stepped without even a friendly 'hello'...I always hear about those damn Indians spearing all of our walleyes..."

--10th Grader



"I know the spirit of the Holocaust is inside of me, because I treat people that are different inhumanely. There is one person from a different race in my school and he gets money from the running of the casino. He hasn't had to lift a finger to get his paycheck, and somehow he ends up making more money than I do. The jealousy I feel isn't right, but no matter how much I confront myself and attempt to extinguish the flame, I still can't blow it out. The ignorance I hold inside of me isn't fanning the flames, but it is giving it just enough fuel to continue burning...I have a flame inside of me and it is my job to put it out and make sure that nobody relights it."

--12th Grader

"America is full of hate. Blacks being tormented by whites, gay people getting beat to death by the family next door, and people see these things happening and they know this must stop, but they let others do what they can to stop it. No one bucket of water can douse this fire. I hate the people that do these things, but I don't do anything about it, and that makes me no better than them..."

--12th Grader



"I must admit that I didn't think I had prejudices, but after hearing your presentation, I realized that I had one I never even thought about as being prejudiced. I don't like the act of homosexuality, and have on many occasions referred to homosexuals with vulgar names and labels...I had never thought of gays as actual people, but more like freaks. After hearing your thoughts I realized that it would have been easy for a person to prey upon my ignorance. I still don't approve of homosexuals, but now at least I'll view them as humans with real lives and goals..."

--10th Grader

"Think of yourself sitting in school or in gym class, you look different than other people for some reason and everyone is staring at you. You feel uncomfortable and alone. You do not know what to do or why they are looking at you as they are. Suddenly, you hear it--'loser', 'geek', 'schooly' and many other names you do not deserve to be called. Nobody comes to help you; everybody just sits and does nothing. How often have we been a part of this, either the name caller or the person receiving the name calling, or just a bystander that does nothing?"

--11th Grader



"I myself found the Holocaust is in me too. It's not racism like I don't like blacks or some other group that's different. I found out that picking on overweight people or people who aren't the same as me, like how they dress or talk. Now I've learned to put out my flame by growing up and maturing and looking at everyone the same way. I even volunteered at the Special Olympics for two years and found that on the inside, they're just like me."

--11th Grader

*Either we will learn to live together
as brothers [and sisters] or we will
perish together as fools.*

--Martin Luther King, Jr.

"I see the spirit in Ashland every day. People are calling people fags, niggers and losers; they call me that, sometimes every day. And I know how those others feel; it hurts. I mean people are teasing others so bad that they don't feel they deserve to live anymore, so they commit suicide..."

--9th Grader



"People make fun of me; they call me dog; they say I need to shave...I've been called names all my life by my classmates and my brother. From that I started to do drugs and smoke. Right now I'm trying to quit but it's hard. Because when someone calls me a name I want to go back to the drugs but I can't. I wish they would just leave me alone."

--9th Grader



"I see and hear the spirit everywhere. 'Damn Hmongs', 'I got jewed', 'he got gypped', 'stupid chink', 'negro NFL'. These are truly disturbing things not uncommon in today's society."

--10th Grader

"What do I see? I see homosexuals being trashed. I hear the gossip when two of the same gender walk down the halls holding hands. I smell the fear when word is leaked out of someone who has AIDS in the school. I sense the confusion and the bitter hatred of someone or something different...I see, hear, feel, taste, and touch the prejudice against someone who is different from the stereotypical 'normal American kid'. There is hatred here, too. Toward Hmongs, toward Hispanics, toward Native Americans, toward African Americans, and even it seems, toward white. People, can't you see we are brothers and sisters? We are all put here on the same Earth, not to harm and destroy one another with words, weapons, and bitter hatred, but to live side by side in harmony with one another...If we cannot resolve our prejudices, then we will again become like Hitler, and so the circle will become unbroken, and madness will reign again."

--10th Grader

"When you began today's lecture, I believed all of the ideology concerning the Nazis and the Holocaust was a big joke. When I would walk into German class, I would say to Herr Fleming, 'Sieg Heil', 'Heil Hitler', or 'guten Tag, mein Fuehrer'! Now I don't think I will be doing that. I thought it was a joke because it didn't affect me or because I was naive enough to think that I knew what really happened from a few books and word of mouth. Now I know that I really knew nothing. Sitting there thinking about me being a part of it made me feel very awkward. At the beginning I felt like laughing after hearing about the human waste pouring out of cattle cars. Later I felt like crying after getting a refresher as to how truly brutal the treatment was."

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"Hearing this made me self examine my own views. I consider myself a non-racist, but when people are cutting on a race yelling racial slurs like 'Jew', 'nigger', 'gook', or 'coon', I find myself going along. I am not sure right now if deep down I am like that or going along with the crowd. I do know one thing, the next time a situation like that presents itself, I will think before I speak."

--11th Grader

"I do not know many people that appreciate or like having Hmongs living and roaming the streets of our city. Although the crime rate is fairly low in the Eau Claire area, anytime you hear about a shooting or a large group of people fighting, the Hmongs are always involved. They are trouble. I know people that have gone Hmong bashing. I know people that hate them. I hate them."

"I know a lot of my friends hate Hmongs, blacks, gays and lesbians. A friend of mine wouldn't play on one of the flag football teams because on that team was a senior named Charlie. Charlie is black. You can count the minority population in Memorial High on ten fingers and I hope it stays that way. I have the same beliefs as my friends. I don't hate blacks, I hate niggers. If you don't think there's a difference, I do and there is. Niggers are nothing but trouble waiting to happen. I don't like Mexicans, gays, or lesbians, but as long as you are white, you are alright."

--11th Grader

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"I have a little racism in me. I can't stand Hmong or Mexicans. I just feel that they do not belong in our country. And if I was boss, I don't think I would give them a job."

--11th Grader



"I was brought up a racist. My grandpa, grandma, dad, mom, uncles, cousins and I are all racists. There is no way that you can change my mind. I feel that if they want to be Americans so bad, then they should start acting like Americans. And quit asking for special rights. Like for example, niggers want to be called Afro-Americans and gooks want to be called Chinese-Americans or Japanese Americans and so on. I can see if Indians want special rights because they were here first. But now because of them fucking niggers and gooks going around shooting everybody, because they are in gangs, is screwing it up for the true Americans. Because of them our guns are starting to be taken away. And with the gooks wanting to come to America from Laos and Vietnam, they should just be thankful that we helped them and stay where they belong."

Another reason why we must love our enemies is that hate scars the soul and distorts the personality. Mindful that hate is an evil and dangerous force, we often think of what it does to the person hated. This is understandable, for hate brings irreparable damage to its victims...

But there is another side which we must never overlook. Hate is just as injurious to the person who hates. Like an unchecked cancer, hate corrodes the personality and eats away its vital unity. Hate destroys a man's sense of values and his objectivity. It causes him to describe the beautiful as ugly and the ugly as beautiful, and to confuse the truth with the false and the false with the truth.

--Martin Luther King, Jr.

"Do you know what it is like to live in Eau Claire and come home and find a little gook kid walking out of your house with your TV? Well, I do and I knocked the little fucker's dick in the dirt for doing it. The cops just slapped him on the hand and said 'don't do it again' and then the next day I got the shit beat out of me by all of them little fuckers for beating one of them up."

"And I can't see how they can live in a two bedroom house with the ma, dad, grandma, grandpa and a dozen kids. The reason why there are so many in Wisconsin is because they can get on welfare so easy. And then they don't have to pay taxes for the first five years that they're in the U.S. And they get their new Nissan's and Isuzu's and all that other rice-grindin' gook-made crap. They also have nine kids or more just to collect a bigger welfare check. And your come-back will probably be that not all of them are like that. Well at least all of them that I've met are...as you can see, I don't care one bit about those hubcap stealing, drug-dealing, velcro hair, big lipped, Alabama porch monkeys (niggers) and those short, slant-eyed, flat-faced, rice-chewing, dog-eating, tax-evading, welfare-junkie, smelling-worse-than-death gooks."

--8th Grader



"Some of the people at North High School scare me. When they grow up and are living in the real world, what will it be like? I think we've always stayed just barely within the bounds of disaster. Anytime there could be another Holocaust, with all the hate in this world there could be more than one. Everyone hates

someone -- whether it be fat people, black people, baid people, or people with nose rings, it doesn't matter, all kinds of hate are the same...Because of this feeling of contempt and hatred, people don't communicate with each other about their problems. They are so afraid that people will judge them and truthfully, they are probably right, that they get screwed and don't know what to do when the shit hits the fan on a large scale. The spirit of the Holocaust is definitely alive today, I see it every day and it sucks."

--10th Grader



"The spirit is alive when one of my Hmong friends is so embarrassed by her culture she'll deny knowing about it in classes. She's embarrassed of her long hair that her culture says she should grow out until marriage. She begged her mom for weeks to cut it and when she got permission she couldn't go through with it. After that she felt guilty that her culture meant something to her."

"She started to cry during your speech yesterday as you were reading what kids from North and Memorial said about Hmong. Afterwards I went and gave her a hug and reminded her of all her friends that loved her. She said that nothing was wrong. I told her she had a right to cry because I would pray to heaven she never had to get so used to hearing stuff like that, that it would stop bothering her. Then she looked at me and said, 'I guess I'm just weak'."

"It makes me sick to my stomach to know that there are people out there being attacked every day. It makes me scared. But what scares me the most is that there's a girl in my grade who had to live through being verbally abused, had stuff painted on her house and more. What scares me the most is that she wishes it didn't bother her anymore."

--10th Grader



"My parents said that if we sold all our land and our farm that the Hmongs would be the first ones to get it. Then we would have to move away because they would steal from us. If my dad sees one across the road going slow, he's just going to run him over."

--7th Grader



"The Holocaust is still alive today. When my family is driving somewhere and all the people would make dumb, stupid noises. They would also be like 'gook', 'damn gooks, get out of here!'...And one time people came to our place and bombed and burned our mailbox. I don't know how or why people are like this but I just don't think people know why we're here in the USA and it only seems like us Hmong people know why we're here. And I pray every day that this hatred around the world will soon come to an end."

--8th Grader

"Sometimes the white people would start calling the Hmongs 'gook' and tell us to go back where we came off. They would make fun of us but they don't know that it hurts a lot inside but sometimes we don't show it. Well, we help fight the war and help the Americans across the river and some die for helping the Americans fight. They would say that going to America is where you can have freedom and do anything you want. As for me, I don't really think so, not that much anymore. There are a lot of hates. Like when we are at school kids would start picking on us because of color of our skin and because we are Hmong. They only judge people by the outside but not the inside."

--8th Grader



"Ever since your presentation, I've been wanting to learn more about the Holocaust. I think I might want to go around to schools and do the same thing when I'm older because people need to learn about the past so something like this doesn't happen again. You spoke with so much emotion. I couldn't believe it. I've never heard anyone like that before. When you talked about pointing fingers, I thought of my ancestors because I'm German."

--8th Grader



"My dad never like Hmongs or Chinese and people like that. He said they are just taking up our jobs."

--8th Grader

The hottest places in hell are reserved for those who, in a time of moral crisis, retain their neutrality.

--Dante

"Many people in our community are prejudiced toward the Hmong community and that same idea is what founded the Holocaust...Last year we had a serious brawl between white kids and Hmong kids. This caused a great amount of tension in the school and throughout the community...Is the spirit alive in me? This is the hardest question of all to answer because it is hard to admit the feelings that I have and the reasoning behind them. My parents have some degree of prejudice against some things and these ideas have been passed down to me. What really made me realize how stupid prejudice is when it happened to my best friend. She was adopted at a very young age by a wealthy family. One day when our school held our all-school picnic, my friend Sara and her boyfriend were holding hands. I was walking a little bit behind them when I heard the words, 'Hey, look at the gook with the white boy. I wonder if she ate my dog last night for dinner?' I still remember how these words of hatred rang in my ears..."

--10th Grader



"In Menomonie I can see a lot of people against Hmong and people with disabilities. I remember one time I was looking for my lost dog. I told my neighbor to tell my dad I was going to the trailer court to look for my dog. He said not to go there because all it is is a disgusting, dirty Hmong place. I have also seen people that have disabilities be pointed at and made fun out in public..."

--8th Grader

"One time I was at the fair in Dunn County and this lady said that I 'can't go on this ride because you are Hmong'. And I said, 'Why is that a problem for you?' She still said that I have to leave this country and I got mad and I was ready to hit her but instead I ignored her and walked away. I will never forget that moment because of how it hurt my feelings. I wish I could know why they hate us Hmongs so much. What's the matter with them? I will always have that woman's sentence in my heart."

--8th Grader



"Prejudice against gay and lesbian people is something that pervades Menomonie and Menomonie High School, even more than racism. If someone uses a racial slur, there is usually someone else there who will speak up against racism or at least think twice about what is being said. If a comment bashing gay or lesbian people is made, most people won't even think twice, let alone say anything to stop the hate."

--11th Grader



"How touching of a speech you have, unfortunately your speech is a little bit too late for me. For I have been in all three positions -- the discriminator, the discriminated and the bystander. For me, life is from a hate point of view. Every day in school I feel that my skin is working against me from the student body...I think that it is too late for me to blow out my fire. For the flame is forever burning. But I hope that your speech can change someone else."

--11th Grader

"I would like to tell you that your message was the most thought-provoking that I have heard in a long time. Never before has anyone laid the issues down that you did in such a way. We, as a school, have been sat down and given a speech on this, that, and the other. After all those presentations, I have left wondering how many of the kids got a thing out of it. After your presentation, however, I would not doubt that a single person in that audience was not affected in some way. The manner in which you delivered the second part I thought was brilliant. Most of the students came into the auditorium thinking that they were going to hear a lecture on the Holocaust, and they were not expecting your second message. Before a person goes into a lecture on diversity and sensitivity, they all prepare themselves and put up a guard for things they don't want to hear. A lot of people, including myself, were taken by surprise and were not able to put their guard up fast enough. And that is why your message was so effective. I don't know if you planned it that way, but it works."

11th Grader



"Right now, we live as fools in a world where hatred is common. Your attitude toward the word 'loser' really struck me. I hear that word, along with other put-downs, all the time walking down the hall. I say 'loser' to my friends on a joking basis. Does that make me a racist? You never really know how something feels until that something happens to you. I feel like I could write forever on your presentation."

"You opened my eyes to so many new sides of the Holocaust. The way you told the story of the cattle car ride was like something I've never heard before. Your entire presentation made me aware of something I have never really thought about before -- why we are the way we are, and what we can do about it to accept others like we would want to be accepted."

--11th Grader



"In an isolated town in rural Wisconsin, we don't see the minority groups everyday like other schools and when we do see them, it's on the television and we get that picture of them in our mind. We could see a black person and think 'rapist', 'murderer', and 'nigger'. We could see a Mexican walking down the street; we'd then whisper to ourselves 'drunk', 'thief', and 'wetback'. In a society where people get impressions of one another off TV's or newspapers and magazines, it's not hard to look at someone different and think you are superior to him/her. I know I could easily say I've been around people like that and I can honestly say I too have had these thoughts. It will take much more of me and my friends to look at a black person or Asian walking down the street and think of them as our equals. But everyone must try a little or we could have another Holocaust and I wouldn't want to go through life knowing that during my lifetime I was responsible for people being killed."

--11th Grader

"This is the story. You are in seventh grade, and you are a 'nerd'. When you contradict a statement that someone made, everyone starts yelling 'shut up!' Kids follow you in the halls and mock your left-leg limp. When you get on the bus to go to or from school, everyone moves toward the aisle, giving you nowhere to sit. You walk home hearing people walking behind you shouting 'nerd' or 'loser' and you feel your heart collapse every time. The next painful day you are the 'nerd' getting shoved, your books flying all over."

--8th Grader



"When you came and asked if the spirit of the Holocaust was alive and well in ourselves, I realized that this was the hardest thing to find, the hardest thing to figure out, and the hardest of all to admit, but I will. I do see the spirit of the Holocaust alive and well in myself, when I look at people walking down the street and I label them, by the clothes they wear, or whatever first meets my eye. It is alive and well in myself when I choose my friendship with someone because of my friend's relationship with that person."

"When you came and talked to us, you really opened my eyes, not only on the Holocaust, but on my country, school, family, friends, and last but not least, myself. Thank you so much. You don't know what you have done for me, and my outlook on life."

--8th Grader

"I hate gays and lesbians because it states in the Bible it is a sin to be gay or lesbian. Who would want to be gay or lesbian, it's gross. When God made people he didn't want them to be gay or lesbian. So I stick with God. Gays and lesbians are wrong and they shouldn't be in the U.S. Catholics I feel sorry for them because they don't believe in the real God -- Jesus Christ and God. I'm not really racist, but I dislike Indians today. The Indians in Hayward are druggies and they have too many casinos. Indians shouldn't be in Wisconsin. We made them move when Columbus came here and we can more them now."

--8th Grader



"In our country I don't think gays and lesbians should be allowed. They should be put on an island and let them live like queers and let them do it how they want as long as they stay on their island."

--9th Grader



"People are afraid of change. If you're not like them, they are out for you. It takes a number of people to change something, but why can't it start...with...you? The Nazis were afraid of the Jews, because they were different. They weren't used to change, so before change could grow on them, they killed it! All 10 million of them! What does it take to burn discrimination? What does it take so that everyone can be equal?"

"Whenever I look at people, I see them equally as me. I don't see them differently, but I greatly admire them for having their own look and daring others to be different. I feel that when I look at people equally, it's the start of getting rid of the Holocaust in our schools and any other place as well. It takes one person to add one."

--10th Grader



"I myself, I see the spirit of the Holocaust EVERYWHERE! To me I feel that deep down inside I'm not prejudiced. I feel that I am not because my mother and father have taught me the effects of this. But I do see it and I don't always stop it! I know deep down that it's wrong, but I can't make myself do it. In the future as I grow as a person, I hope that this will change. From hearing your speech, Mr. Scott, I feel that it has definitely been a stepping stone in this journey to my goal. I hope that someday when I have kids they will not need to work as hard as me to reach a goal like this because I will have taught them how!"

"There is so much prejudice in the world. I don't know where to start. Almost ALL groups have been discriminated against. Someday my dream is to have no prejudice in the world. I know it's not realistic, but I hope it will come true. Do you?"

--10th Grader

*All that is necessary for the forces of
evil to win the world is for enough
good men [and women] to do
nothing.*

-Edmund Burke

"Don't keep the hurt inside, let it out so maybe there will not be another next time. This is how I see it alive in my school. In my own life, I do make fun of others. Sometimes the recipients laugh, other times they're silent. I understand it - the quiet - because that is how my friends express the hurt and pain I have just caused them. Now, two days after your presentation, I have started to make a difference in my life. I think before I speak now. I feel that by improving my language and actions I can be a part of the turn around. Thanks for coming and speaking to us, it was well worth it."

--9th Grader



"I had a pain in my stomach all day after I listened to the presentation. I had a pain for all the lives that were lost and a pain for all the horrible things that humans did to one another without thinking twice. I also had a pain of guilt. Guilt? This was something that surprised me. I thought about all the awful things that happen in my school every day. Things that are said such as 'that's so Jewish' - meaning 'how could you do something that stupid?' I remember one day that we were talking about racism, sexism and discrimination against religions in our English class. The same people who used the word 'Jewish' in slang form commented on how terrible discrimination is. When I made the comment that the vocabulary they use is very discriminatory, I was told in no uncertain terms that it was just a word used in a slang manner. So I kept my mouth shut and said nothing more of the matter. This is where my guilt came from. Instead of persisting that this is wrong, I stayed quiet to avoid

confrontation. Trying to avoid confrontation with Hitler was a huge contributing factor to the Holocaust."

"In my math class after the presentation, my heart sank. People saying things like 'gays deserved to die along with the Jews' and so on. This time I could not stay quiet. I had something to say and I did. I asked my math class if they thought all the smokers deserved to die or all the football players or even all the kids with blue eyes. I think I caught some of them off guard and they were shocked I was speaking up, but I said what needed to be said. Some of my classmates thought about it for awhile and maybe changed their way of thinking. If enough people speak up instead of avoiding confrontation, things might just change a little,"

--10th Grader



"I agree with you when you said the spirit of the Holocaust is still very greatly alive, and that's the main point of the presentation. It is so weird that now that I have taken in the knowledge that it is all over, because I see it everywhere. I see it in myself, my friends, and everyone else here in Medford. I see those flames in everyone in the world. For example, we have a new kid in our high school. And his race is different than everyone else's. I heard from one of my teachers that some kids came up and pushed him into a locker and said, 'You don't belong here.' When our teacher had told us, I was so ashamed of our town. I mean, I wonder what he thinks of Medford now. It makes me wonder how people can do that to others. I could never do that to someone, that's so cruel.

--8th Grader

"When I was growing up I went to a public school in a small community and I remember thinking that I didn't fit in. I worked hard at my studies and did very well. Somewhere along the line I picked up the belief that I was inferior no matter what I did. I was ashamed of my skin color and by the time I reached high school I tried to distance myself from my own people and seek acceptance from my Caucasian peers. I was even ashamed to be seen in public with my family though I loved them very much. When friends approached me while I was in a group of white people I acted as if I hardly knew them and made excuses to my white friends when they left. I practiced prejudice against my own race. Over time I went from one extreme to the next. I bullied and went out of my way to attack everyone who was not a member of my race. There were a lot of prejudiced people on both sides but I used that as an excuse to be violent. I turned those past feelings of shame and inferiority into anger and I acted out on that hatred. Eventually that hatred grew until only the people in my community where I grew up were exempt. Being a member of my race in a different community was no longer good enough. Finally, even that circle grew smaller until at last only I was left to hate. And I did. I hated myself."

--St. Croix Correctional Center Inmate



"Felons such as myself failing to see, or avoiding to see the hurt and pain I cause on others. Also, not recognizing all the people I affect. What I mean by this is the traits that frustrate me or anger me are traits I deep down inside know I have and am very careful to hide. All the confusion, fear and sadness, I will vent these emotions on others..."

--St. Croix Correctional Center Inmate



"I can honestly say that I've never made a religiously or racially motivated slur out of hate in my life. This I can honestly say. But I've thought it (feed the fire). I've used them in joking conversation (feed the fire). I've heard others say it and have done nothing (feed the fire). No, there is no Holocaust going on today, there's wars of religion in the news. Terrorists killed 40 people today somewhere overseas over some kind of religious difference -- ignorance (feed the fire). What can I possibly do about it? -- Apathy. (Watch the fire burn.)"

--St. Croix Correctional Center Inmate

"What you said really got to me, because I noticed the way we persecute others isn't so different from what started the Holocaust. I really feel the effect of it, that it really happened. Real people died, and it could happen again unless we blow out the flame of hatred and accept people the way they are."

"It's almost like I have been given new eyes, and I see everything in a new light. I see people I would have labeled as "different" really aren't. I also saw something that frightened me. I saw a flame burning in many anti-minority groups across the country. On a smaller scale, our town wrongfully persecutes blacks, Hmong, Polish, blondes, and anyone who doesn't fit in. In our school, we tease wiggers, hicks, preppies, skanks and people who act, dress, or talk differently. What scared me the most was that I was afraid of anyone different or someone I don't understand."

"Ever since you talked to us, I've been thinking about the candle, that if we find a flame burning inside of us, we should blow it out. I have made a late New Year's Resolution to blow out that flame."

--8th Grader



It is the greatest of all mistakes to do nothing because you can only do a little. Do what you can.

-Sydney Smith

Timothy J. Scott

Those who do not learn from the past shall be condemned to repeat it.

-- Santayana

Timothy J. Scott is a shareholder of Bakke Norman, S.C. He practices bankruptcy, real estate and municipal law from its New Richmond office.

After graduation from St. John's University, he taught German at St. Lawrence Seminary before attending law school at the University of Minnesota. After receiving his Juris Doctor Degree in 1988, he participated in the Young Lawyer's Program of the German Academic Exchange Service in Germany. He then enrolled at the Eberhard-Karls Universität in Tübingen, Germany, where he received a Master of Laws in German and European Community Law in 1990.

Mr. Scott has made teaching the lessons of the Holocaust a lifetime mission. He has delivered his Holocaust presentation hundreds of times; he currently gives 40-50 presentations per year. In addition to his frequent speaking at schools, he has also delivered this talk to teachers' conventions and other adult religious, civic and business groups. He was the recipient of the 1995 Attorney of the Year for Law Related Education from the State Bar of Wisconsin.

Mr. Scott has also been an instrumental force in organizing the annual Bakke Norman lecture series. This series has featured guest speakers who challenge our local community including Alfons Heck, an Emmy Award winner who was a General in the Hitler Youth, Arun Gandhi, grandson of Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King III, and Timothy Scott with this Holocaust presentation.