

Hanna Blawat

"It is important to understand that big changes, the kind that transform the way human beings handle being human, start with small changes." (Warren, Holocaust Museum Houston). The Holocaust was the brutal massacre and imprisonment of Jews and other groups of people that Hitler and his accomplices viewed as "inhuman." In January of 1942, the Nazi Party came up with "The Final Solution" (Bulgin, Willmott). This was the plan to exterminate all Jews from Europe. Millions were sent to labor and concentration camps (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum). Some survived the horrors. However, many did not. Hanna Blawat was a victim of the Nazis' cruelty and society's tolerance.

Hanna Blawat was born in 1938 to Maier-David and Frymet-Leah Blawat in Gablin, Poland. Her father was a tailor who wished to provide a better life for his family. Mr. Blawat soon moved to France and got a job on a farm to earn money so his family could join him. However, before the papers were granted for his family to emigrate, the Nazis had invaded Poland. Two years later, Hanna and her remaining family in Poland were forced from their home into an overcrowded ghetto that had once been a luxurious vacationing spot for wealthy Jews (ucsd.edu).

Hanna, along with her mother and grandparents, lived in the ghetto for two more years before they, along with all the other Jews of Gabin, were sent to Chelmno Concentration Camp. Four-year-old Hanna, her mother, and her grandparents were murdered upon arrival. Hanna Blawat was just one of 1.5 million Jewish children who were cruelly and mercilessly slaughtered by the Nazis and their allies during the Holocaust (Museum of Tolerance).

This has made me realize what a privileged life is. The Holocaust has shown just how quickly our rights can be taken away due to another person's hatred. Hanna Blawat was merely

four years old when her rights were stripped away. Jewish people were robbed of their rights, many of which we take for granted: to religion, to go to school, to exist. As Elie Wiesel stated in his book, Sages and Dreamers: Biblical, Talmudic, and Hasidic Portraits and Legends, "True, we are too timid and powerless to take on all the guards of all the political prisons in the world; but in offering our solidarity to one prisoner, we denounce all the tormentors. True, we are powerless against death, but as long as we help one man, one woman, one child live one hour longer in safety and dignity, we affirm man's right to live." (Wiesel, 1991). What happened to the Jews was atrocious and happened due to tolerance of hatred. As a society, when we see discrimination, we must fight against it. One small act of simply speaking out against discrimination can make a difference. We can make a difference; we have to try. That is the only way to prevent another event like the Holocaust from ever recurring.