Post-World War II Resources

Lesson Plans

From Tragedy to Hope

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Introduction

This lesson coordinates with the *You Are There 1950: Making a Jewish Home* component of the *Indiana Experience* at the Eugene and Marilyn Glick Indiana History Center.

In this experience, visitors are invited to step back in time to April 5, 1950, to visit the Kaplan family in their Union Street home a year after their resettlement in Indianapolis from a post-World War II displaced-persons camp. The Kaplans, Jewish refugees from Poland, were making a new home and building a new life in Indianapolis after surviving the Nazi horrors in Europe. They resettled in Indianapolis with the help of Jewish Social Services, the Indianapolis Chapter of the National Council of Jewish Women, and the Indiana Refugee Service.

The curriculum is intended to provide historical context for life in Indiana in the postwar era and the Jewish community in Indianapolis. The lesson may be used to prepare students for a visit to *You Are There 1950: Making a Jewish Home* or it may be used as a follow-up to a visit. In addition, the historical context and themes will be relevant to classroom instruction even if a visit is not possible.

You Are There 1950: *Making a Jewish Home* opens on October 11, 2011, and will remain open through September 2012.

Overview/Description

In this lesson, students will learn about the Kaplan family as an example of a post-World War II refugee family. They will examine the choices that the Kaplan family had to make as they left Germany and immigrated to the United States. In addition, they will examine the process of becoming U.S citizens.

Learning/Instructional Objectives

Students will:

- recognize the Kaplan family as refugees
- list one to two reasons why the Kaplan family could not return to their home in Poland
- analyze the Kaplan family's choice to immigrate to the United States or to Israel
- examine and analyze Fanny Kaplan's Certificate of Naturalization
- describe the naturalization process to become a U.S. citizen.

Grade Level

Intermediate/middle school (grades 7 and 8) and high school

Academic Standards for the Social Studies

- Indiana Standards
  - Grade 4
    - U.S. Government 4.9—Identify world issues, including political, cultural, demographic, economic, and environmental challenges that affect the United States foreign policy in specific regions of the world.
    - U.S. Government 4.10—Discuss specific foreign policy issues that impact local community and state interests. (Economics; Individuals, Society and Culture)
  - Grade 5
    - U.S. Government 5.1—Define the legal meaning of citizenship in the United States.
    - U.S. Government 5.2—Describe the requirements for citizenship in the United States and residency in Indiana and deliberate on criteria used for attaining both. (Individuals, Society and Culture)
    - U.S. History 5.4—Describe Hitler's "final solution" policy and identify the Allied responses to the Holocaust. (Government, Geography)
    - U.S. History 5.6—Identify and describe the impact of World War II on American culture and economic life. (Government; Economics; Geography; Individuals, Society and Culture)
  - Grade 7
    - Geography and History of the World 7.2—Analyze the physical and human factors involved in conflicts and violence related to nationalist, racial, ethnic, religious, economic, and/or resource issues in various parts of the world, over time. Assess the human and physical environmental consequences of the conflicts identified for study. Propose solutions to conflicts that are still ongoing. (Change over Time, Spatial Interaction, Human Environment Interactions, Sense of Place)
  - Grade 8
    - World History 8.5—Identify and analyze the causes, events, and consequences of World War II.
    - World History 8.8—Describe and explain the origins of the modern state of Israel and the reactions of the peoples and states in southwest Asia. (Government)
    - World History 8.9—Describe ethnic or nationalistic conflicts and violence in various parts of the world, including Southeastern Europe, Southwest and Central Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa. (Sociology)
  - Grade 10
    - Geography and History of the World 10.2—Analyze the formation of states (countries) in selected regions and identify and appraise the contribution of factors, such as nationalism, in their formation. (Change over Time, Physical Systems, Origins, National Character)
- National Standards (National Council for the Social Studies)
  - II Time, Continuity, and Change; III People, Places, and Environments; V Individuals, Groups, and Institutions; VI Power, Authority, and Governance; IX Global Connections; X Civic Ideals and Practices

Social Studies/Historical Concepts

Refugees, immigration, Israel, United States, postwar era, citizenship, and diversity

Time Required

Two to three class periods

Materials Required

- Copies of the following news article from the collections of the Indiana Historical Society. Refer to pages eleven and twelve of this lesson.
    - "Saved from the D.P. Camp by Your JWF Gift," *Indiana Jewish Chronicle* article from May 5, 1950. (Indiana Historical Society Digital Image Collections, Item ID M0463_BOX358_05-05-1950)
- Copies of the *Indiana Jewish Chronicle* News Article Analysis Worksheet. Refer to page thirteen of this lesson.
- Copies of the following document, courtesy of Rosie Kaplan. Refer to page fourteen of this lesson.
    - Certificate of Naturalization for Frania Kaplan
- Copies of "The Kaplan Family Story." Refer to page fifteen of this lesson.
- Internet access to the History Channel's Citizenship Test at http://www.history.com/shows/classroom/interactives/citizenship-quiz (accessed September 20, 2011).

Background/Historical Context

Refugees are people who have fled their country in order to escape persecution due to race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social or political group, war, or a natural disaster.[1]

The Kaplan family, who came to Indianapolis in 1949 following World War II, provides an example of a Jewish refugee family. The Kaplans were Holocaust survivors and their personal story offers a window into the experience of European Jews in the postwar era.

In 1933 Adolf Hitler came to power in Germany with the intention of creating a German empire dominated by the Aryan race (ethnic Germans) and void of Jews. The National Socialist German Workers Party, popularly called the Nazi Party, blamed Germany's economic troubles on the country's Jewish inhabitants. Hitler harbored a deep personal hatred of Jews, which dated to the time he spent in Vienna as an impoverished young adult. One historian noted:

> In his memoirs, he [Hitler] claimed that Vienna was crucial to intellectual development: "In this period my eyes were opened to two menaces of which I had previously scarely known the names: Marxism and Jewry." (Kershaw, p. 29) He found an ideology that allowed him to explain his failure and a target for his resentments. It is impossible to explain the precise cause or the exact beginning of Hitler's hatred of the Jews; but it is also clear that anti-Semitism was the oxygen of his mental life.[2]

Very early on, Hitler established laws restricting the lives and freedoms of German Jews. For example, in April 1933 a series of laws banned Jews from practicing certain professions, including medicine, law, accounting, and teaching. The law also limited the number of Jewish students allowed in schools and universities. In September 1935 enforcement of the Nuremberg Laws stripped Jews of their

1. Joyce A. Kelen, "Faces and Voices of Refugee Youth: A Curriculum Guide for Teachers and Counselors Grades K-6" (Salt Lake City, UT: Salt Lake Education Foundation, 2002), p. 7.

2. Larry L. Ping, "Adolf Hitler: Biography and character," Southern Utah University, accessed September 22, 2011, http://www.suu.edu/faculty/ping/pdf/HitlerBiography.pdf.

German citizenship and made it illegal for them to vote or marry non-Jews. Systematic discrimination continued as the government took control of Jewish-owned businesses and barred Jews from public places such as parks, movie theaters, and eventually public schools.[3] To futher isolate Jews from German society, Hitler established walled ghettos in cities, where Jews were forced to live. Jewish ghettos were common in the Middle Ages; the term was first used in the sixteenth century to refer to a section of Venice to which Jews were confined.[4] The Nazis revived the practice during World War II. Living conditions in these ghettos were very poor and work was difficult to find.

To expand German influence over Europe, Hitler's army invaded adjacent countries. In March 1938 Nazi troops entered Austria where Hitler immediately extended his anti-Semitic policies. On September 1, 1939, Hitler's troops invaded Poland, an act that resulted in the outbreak of World War II.

On the eve of the Nazi invasion, Poland had a robust and thriving Jewish population. For example, more than 352,000 Jews lived in Warsaw.[5] During the war, Poland lost 19.6 percent of its population. Three million Polish Jews were killed as well as two million non-Jewish Poles. Between July and December 1941, at least one million Polish Jews were shot, mass-execution style in front of graves the Jews had dug themselves. Later, the Nazis abandoned this method "because of its deleterious effect on the morale of those who had to carry it out."[6] Death camps, where Jews were gassed, replaced the Nazi firing squads. The mass destruction of the Jewish population continued. The loss of three million Polish Jews represents half of the total number of Jews killed during the Holocaust, a figure that illustrates how devastating the events of World War II were to that country.[7]

At the time of the German invasion of Europe, Berek Kaplan, who used the nickname Benny in America, was a soldier in the Polish army. Kaplan fought in Warszawa (Warsaw) until defeat was eminent. Shortly before the siege ended on September 29, 1939, Kaplan's Polish commander told his troops to return home. Kaplan managed to make it home to Radom, Poland, without being captured. While other members of his family were sent to a Nazi extermination camp near the Polish village of Treblinka, Kaplan and his first wife were among the 32,000 Jews from the Radom area who were forced into the Radom Ghetto.

After his wife and two children were taken to the Treblinka extermination camp, Kaplan was placed in a forced-labor camp at Pionki. He worked in a leather factory and later a shoe factory, walking long distances each day from the barracks to these factories. After becoming ill with typhus, Kaplan was taken to the Krynki ghetto. From there, he was placed at another work camp, managed to escape, and hid in the woods near Bekiesza until the end of the war. At some point, the Nazis killed Kaplan's wife and two sons. Kaplan returned to Radom sometime after January 1945.

Frania Goldstein, who went by the name of Fanny when she moved to America, began her wartime experience in the Warszawa (Warsaw) Ghetto, which housed approximately

3. Deborah Cardin and Elena Rosemond-Hoerr, "Lives Lost, Lives Found: Baltimore's German Jewish Refugees, 1933–1945 Teacher Outreach Kit," Jewish Museum of Maryland, accessed September 13, 2011, http://www.jhsm.org/sites/default/files/LLLF%20Curriculum.pdf, p. 11.
4. Anatoly Liberman, "Why Don't We Know the Origin of the Word Ghetto?" Oxford University Press (blog), 2009, accessed September 22, 2011, http://blog.oup.com/2009/03/ghetto/.
5. "Ghettoes Established by Nazis in Poland," PolishJews.org, accessed September 13, 2011, http://polishjews.org/shoad/shoah7.htm.
6. "Polish Jewry During World War II," PolishJews.org, accessed September 13, 2011, http://polishjews.org/shoah/indes.htm.
7. Ibid.

450,000 Jews. According to Goldstein, when the Germans were rounding up Jews in the ghetto, they called for all Jews to come to a central meeting place, where they were supposed to be taken to work camps. Pregnant at the time with her first child, she walked with her husband, Haskel Goldstein, following a crowd toward the designated place. In the mass of people, Goldstein became separated from her husband, who was sent to the death camp and was killed. Goldstein hid in the Warsaw ghetto, where she gave birth to a boy, Ruben. He was killed when the Nazis discovered their hiding place. After the Nazis captured Goldstein, she was placed in various work camps in Poland. Although her exact journey is unknown, she spent time at the Majdanek annihilation camp and the Skarzysko and Czestochowa work camps.

As distant cousins, Kaplan and Goldstien knew each other before the war. After the war ended, Kaplan heard that Goldstein had survived and was living in another Polish city. Since they had both lost their spouses, he sent for her to come to the town where he was working. They married and began a new life together. Eventually, the Kaplans made their way to a displaced-persons camp in Stuttgart, Germany, where they remained until they immigrated to the United States in 1949.

The Kaplans were among the six and a half to seven million displaced persons that the Allied armies liberated at the end of World War II. More than four million of these displaced persons were repatriated, meaning they returned to their country of origin. However, some displaced persons did not return to their homeland for various reasons. Returning home was not a realistic option for eastern European Jews. Their countries were occupied by the Communist Soviets. "The thriving Jewish communities had been destroyed; the anti-Semitism which continued unabated after the war doomed any attempt at rebuilding these communities."[8] Pogroms, which were systematic attacks on Jews, continued in Poland following World War II. For example, in the Kielce Pogrom of 1946, forty Jews were killed.[9] Like millions of other Jewish displaced persons, the Kaplans had nowhere to go. In the words of one survivor, "The Jews suddenly faced themselves. Where now? Where to? For them things were not so simple. To go back to Poland? To Hungary? To streets empty of Jews, towns empty of Jews, a world without Jews. To wander in those lands, lonely, homeless, always with the tragedy before one's eyes . . . and to meet, again, a former Gentile neighbor who would open his eyes wide and smile, remarking with double meaning, 'What! Yankel! You're still Alive'"[10]

Immediately after liberation, the U.S. Army scrambled to find accommodations for those displaced persons who were "non-repatriable." "The U.S. Army set up camps that were technically known as assembly centres. They varied in size from sites with fifty people to camps housing over 7,000 persons. They comprised barracks, former POW and slave labor camps, industrial workers' housing, tent cities, hotels, apartmenbuildings, garages, stables, monasteries, hospitals, sanatoriums, schools, and so forth."[11] In some cases, Jews were housed alongside former Nazi guards. Despite these conditions, Jewish survivors in the displaced-persons camps created a community of support, helping each other through their grief and making the best out of difficult circumstances. Although the camps were intended to be temporary, in many cases it took years for Jewish displaced persons to settle in a new land.[12]

8. Angelika Königseder and Juliane Wetzel, "Displaced Persons, 1945–1950: The Social and Cultural Perspective," Cengage Learning Historical Archive, accessed September 20, 1011, http://www.tlemea.com/postwareurope/essay5.asp.
9. Rebecca Weiner, "The Virtual Jewish History Tour–Poland," Jewish Virtual Library, accessed September 13, 2011, http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/vjw/Poland.html#Post World War II/Communist Era.
10. Königseder and Wetzel, "Displaced Persons," 2.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid., 3.

The Kaplan family spent more than four years in the Stuttgart camp. Known as one of the better camps, Stuttgart, was part of the American-occupied zone and housed Jews who lived in requisitioned apartment buildings previously filled with soldiers. A Talmud Torah (religious elementary school) and a kosher kitchen were also located in Stuttgart.[13]

While living in the Stuttgart camp, the Kaplans had two children, a daughter named Rosza (Rosie) and a son named Moszesz (Morris). Rosie writes:

> In Germany, we lived in a displaced person's camp (DP Camp) which was probably an apartment building in Stuttgart. My father started a business which was probably like a thrift shop, buying what he could and reselling it for a bit more. We must have gotten help from the Jewish agency there. The photos of that time make us look pretty prosperous. My mother even had a helper, a German woman named Rose. My parents regained their health and confidence. There was a community of survivors who supported each other. My aunt Hannah (my father's sister) and her husband Joseph were with us. Hannah was the only survivor from both sides of my parents' families.[14]

As the Kaplans considered their future, they had to decide where they would live. The United States and Israel provided two possibilities. According to Rosie, "When Israel became a state, in May 1948, we were given the option of going the *[sic]* America or Israel. My parents chose America, safer for a family with two small children. My aunt and uncle went to Israel, lived in a tent and dealt with yet another WAR."[15]

Finally, in March 1949, the Kaplans left the camp and immigrated to the United States as refugees under the Displaced Persons Act of 1948. This act ultimately resulted in the immigration of 205,000 displaced persons and 17,000 orphans to the United States.[16] Under the sponsorship of the Indianapolis Jewish Social Services Agency and the help of the United Service for New Americans, the Kaplans arrived at New Orleans aboard the U.S. Army Transport *General S.D. Sturgis*, a former troopship. After docking in New Orleans, they boarded a train for Indianapolis, where they were met at Union Station by Nathan Berman, director of the Jewish Social Services Agency in Indianapolis.

The Kaplans began their new life in Indianapolis. First housed at the Hotel Michigan, they moved into a home shared with another Jewish family, and then found a home of their own at 1250 Union Street on Indianapolis's south side. The Kaplans received assistance from various Jewish agencies in Indianapolis as they settled into the community—the Jewish Social Services, National Council for Jewish Women, and the Indianapolis Committee for Refugees to name a few.

The Indianapolis Jewish community provided a much needed support network for the Kaplans and other refugee families. When the Kaplans arrived in Indianapolis, they spoke only Yiddish (a combination of Hebrew and German) and Polish. The National Council of Jewish Women provided a visiting English tutor for Fanny and the children, while Kaplan attended night classes at nearby Manual High School. Jewish Social Services provided Kaplan with a job at Kraft Bakery, helped the family find housing, provided furnishings, and more. A caseworker named Dora Burton guided the Kaplans through this important transition period and helped them prepare for U.S. citizenship.

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13. "Stuttgart West," United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, accessed September 13, 2011, http://www.ushmm.org/museum/exhibit/online/dp//camp10.htm.
14. Rosie Kaplan, e-mail to Elosie Scroggins, Indiana Historical Society, July 5, 2011.
15. Ibid.
16. "Displaced Person Transports: Cargo of Hope," American Merchant Marine at War, accessed September 12, 2011, http://www.usmm.org/dp.html.

Teacher's Instructional Plan

Introduction

- Begin the lesson by reviewing information about the Holocaust with students.
    - In particular, students should be familiar with the fact that six million Jews died in the Holocaust as a result of mass executions and disease in Jewish ghettos, concentration camps, and forced-labor camps.
- Share with students the information given in the historical essay about the Holocaust's effects on Jews in Poland.
    - Refer to pages three through six of this lesson.
- After students have an understanding of the horrors of the Holocaust for Polish Jews, introduce them to the experiences of the Kaplan family.
    - Relate the experiences of the Kaplan family as described in the historical essay.
    - Have students read "The Kaplan Family Story."
        - Refer to page fifteen of this lesson.
    - Remind students that the Kaplans were refugees at the end of World War II. Many Polish refugees could not return to Poland because their homes and communities had been destroyed. They did not know if they would be safe there, because Poland was now occupied by Communist Soviets.

Procedure

- Ask students to use their knowledge of the Holocaust, in particular the devastation in Poland, and the Kaplan family story to consider reasons why the Kaplan family did not want to stay in Poland after the war and chose to go to a German displaced-persons camp.
    - Students may share their ideas in a think-aloud discussion.
- Tell students that this is not the only difficult decision that the Kaplans had to make.
    - Remind students that the Kaplans spent more than four years at the Stuttgart displaced-persons camp. Rosie, the Kaplan's daughter, and her brother, Morris, were born in the camp. The camp was not intended to be their permanent home and their parents had to determine where they ultimately wanted to live. According to Rosie, in 1948 when the state of Israel was created, the Kaplans had to decide whether they would immigrate to the United States or Israel.
- Tell students that after World War II a Zionist movement promoted the idea of an independent Jewish state. People advocating for the creation of the new Jewish nation argued that it would enable Jews to return to their Biblical homeland and provide sovereignty to the Jews who settled there. Jews and others who viewed Judaism as a culture, advocated for this new Jewish nation, while those who considered Judaism as a religion did not support the creation of a separate Jewish state. Although this movement was in place long before the Holocaust, it intensified calls for the creation of Israel. Many Americans, Jews and otherwise, supported the Zionist movement, especially after the Holocaust. One historian noted, "Zionism resolved the dilemma of [the] American; it provided a home for the remnants of European Jewry without incurring an immigrant exodus to the United States."[17]
- As a class, create a list of pros and cons for immigrating to the United States and a similar list for immigrating to the newly formed state of Israel.

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17. David Brody, "American Jewry, the Refugees and Immigration Restriction, 1932–1942," *Publications of the American Jewish History Society* 45 (September 1955), 219.

- Prompt student brainstorming with the following guiding questions/statements.
    - Remember that the Kaplans had two young children. Would it be preferable to take young children to an established community such as those available in the United States? Why?
    - The Kaplans' only surviving family members (Benny's sister and her husband) chose to go to Israel. Would you want to follow your family?
    - Many European Jews recall hearing wonderful things about America, such as "the streets are paved with gold." How might that influence your decision?
    - Many European Jews, especially after the Holocaust, valued the American ideals of liberty, democracy, and freedom of religion. At the same time, Israel was trying to model itself on America's democratic principles.
    - The promise of Israel was a permanent homeland for the Jews—a place where they would ultimately be safe from another Holocaust. How important would this dream be to your family?
    - Immediately after its founding in May 1948, Arab nations who rejected the plan by the United Nations to partition Palestine into a Jewish state (Israel) and an Arab state (Palestine) invaded Israeli territory. Would you want to experience another war?
- Ask students to write a journal entry describing the decision that they would make (to immigrate to the United States or Israel) and offer reasons for that decision.
    - As students know from reading "The Kaplan Family Story," on page fifteen of this lesson, or from your own summary, the Kaplans chose to immigrate to the United States. They came to the United States under the Displaced Persons Act of 1948, which provided for the resettlement of more than 200,000 displaced persons in the United States.
- Explain to students that the United Service for New Americans helped resettle refugees. Local agencies, such as the Jewish Welfare Federation, Jewish Social Services Indianapolis chapter of the National Council for Jewish Women, and other groups assisted in this effort.
- Distribute copies of the May 5, 1950, *Indiana Jewish Chronicle* new article, "Saved from the D.P. Camp by Your JWF Gift."
    - Refer to on pages eleven and twelve of this lesson.
- Also, distribute copies of the "Saved from the D.P. Camp by Your JWF Gift" worksheet.
    - Refer to page thirteen of this lesson.
- Allow students twenty to thirty minutes to read the article and complete the worksheet.
    - The last question on the worksheet asks students to predict whether or not the Kaplans will become U.S. citizens.
        - The Kaplans did become U.S. citizens.
- Distribute copies of Fanny Kaplan's Certificate of Naturalization, found on page fourteen of this lesson.
- Conduct a think-aloud discussion with students and ask the following questions:
    - On what date did Fanny become a U.S. citizen?

- What other details can we learn about Fanny Kaplan from this document? (date of birth, weight, height, color of hair, color of eyes, marital status, and former nationality, etc.)

- Tell students that in order to become a U.S. citizen, she had to meet the following requirements:
  - be at least eighteen years old
  - have held a green card for at least five years prior to her application
  - have lived in the district from which she applied for naturalization for at least three months prior to her application
  - have been a continuous resident of the United States for at least five years prior to her application
  - have been physically present in the United States for at least thirty months of the five years preceding her application
  - resided continuously in the United States from the time of her application for naturalization up until receiving citizenship
  - be able to read, write, and speak English and have a knowledge and understanding of U.S. history and government
  - "Be a person of good moral character, attached to the principles of the Constitution of the United States, and well disposed to the good order and happiness of the United States during all relevant periods under the law."[18]

- Have students take the U.S. citizenship quiz on the History Channel Web site, http://www.history.com/interactives/citizenship-quiz (accessed September 20, 2011).
  - Check to see if your students would pass the requirement that new citizens "have a knowledge and understanding of U.S. history and government."
  - If students do not have access to the Internet, use the link to the "100 Citizenship Questions" document to create a paper version of the quiz.

- After students have taken the citizenship quiz, ask them for their reactions. Were the questions difficult? Would they be difficult if you were a relative newcomer to the United States? Would they be difficult if English was not your first language?

- Finally, ask students to write a journal entry from Fanny Kaplan's perspective on the day she became a citizen of the United States (April 1, 1955). Ask students to discuss the emotions Fanny might have had on that day. Pride? Happiness? Excitement? A sense of loss at no longer being a Polish citizen? A sense of sadness at remembering the journey that brought her to this day?

Assessment

Use a teacher-developed rubric to assess student participation in class discussions, answers on the student worksheet, and the student-created journal entry.

Suggested Modifications

Use materials from the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum to examine the ways in which the United States dealt with European Jewish refugees during the war years. For details, go to http://www.ushmm.org/museum/exhibit/online/stlous/teach/supread.htm (accessed September 14, 2011).

18. "Path to U.S. Citizenship," U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, accessed September 14, 2011, http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.b9ac89243c6a7543f6d1a/?vgnextoid=86bd6811264a3210VgnVCM100000b92ca60aRCRD&vgnextchannel=86bd6811264a3210VgnVCM100000b92ca60aRCRD.

Additional Resources

Publications

Gottschalk, Max, and Abraham Duker. *Jews in the Post-War World*. New York: Dryden Press, 1945.

Provides information on Jewish refugees, who were not yet classified as "Displaced Persons. " Chapters include: The Position of the Jews in the Post-War World; Palestine in the New World; and Relief, Reconstruction, and Migration.

Uris, Leon. *Exodus*. New York: Bantam, 1983.

This classic novel tells the story of Jews who survived the Holocaust, struggled to come to the Middle East, and created the new Jewish state of Israel in 1948. *Exodus* focuses on several young characters and their roles in establishing the state, interwoven with historical events that portray the relationships among Jews, Arabs, and the British during this tumultuous period in history.

White, Lyman Cromwell. *300,000 New Americans: The Epic of a Modern Immigrant-Aid Service*. New York: United Hias Service, 1957.

Describes the local and national agencies that facilitated the resettlement of postwar Jewish displaced persons in the United States and helped them adjust to an American way of life.

Web sites

Golden, Jonathan, and Jonathan D. Sarna. "The American Jewish Experience in the Twentieth Century: Antisemitism and Assimilation, part 2." Divining America: Religion in American History, TeacherServe, National Humanities Center, 2000. http://www.nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/twenty/tkeyinfo/jewishexpb.htm (accessed September 14, 2011).

This essay offers information about the postwar Jewish refugee experience in America.

"Life Reborn: Jewish Displaced Persons 1945-1951." United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2000. http://www.ushmm.org/museum/exhibit/online/dp/menu.htm (accessed September 14, 2011)

A comprehensive Web resource with information about the history of postwar Jewish displaced persons, displaced-persons camps, and the Zionist movement. The Web site also includes a gallery of images and audio clips from oral histories.

"Voices of Liberty" New York: Museum of Jewish Heritage, 2009. http://www.mjhnyc.org/khc/voices/ (accessed September 14, 2011)

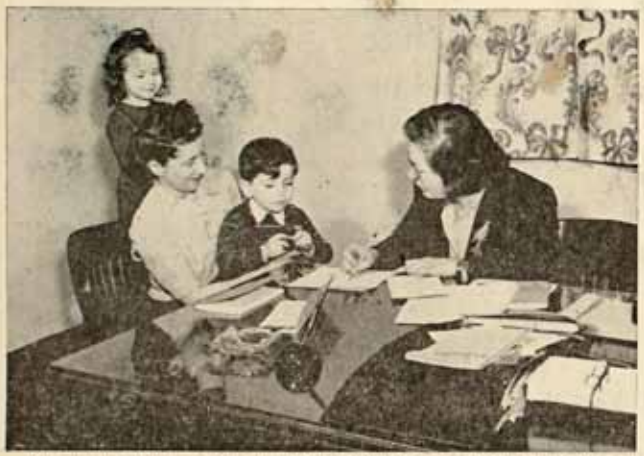
This soundscape is composed of diverse voices—Holocaust survivors, refugees, and others who chose to make the United States their home. Sometimes emotional, often humorous, and always meaningful, the testimonies relate the stories of new arrivals to the United States from their point of view.

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis (accessed September 14, 2011)

Offers information about naturalization, citizenship, refugees, and asylum in the United States.

SAVED FROM THE D.P. CAMP BY YOUR JWF GIFT

Delivered from a displaced persons camp in Germany by the dollars of Indianapolis Jewry, Berek Kaplan and his family spend their first night in Indianapolis in a hotel room. Mrs. Kaplan sits by her daughter, Rozza, as Mosezer gets a reassuring word from his father.



Now comes the problem of helping this Polish Jewish family find its place in a land of hope—and of problems, too. Here the Jewish Social Services begins to fill an invaluable role as Mrs. Kaplan, holding Mosezer while Rozza looks on talks to Dora Burton, a case worker.

Here, in words and pictures, is a story of deliverance from evil that might never have been told, save for the curious whims of fate and the generosity of Indianapolis Jewry.

Had a Nazi storm trooper, his lust for Jewish blood unquenched, seen the thin, frightened woman who hid in the rubble of the Warsaw ghetto, the story could have had no beginning. And thus no middle and end.

As much may be said for the young Pole of strong frame and brave heart who hid in the caves of the damned outside the Polish capital.

The story of Frania and Berek Kaplan could so easily have ended in those huge piles of emaciated, gaunt bodies with which the Herrenvolk shocked the sensibilities of a whole world.

But Frania and Berek Kaplan live today. And because they do, so do two children Rozza, 4½, and Mozezer, 3½.

The story of the Kaplans is one with a happy ending supplied by Indianapolis Jews who, though knowing nothing of hunger and little of fear, could not forget or reject the plight of their brethren who filled the "displaced persons" camps of Europe when World War II was ended.

Berek Kaplan, his wife and two children live in Indianapolis today at 1250 Union Street, one of more than 100 Jewish refugee families settled here by Jewish Social Services, whose immigration activities are supported solely by the Indianapolis Jewish Welfare Federation.

As the Federation opens its 1950 campaign, the Kaplan family offers a living proof that in your conscience and your dollars lie salvation for thousands of Jews over the world.

How wide-spread this salvation becomes is a matter which you must settle within your own heart.

Frania Kaplan sat with folded hands the other day in her home here and lived again the horrors which, though cushioned now with safety and security, do not die.

It is not many years ago that the bombs began to rain down upon Warsaw, Poland. Frania sought safety wherever there was the slightest hope for it.

From 1941 to 1943, the Germans set her to the task of sewing uniforms for her conquerors. Non-Jewish friends occasionally made her gifts of food, which, with the meager rations allotted her by her guards, sustained her life.

From 1943 to 1945, there was the ultimate in punishment which the German inflicted on his enemy—the concentration camp. Here there was an endless moving of rocks for no visible reason, labor in a munitions factory, in bed at 7 p.m., up at 3 a.m. and always the fear that one might meet the fate that befell Frania's parents, a brother and four sisters.

They were gassed and then burned in the infamous crematoriums.

As Mrs. Kaplan told her story once again, her daughter, Rozza, climbed into a chair beside her and cuddled a small doll to her breast.

The child's bright eyes returned the wink of her mother's visitor and a smile lighted her face. The kindness of Indianapolis Jews had insured that this little girl need not fear a strange man who asked her mother questions and wrote down the answers.

While Mrs. Kaplan suffered the tortures of German slavery in World War II, the man who would be her husband when peace came hid in the caves outside Warsaw. He had made his escape after a year in a concentration camp.

Peace reunited Frania and Berek Kaplan. There was a wedding . . . a displaced persons camp in Germany . . . the aid of unseen and unknown Jewish friends in Indianapolis . . . finally, 14 months ago, a new life as the Kaplans filed down the steps of Indianapolis' Union Station.

Now Rozza had lain down upon a couch and sleep gently closed her eyes as sleep left her brother, Mosezer. He awoke from a nap and found again the reassurance of his mother's lap and arms.

Berek Kaplan was at work at his job in a bakery.

The gifts of Indianapolis Jews have saved Berek Kaplan and his family.

But there are so many more.

With the lessons she may have learned in a nutrition class, Mrs. Kaplan and her children go to a grocery, where they find a friendly clerk and food in an endless variety. This is a long, but only a few years, from the abject misery of a Warsaw ghetto where food had to take second place to the problem of avoiding the whip of the Nazi conqueror.

A new country often demands that an immigrant learn a new language and so Berek Kaplan (right center, wearing figured tie) goes to a night class at Manual High School near his home. In time he will overcome the perplexing obstacle of English.

"Saved from the D.P. Camp by Your JWF Gift," [DETAIL] *Indiana Jewish Chronicle*, May 5, 1950. (Indiana Historical Society Digital Image Collections, Item ID M0463_BOX358_05-05-1950)

Now comes the problem of helping this Polish Jewish family find its place in a land of hope—and of problems, too. Here the Jewish Social Services begins to fill an invaluable role as Mrs. Kaplan, holding Moussee while Rossa looks on talks to Dora Burton, a case worker.

Among the first problems to be solved for any immigrant family is that the father find work. Mr. Kaplan solves that problem as, with a confident smile, he puts unleven bread in an oven of an Indianapolis bakery. He became a self-supporting worker three weeks after his arrival.

Any new immigrant finds that the sooner he joins in the activities of his new community, the sooner he will find happiness. For children, perhaps, the problem is not so great, or so it appears, at least, with as Rossa Kaplan, who shares the interest of a book with a new-found friend at Kirshbaum Center while brother Moussee is content, for the moment, to sit by.

For the mother of a refugee family, the first warm feeling of contentment may come when she is able to preside once more in her own kitchen. In a hot soup like Mrs. Kaplan ladles from a kettle in her kitchen, there can be more than nourishment and good taste—there can be a reassurance that here, at last, is peace.

Reason and order restored to her family, a refugee mother like Mrs. Kaplan may feel able now to begin to join in the activities of her neighbors, such as this instructional dinner on nutrition arranged by the Jewish Social Services and the Council of Jewish Women. Here she learns the possibility of American foods and, just as important, begins to feel that she "belongs."

A new country often demands that an immigrant learn a new language and so Berek Kaplan (right center, wearing figured tie) goes to a night class at Manual High School near his home. In time he will overcome the perplexing obstacle of English.

Mrs. Kaplan (wearing glasses) also sets herself to the task of learning a new language, going over a lesson with a home-visiting teacher sent by the Council of Jewish Women. Rossa and Moussee listen, for they too must learn.

All the problems of a terrifying past and a promising future disappear, for the moment, as the Kaplan family, together and safe, gather at their table for another meal. The dollars of Indianapolis Jewry have laid the gentle hand of brotherhood upon their shoulders.

"Saved from the D.P. Camp by Your JWF Gift," [DETAIL] *Indiana Jewish Chronicle*, May 5, 1950. (Indiana Historical Society Digital Image Collections, Item ID M0463_BOX358_05-05-1950)

"Saved from the D.P. Camp by Your JWF Gift" Student Worksheet

1. When was this article printed and in what newspaper did it appear?

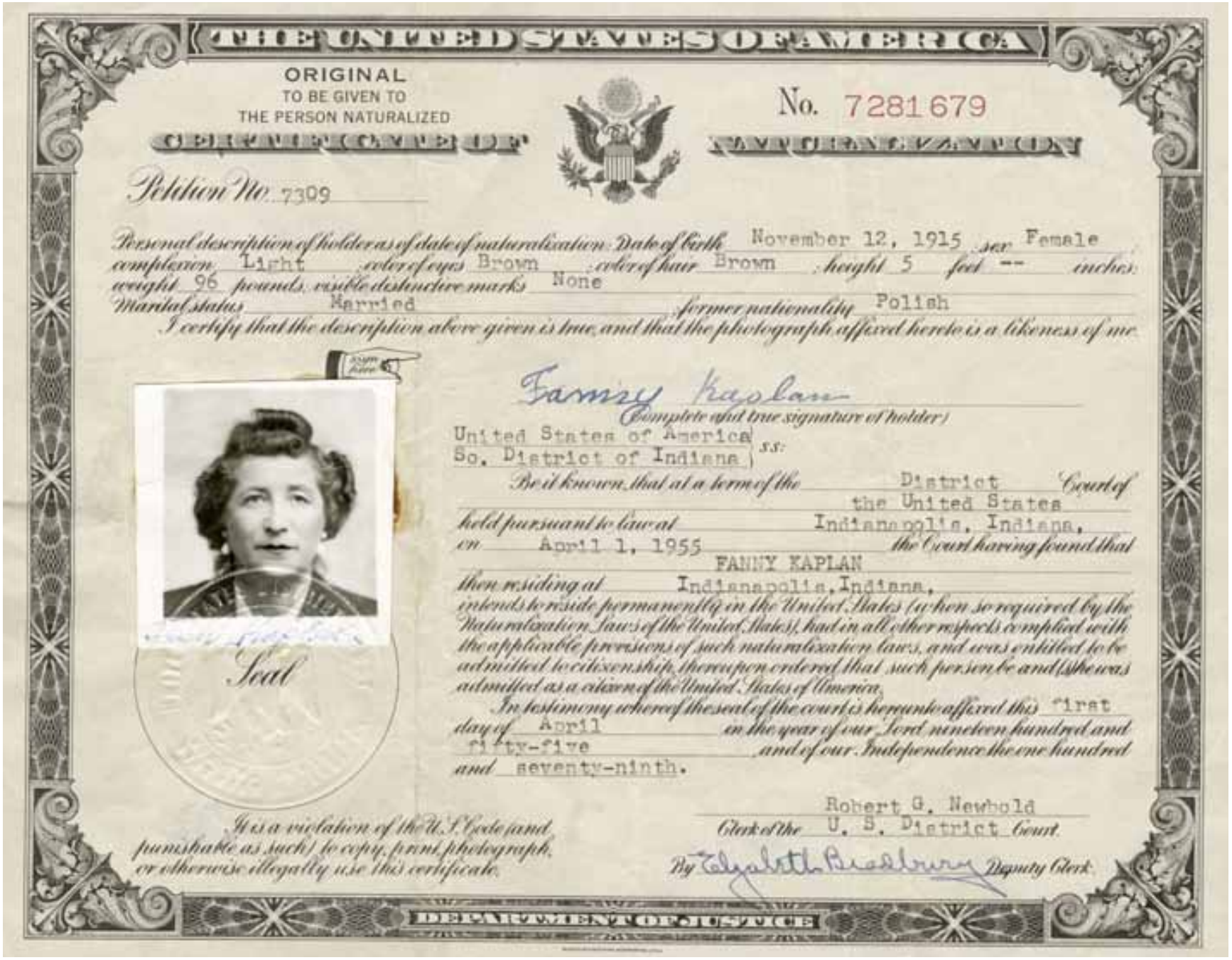
2. The article says the Kaplan family is one of many Jewish refugee families who came to Indianapolis during and after World War II. How many Jewish refugee families does the author claim there are in the city?

3. The article and accompanying photograph captions provide the names of several agencies, organizations, and community centers that provided aid to the Kaplans and other refugee families. Name at least three of these agencies.

4. In addition to providing an update on the Kaplan family, what is the purpose of this article? Cite evidence for your answer.

5. Use information you gather from reading the photograph captions that accompany the article to name at least three examples of ways that the Kaplans must adjust to life in America.

6. After reading this article, do you think that the Kaplan family will stay in America and become citizens of the United States? Give a reason for your answer.


THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

ORIGINAL
TO BE GIVEN TO
THE PERSON NATURALIZED

CERTIFICATE OF

No. 7281679

NATURALIZATION

Petition No. 7309

Personal description of holder as of date of naturalization: Date of birth November 12, 1915 sex Female complexion Light color of eyes Brown color of hair Brown height 5 feet -- inches weight 96 pounds visible distinctive marks None Marital status Married former nationality Polish

I certify that the description above given is true, and that the photograph affixed hereto is a likeness of me

Fanny Kaplan
(Complete and true signature of holder)

United States of America
So. District of Indiana } ss:

Be it known that at a term of the District Court of the United States held pursuant to law at Indianapolis, Indiana, on April 1, 1955 the Court having found that FANNY KAPLAN then residing at Indianapolis, Indiana, intends to reside permanently in the United States (when so required by the Naturalization Laws of the United States), had in all other respects complied with the applicable provisions of such naturalization laws, and was entitled to be admitted to citizenship, thereupon ordered that such person be and (she was admitted as a citizen of the United States of America.

In testimony whereof the seal of the court is hereunto affixed this first day of April in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and fifty-five and of our Independence the one hundred and seventy-ninth.

Seal

Robert G. Newbold
Clerk of the U. S. District Court.

By Elizabeth Bradbury Deputy Clerk.

It is a violation of the U.S. Code (and punishable as such) to copy, print, photograph, or otherwise illegally use this certificate.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Certificate of Naturalization for Frania Kaplan. Courtesy Rosie Kaplan.

The Kaplan Family Story

When the Kaplan family arrived in Indianapolis on March 15, 1949, they were not only embarking on a new adventure in a new land, but they also were bringing their stories of an incredible journey to America.

Berek (Benny) and Frania (Fanny) Kaplan, with their two children, Rosie and Morris, arrived in America aboard the U.S. Army Transport *Gen. S.D. Sturgis*. The ship dropped anchor in New Orleans on March 14, carrying 843 displaced persons from Europe. The Kaplans' trip from Bremerhaven, Germany, to America had taken fifteen days. From New Orleans, the Kaplans continued by train to Indianapolis, where Nathan Berman of the Indianapolis chapter of Jewish Social Services met them at the station and helped them settle temporarily into an apartment.

Upon arrival, Bennie told the *Indianapolis Star* that he left his home in Radom, Poland, and had struggled to survive since Adolf Hitler's troops invaded Europe almost a decade earlier. Fannie had spent time in forced labor and concentration camps. In Poland after the war, the Kaplans met ten other Jewish families and fled west through Czechoslovakia, arriving at the Stuttgart displaced-persons camp in Germany's American zone. The Kaplans' two children were born at the camp.

Arrival in a New Place

In March 1949 the *Jewish National Post* reported the Kaplans were the first Jewish family to arrive in Indianapolis after the U.S. Congress had voted to accept displaced persons a year earlier. The Jewish Social Service agency in Indianapolis had little advance notice of the Kaplans' arrival and publically appealed to the local Jewish community for help. Kaplan had been a baker in Poland and was given a job at Kraft Bakery. His wife remained at home with their two young children.

The *Indiana Jewish Chronicle* did a follow-up article on the family one year after their arrival in Indianapolis and reported that the family was doing well. After sharing quarters with a host family, the Kaplans were now living in a home on Union Street. Kaplan still worked at the bakery and was financially able to support his family. His wife was taking a nutrition class. The whole family, who spoke Yiddish and Polish when they arrived in the United States, was learning English.

Survival and Remembrance

The Kaplans were part of the large number of Jews and other groups who survived the atrocities of the Holocaust during World War II. Once safe on American soil, Kaplan shared stories of his experiences in a concentration camp and hiding in caves outside Warsaw. He lost his first wife and two sons in the concentration camps. After surviving the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, Fanny was forced to sew Nazi uniforms during the early years of the war. The Nazis killed her first son in the Warsaw ghetto. She lost her parents, brother, four sisters, and her husband in the concentration camps.

Like many survivors, the Kaplans coped with strong emotions and memories. They also grappled with ways to share their stories with new friends, fellow survivors, other Jews, and especially, their children. We will never know the full extent of their experiences.