

In Nazi Germany, Hitler's ideas about Jews did not stop until a war began. In the Shoah packet, I read about terrible acts against the Jews and that didn't pass through me easily. Hitler thought that by eradicating the Jews from Europe he was doing a good act, but how is it possible that a man could think this way? In response to the whole packet, I asked how could a man live with himself knowing that people are dying all around Europe, just because of him? Hitler made orders knowing that innocent people were being tortured and killed. I could never imagine making orders to kill innocent human beings. It just isn't right. Hitler knew exactly what he was doing and he still lived with himself, I find all of this extremely disturbing while it really is inspiring that with all this misfortune, the Jews still had hope and fought back. The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising was an act of resistance on the part of the Jews and the fact that the Jews resisted Nazi control really empowered me to stand up for myself.

In The Devil in Vienna, by Doris Orgel a girl in the following scene is young and has such a kind soul. "I made up this scene in my head: I'm in a crowd where Hitler is. Everyone is singing, me included. I'm standing near him. He hears me. 'Why, that girl sings beautifully,' he says. 'Come here, child.' I go right up to him. 'What is your name?' 'Inge Dornenwald.' He frowns. 'Isn't that a Jewish name?' 'Yes,' and show him the Jewish star (actually I don't have one) on a chain around my neck. Hitler claps his hand to his forehead and exclaims, 'I've been wrong about the Jews!' And from then on he likes Jews and treats them like everybody else--because of me!" Was Hitler so against the Jews that he would want to get rid of this little girl? This excerpt really makes me wonder what Hitler would have done in this situation. Is it possible that Hitler disliked the Jews so much as to hate any Jew, even if they were innocent?

Something that really stood out to me was the resistance that the Jews had shown during this terrible time. In The Devil in Vienna, there was a scene in which the Jews showed resistance to the Nazis. “‘Inge, Inge, do you hear!’ Vati’s voice rang with relief and pride. I was sure he wanted to march with them also. He pulled me back hard. ‘No!’ He took hold of my shoulders and made me turn around. ‘But we belong with them! Why can’t we march with them?’ ‘Inge, this is not child’s play, this is serious. And I won’t take chances with your safety. Don’t argue with me.’ He pushed me along in the direction we had come from.” This excerpt is not only a demonstration of resistance but also of how *unsafe* the resistance was. Vati (Inge’s dad) knew that this was a dangerous scene and as a matter of fact, on the next page of the book, the Nazis came and a fight arose. In the Shoah packet, there is a very intriguing sentence about resistance. “To embrace survival and refuse acceptance of the Nazi death sentence, both as individuals and for the Jewish people collectively, represented a choice to resist the imposed German fate.” Anything that the Jews did to keep themselves alive, was a form of resistance to the “imposed German fate.”

Despite all the physical violence in this time, Jews in the Ghetto tried to find any way to get food. How much food could the Jews eat if they were living in the ghetto? The Shoah packet says, “The amount of food the ghetto was allowed could change from week to week, sometimes from day to day.” In the ghettos, at its best, the Nazis would give the Jews 1100 calories. At its worst, 220. It is terrible to imagine Nazis choosing how much food to give to the Jews in the ghetto. If I ever had that power, I would never hate someone so much as to feed them only 220 calories of food a day.