

Grade 9

The Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre is pleased to offer a series of eight (8) units covering the following Grade 9 CAPS topic:

Failure of the Weimar, the rise of Nazi Germany, outbreak of WW2 in Europe, the Holocaust, people's experiences and resistance.

Unit 8

- Why study the Holocaust in South Africa

By the end of the unit Learners should be familiar with and think About:

1. The term “conflate”
2. The differences and similarities between the policies of the Nazis and the Apartheid regime
3. The reasons for studying different histories

In Unit 6 you learnt that after World War Two countries got together and decided that it was necessary to have a document which outlined what universal human rights were so that what happened in the Holocaust could never happen again. Most countries, apart from eight, did not sign South Africa being the eighth.

Now we must ask ourselves, why didn't South Africa sign, after all **South Africa fought on the side of the Allies and against the Nazis during WW2.**

- South Africa had policies of segregation and separation long before World War Two, long before the Nazis were in power during the Dutch and the British administrations
- So there was racism already in place in South Africa
- But in 1948, ***the same year that the Declaration of Human Rights was signed, The National Party passed into law the policy of Apartheid***
- This had already been in place through racist practices, but now was actually written into law
- From 1950, South Africans were classified on the basis of their race into four groups: “native”, “coloured”, “Asian”, “white”. By 1966, 11 million people had been classified under this population registration of 1950



Image 1



Image 2



Image 3

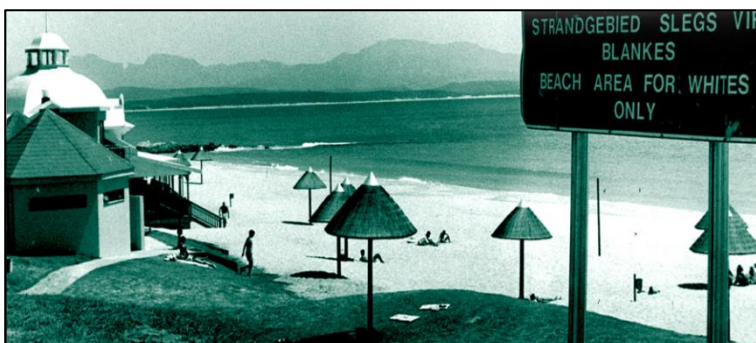


Image 4

Let's look at how these laws were implemented and think about the effect that they would have had on the citizens of South Africa.

Image 1 is of a little girl sitting on a bench, which is marked "Europeans only", Europeans only was the terminology in the early days of Apartheid before the term "whites" was used. The sign makes clear that the little girl with the white skin can sit on the bench but the woman who is obviously taking care of her and looking after her may not sit on that bench. This was social separation of the most basic kind.

Image 2 is a particularly nasty and dehumanising sign threatening trespassers with ugly consequences. Please note white people are not listed as a threat.

Image 3 shows a sign at a station in Pretoria. Please note the terminology. Think about the use of the words "non-white". The implication being if you are not white then you are a "non" a 'not'. You are not seen for who you **are**. You are seen for who you **are not**'.

Image 4 is an image of the beach. Please note, it's a big area for "whites only". The beach is all but deserted with only a few people sitting on it. But people of colour would certainly not have been allowed onto that beach.

So you can see that all of these are designed to **separate, isolate, humiliate**.

You might remember hearing those words before in the context of Nazi Germany.

The consequences of the Apartheid Laws

- Due to laws upholding the belief that one race was superior to all others, citizens regarded as inferior were:
- Stripped of their citizenship
- Denied citizenship rights such as voting, equality, jobs, quality education
- Deprived of family life
- Dispossessed of their land
- Robbed of their dignity, humiliated and abused

Similarities to Nazi Germany

The Nazis also believed in the superiority of what they called “Aryan” blood

NUREMBERG LAWS:

- Stripped of their citizenship
- Denied citizenship rights such as voting, equality, jobs, quality education
- Deprived of family life
- Dispossessed of their land
- Robbed of their dignity, humiliated and abused

Differences to Nazi Germany

The Apartheid regime did not commit a genocide, as they utilised those classified as Black as cheap labour.

People were classified according to the colour of their skin. The Nazis based their perceived differences on blood.

Apartheid policies were applied in South Africa only, whereas the Nazis applied their racist laws in all the occupied countries.

Germany intended to murder every Jewish man, woman and child worldwide.

Please note and this is very important:

- You cannot conflate histories
- That means you cannot take two different histories that take place at different times and in different circumstances and try push them together to say they are the same
- No two histories are the same
- Circumstances such as the context, era, individuals, the way the world sees things are different.

We study different histories so that can observe certain similarities and learn lessons but we cannot conflate them.

Can we compare pain?

Is it useful?

What should we do with these histories?

Should we compare pain?

Can we compare pain?

If a mother has lost her son because he was taken to a prison in Pretoria and beaten to death, and a mother has lost her son because he was taken by the Nazis and shot dead into a ditch in a forest, is the pain of the mother in South Africa any more or less than the pain of the mother in Nazi Germany?

We should be very careful about comparisons of pain as it is not helpful and does not move us forward in understanding our histories and learning from them

What is helpful?

Learning from these histories and **using what we have learnt in a positive way.**

Why study the history you've just studied about Nazi Germany?

In the first unit we learnt about **prejudice**, about **stereotypes**. We learnt about **scapegoating**.

From these histories, we learn the **consequences** of **dehumanizing** people on the basis of **stereotypes** and the dreadful dangers and consequences of doing so.

QUESTIONS

1. What does the word “conflate” mean?
2. Explain why it is important not to “conflate” histories
3. Do you think it is important to study histories other than our own South African history? Give a reason for your answer

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre:

<http://ctholocaust.co.za/>

Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwVBUs5VqvsumuwDdzYIAaQ>

historians.org

[https://www.historians.org/about-aha-and-membership/aha-history-and-archives/historical-archives/why-study-history-\(1998\)](https://www.historians.org/about-aha-and-membership/aha-history-and-archives/historical-archives/why-study-history-(1998))

unesco.org

<https://en.unesco.org/news/importance-teaching-and-learning-about-holocaust>