



The Holocaust Institute  
at the University of Miami

Dear Educator,

As the Director of the University of Miami Holocaust Teacher Institute, I am pleased to recommend the Documentary Film The Absence - La Ausencia - a 35 minute documentary film, which is perfect for viewing in a single class period. It would be an appropriate introduction to a unit on The Nazi Holocaust of 1933-1945, which is mandated in the state of Florida for all public schools.

The Absence - La Ausencia features 12 Holocaust Survivors from various countries in Europe narrating the factual accounts as well as provide personal testimony about The Holocaust. Their stories are supplemented with historical Archival Footage. This addition of primary source material is particularly important and provides students with accurate historical knowledge as well as a powerful emotional connection to the authentic survivor testimony. This demonstrates a best practice in Holocaust education, which for instructional purposes should balance both the historical and the emotional aspects of the events.

The film is artistically done, and the film producer, Liz Schonfeld, herself a daughter of Holocaust survivors also offers a website with a study guide, which is an excellent resource for teachers and students as they study The Holocaust. In addition, there are musical scenes performed by youngsters that bring messages of unity and peace to mankind, a much-needed lesson for today's complex world. The children's singing also promote better understanding, the need for hope, and a desire to create a better world without prejudice and discrimination. The themes of the film also support school district initiatives such as character education, culturally responsive teaching, and the importance of recognizing the dangers of intolerance, prejudice, and discrimination. Today as we see a surge in antisemitism, I believe this film will help students to understand and appreciate the Jewish culture and its history.

The Absence- La Ausencia has been distributed at many highly recognized institutions, including the University of Miami Holocaust Teacher Institute, the Holocaust Documentation and Education Center (HDEC) and Miami-Dade County Public Schools teachers have reported it to be of high interest to students and useful as an instructional resource. So once again, it is my pleasure to recommend the film as a major visual resource on the study of the Holocaust to Florida school districts for grades 7-12 and Adult Education.

The website for the film is:

<https://www.holocaustdocumentary.com/>

which includes a synopsis of the film, historical background, and a study guide for teachers.

Best Regards,

Dr. Miriam Klein Kassenoff,

Director, University of Miami Holocaust Teacher Institute

Author, film consultant, Child Refugee Survivor of the Holocaust