

Only a Number

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Aranka was only a girl, up until the Holocaust. Adolf Hitler took everything close to her away, ruined her life, and made her feel exceptionally out of place. This is an awful thing to do to someone, and many of us think '*I wouldn't do that!*' yet it happens every day. Bullying is an extreme problem in the average teenage life. Of course it is not exactly the same, considering Hitler and the Nazi's murdered thousands of innocent people that they didn't even know. But bullying can lead to suicide, if extreme. So, even though the Holocaust is an intensified version, both Atkar, Hungary and an average middle school are home to one of the biggest problems of all times, bullying.

The Nazi's main bullying factor was how intimidating they were to all of the regular citizens. When Aranka's father died at the age of 44, the property was taken away due to the new laws. What was she going to do to stop them? That's what many victims of bullying cases feel when they are in a sticky situation, powerless. The goal of the Nazi's was to scare the people into thinking that the only thing to do was follow along and not resist. They saw no alternative option, how most victims feel. But they have to know that there will be an end to the sadness and depression of the situation that they are in.

Prejudice is a huge problem in both situations. I know for a fact that prejudice still exists in bullying today because I hear murmurs in the hallway about how so-and-so is so annoying because she is from a certain country, or how he/she doesn't wear clothes from that new store in the mall. And it is not just ethnic groups or religions now-a-days. It also includes how someone's clothes are or how their hair is. That will start rumors like '*Oh, she wore those jeans yesterday, she must not shower!*' which leads to problems. It would really just be a much better

world if all of us could simply look past everything and see what is on the inside. End unfair judging and stereotyping. Didn't Aranka want us to look past the number on her arm and the star stitched on her coat? She wanted us to learn a lesson and pass it on. That we are all more than what we seem.

Stereotyping is even broader, Jewish were the main group that got stereotyped, but there were other groups too. Many people who didn't have blonde hair and blue eyes were also stereotyped and unfairly judged. But there are ways to prevent thoughts and actions that could lead us into a situation like the holocaust was. Be kind to the new kid in your class. Sit with the girl who's not wearing the latest fashion trends. Be a good example for all of the other people watching. Start a positive chain reaction, and the results may surprise you. Pushing past the initial judgment that all people have (whether or not they admit it) is the first and most important step to ridding the planet of stereotyping.

In conclusion, the Holocaust and what goes on in most middle school hallways are different in actuality, but almost the exact same thing in substance. All of us need to work together to avoid another Holocaust. So Aranka is not just A17855, she is a women capable of love, pain, and depression. She was able to write a book for us all, so that we can all look to it in the future to help our world in harmony. Let's all work together to avoid a future Holocaust situation. So let us take Aranka as a sign. We're all supposed to keep open minds for every different kind of person imaginable. So I am going to take the lesson of open-mindedness out of Aranka's movie, and always remember that we are more than what appears on the outside.