

Facing History and Ourselves Annual Report 2001–2002

I've had **13** MATH classes, **20** ENGLISH classes,
6 or **7** SCIENCE classes, ART, P.E., SPANISH...
But in all the time I've been in school, I've had
one class about **being more human.**

Voices of Facing History

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Over the past 26 years, Facing History and Ourselves has been privileged to get to know, and learn from, millions of people from many walks of life. In addition to educators, students, and parents, our extensive network of friends and partners includes scholars, authors, journalists, artists, business and political leaders, as well as those who have been the makers of and witnesses to history. Voices of Facing History is our way of introducing you to these remarkable individuals. They join us at conferences, workshops, and community events. They interview us, and we them. They offer powerful testimonials of their life experiences.

cover quote:

Jacki Evans, Amador Valley High School student





message from the

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Hold meetings that “weigh the fate of nations” in “the forbidding context of Nagasaki,” declared scientist and humanist Jacob Bronowski. After viewing the ashy, clinical remains of the city in 1945, he experienced a “universal moment”—one that “dwarfed” his imagination: “We looked up and saw the power of which we had been proud loom over us like the ruins of Nagasaki.” He believed that only in such places “could statesmen make realistic judgments of the problems which they handle on our behalf.”

Years later, Bronowski used the medium of television to explore the inventions and innovations that have inspired humans to reach for the stars. In *The Ascent of Man*, he also reminded viewers of the evil done by those who claim “the knowledge of the gods.” In the 20th century, their dogma resulted in the Holocaust—the shame, humiliation, and ultimately murder of millions of Jews and others. At one point, he kneels at a pond at Auschwitz where the ashes of members of his own family were flushed and reminds us that technology did not commit these murders; they were “done by dogma,” by those who believe they had “absolute knowledge with no test in reality.”

Sadly, too few have heeded Bronowski’s words. Antisemitism has not disappeared nor have genocides. Since 1945, atrocities in Cambodia, Rwanda, and Bosnia have reminded us that human beings remain capable of not only beauty beyond words but also crimes beyond belief. And as the 21st century began, we witnessed yet again murders inspired by dogma.

Some saw the tragic events of September 11, 2001, first-hand, others from a distance, but all were changed by yet another “universal moment.” My daughter breathed the ashes of New York City that day, as did our Facing History family there. And in classrooms around the world, we all weighed the fate of nations in the clinical, ashy remains of human destruction.

Since September 11th, many people have said, “Your work is needed now more than ever.” At first, that statement stopped me cold. For nearly three decades, I have meditated on the events that led to the Holocaust and other atrocities. Through all of those years, I have been driven by a sense of urgency—a belief that our work is needed now more than ever!

I have come to realize that our supporters are really saying, “I now understand more deeply why Facing History’s work matters.” These supporters recognize that teachers are artists who can change the world. These artists weave connections between past and present, good and evil, indifference and courage, denial and memory. The relationships they build with their students can lift spirits like great music, stir like great art, and humble like a glimpse of the night sky.

I would not work another day, if I did not believe in the profound wisdom and understanding that can occur whenever empathy develops. I could not confront my own skepticism or fuel my coping skills without the magic that comes with the recognition of the connection between you and me, other and self, them and us. That is Facing History’s message. Each of us must learn to see the humanity in the other and know history in order to recognize evil so that we can judge right from wrong.

“Teach the commandments diligently to thy children,” are words from a prayer I recited as a child. In recent years, that prayer has been altered by history, much the way I have. It now reads:

Teach them faithfully to your children; speak of them in your home and on your way, when you lie down and when you rise up.

The world is not the same since Auschwitz and Hiroshima. The decisions we make, the values we teach must be pondered not only in the halls of learning but also before the inmates of the extermination camps and in the sight of the mushroom of a nuclear explosion.

Bind them as a sign upon your hand; let them be a symbol before your eyes.

The groan deepens, the combat burns, the wailing does not abate. In a free society, all are involved in what some are doing.

Inscribe them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Some are guilty, all are responsible...¹

What do we do at Facing History? We teach from generation to generation. Yesterday’s students are today’s parents and teachers who share our sense of urgency. To those who support our work, I say thank you on behalf of our entire staff. We view our work as not only a responsibility and an obligation but also a privilege.

Margot Stern Strom

Margot Stern Strom

¹ Quoted in *Gates of Prayer: The New Union Prayerbook*. Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1975, p. 579-580.



message from the

BOARD CHAIRMAN

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Facing History and Ourselves, it is my pleasure to present the 2001-02 Annual Report. In the year recently completed, the organization continued to produce extraordinary programming, including a rigorous examination of the history of the American eugenics movement as well as a module to facilitate classroom discussion of the events of September 11th using Facing History's pedagogy. We continued to reach out to teachers through workshops and institutes as well as increase the accessibility of web-based content. Use of our state-of-the-art website by both teachers and students is burgeoning.

The year also brought many challenges. From the very outset of this past fiscal year, it was clear that raising support for our work would be more difficult. In the wake of September 11th and in the context of a slow economy, nonprofit organizations across the country are being negatively affected. Facing History has been no exception.

Despite the best efforts of our remarkable and tireless development staff, the organization fell a bit short of its fundraising projections in the 2001-02 fiscal year. This news comes at the worst possible time, as the R&D team is seeking to roll out several innovative new resources to help fill the ever-increasing demand for Facing History program.

As committed Board members, supporters and friends, each of us can help the organization in three ways: with our involvement, with our advocacy, and with our financial support.

Toward that end, I am asking you to continue to be part of our learning community. Please join us at community events if you are in one of our regions, visit our website regularly for new resources and provocative discussions, and help connect us to schools, teachers and communities who may be interested in our programs.

I am also asking you to please give at the highest possible level to Facing History this year and to encourage others to do the same. The work of Facing History is crucially important, and your support is vital to our efforts. As I said in my remarks at the New England Benefit Dinner last spring, societal problems that are left to fester frequently become exponentially worse. Because investment returns could be on the low side for some time to come, today's problems may worsen at a faster rate than invested capital is able to grow.

Our own giving as long-time friends of the organization, combined with the gifts that we leverage from our friends and colleagues, sends a powerful message about the importance of front-loading, not deferring, our philanthropy during these challenging times.

During this period of worldwide economic and political uncertainty, your participation in the work of Facing History takes on an increased significance. Thank you for your time, your involvement, and your stewardship of this extraordinary organization. I look forward to seeing you at a Facing History event over the months to come.

Seth A. Klarman

program report

Program Overview

The 2001-2002 school year challenged Facing History and Ourselves as never before. In the aftermath of September 11th, thousands of educators called or e-mailed us with requests for information, lessons, readings, and above all, moral support as they and their students confronted the tough and often painful questions the tragedy raised. Facing History met the challenge with innovative programming, new materials and initiatives, and an unwavering commitment to the teachers and students we serve.

That commitment was evident in every part of our work last year—professional development, classroom implementation, outreach, evaluation, and research and development. By using interactive technology in creative ways, we were able to provide the 16,000 teachers in the Facing History network with challenging resources central to an in-depth study not only of racism, antisemitism, and violence but also of courage, caring, and compassion.

Professional Development

Facing History's interdisciplinary approach to citizenship education is modeled at introductory workshops and weeklong institutes. Last year over 900 educators attended one or more of these seminars.

Both introductory workshops and institutes begin with an exploration of individual and group behavior. How is our identity formed? How do we acquire membership in various groups? What does it mean to be excluded from membership? In the sessions that follow, participants examine the history of the events that led to the Holocaust—particularly the choices Germans and others made in the 1920s, 30s, and 40s. As they come to realize that even seemingly unimportant choices have consequences, participants discover that history is not inevitable; the choices we make as individuals and as members of groups can and do make a difference.

Other sessions consider questions of right and wrong, of guilt and responsibility. Participants also reflect on what happens to a history that is denied or revised beyond the recognition of its survivors. The final sessions move from questions of judgment and memory to participation as participants explore efforts to build a strong civil society in the nation today.

For most educators, attendance at an institute marks the beginning of a relationship with Facing History. They rely on Facing History for help with the hard work of crafting lessons, securing the speakers, videos, and other resources to bring those lessons to life, and support in linking history to the moral questions students face in the world today.

These **powerful ideas** are at the core of good instruction: **GOOD TEACHERS ARE GOOD STUDENTS**; a classroom is a **community of learners**; and teaching **relevant content DOES MAKE A DIFFERENCE.**

Tom Woessner, *teacher, Garfield High School*

In the weeks after September 11th, the Facing History staff offered teachers special programming, discussion groups, online lessons, readings, and teaching strategies. At the same time, events planned long before September 11th proceeded as scheduled. Many of those events took on a new urgency as Facing History's approach to difficult issues became more timely than ever.

The staff also took the time for its own professional development. At a five-day retreat, such scholars as Holocaust expert Michael Berenbaum, Judge Richard Goldstone of South Africa's Constitutional Court, Harvard Law Professor Martha Minow, author Samantha Power, Alison De Forge of Human Rights Watch, and Professor Marc Gopin, a specialist in conflict resolution who has facilitated peace initiatives between religious groups in the Middle East and Ireland, deepened understanding of the issues facing the nation today. At other meetings, the staff studied recent scholarship on the Holocaust and antisemitism in the world today.

Facing History's password-protected Online Campus, launched on September 1, 2001, played a key role in professional development last year. Last year an average of about 700 educators each month made use of the Campus in building Facing History classrooms. The Campus provided them with easy access to lesson plans, readings, background information, teaching strategies, and online discussion forums. In just a year's time, the Campus has

become an invaluable asset in providing services to the 16,000 teachers in our network and 1.5 million students they reach.

The Online Campus played a significant role in the North America Project, a new initiative to provide ongoing support to Facing History teachers who do not have access to one of our seven regional offices in the United States. For example, in the summer of 2001, six teachers from three high schools in the Fayette County (Kentucky) Public Schools attended institutes in Memphis and New York. They then created and implemented a pilot program correlated to state standards. Evaluations of that program were so positive that administrators asked Facing History to provide professional development for 20 teachers from its four other high schools.

That institute, which was held in Lexington, Kentucky, in 2002, tested a new model that combines elements of a traditional workshop with interactive tools on the Online Campus. Teachers used those tools to access resources during the institute, continue discussions after it ended, and communicate with program associates on plans to incorporate Facing History themes and materials into their curriculum. The model has since been replicated in Cleveland, New England, and New York. Currently the program technology team is developing additional models for the 2003 institutes as well as an introductory workshop that will be conducted entirely online.

The SYLLABUS AND CURRICULUM for our institute were **inspired and inspiring**. Rarely have I experienced such a RICH BLEND of **superb teaching** and used such **excellent, VARIED MATERIALS AND CLASS EXERCISES**.

David Breakstone, *institute participant*



Facing History's European office offered yet another model for providing ongoing support to teachers after an institute or workshop. At the invitation of the Sweden's Department of Education, Facing History conducted an intensive institute in Stockholm with the expectation that participants will teach what they learned to other teachers—who were unable to attend or do not speak English. The European staff also offered its first bilingual workshops in order to reach more non-English-speaking educators.

Classroom Implementation

At a time when many teachers feel they must “teach to the test,” teachers in the Facing History network have found creative and innovative ways of addressing state standards without sacrificing their commitment to Facing History and Ourselves. The following is a sampling of the ways the 16,000 teachers who have participated in Facing History institutes and workshops have incorporated the organization's content, methodology, and concepts in their teaching.

In many schools, educators teach a six to eight-week Facing History unit or course based on the model they encountered at their first workshop or institute. Their students examine the history of the events that lead to the Holocaust—a history that raises profound moral questions. Those questions are universal even though the Holocaust itself is unique. Others have incorporated Facing History themes into history, language arts, humanities, and science courses. Moreover, a growing number of these schools are teaching Facing History's themes at many grade levels and weaving them into a variety of subject areas.

With the support of the Facing History staff in the Cleveland regional office, teachers at Lakewood High School integrated Facing History into every grade level at the school. At ninth and tenth grade, Facing History themes were woven into social studies, science, and English classes. At eleventh and twelfth grade, a semester-long Facing History course was a popular elective. Indeed so many students signed up for the course last year that the school offered five sections of the elective. Plans are now underway to incorporate Facing History themes and materials at the middle school level as well.

At East Side Community High School in the New York City Public Schools, 500 7th-12th graders encountered Facing History as part of the humanities curriculum. At each grade level, two instructors worked together to develop and teach a yearlong course based on themes and content central to Facing History to challenge students' best thinking and build critical reading and writing skills.

At La Jolla Country Day School in Southern California, teacher Ann Chaitin used her art classes to deepen the Facing History themes her students explored in their 7th and 8th grade Facing History classes. She encouraged them to create visual responses to racism, prejudice, and antisemitism.

Educators at Boston's Hyde Park High School involved parents as well as students in an exploration of Facing History themes. A unique book group was part of that effort. About 35-40 students, teachers, and parents participated in monthly discussions of such books as Lois Lowry's *The Giver*, a novel that heightens understanding of the power of history and memory. Members of the



Facing History staff facilitated the discussions and invited participants to meet Lowry at a community event. The experience prompted the book group to plan a similar event in 2003, featuring poet Luis Rodriguez, whose autobiography is on their new reading list.

At the urging of history department chair Chuck Thomason at Chicago's Roberto Clemente High School, many new teachers at the school attended their first Facing History institute. Several of those teachers were inspired to form a team to integrate Facing History into both their world studies and reading skills classes. The team shares ideas, resources, and teaching strategies.

Outreach

Like many educators, new teachers at Roberto Clemente High School learned about Facing History from a colleague or friend. Others discovered the organization through articles published in various journals and the study guides Facing History has created for documentaries, CD-ROMs, and other resources. Still others found out about its work by visiting its website, attending a broad range of community events, through joint projects with schools of education, or through a parent or supporter.

In northern California, the three high schools in the Sequoia Union High School District have been incorporating Facing History into their curriculum for years. To ensure that new teachers were aware of the program, the district made Facing History a part of its Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program last year. Newcomers attended an introductory Facing History workshop and were encouraged to turn to the organization for mentoring and community building. Facing History was

also a participating member organization in the district's anti-racism coalition, providing support and training to its members.

Some new teachers already know about Facing History and the services it can offer. They learned about the organization in one or more of their education courses. With a generous grant from the _____ Foundation, Facing History established the Education for Democracy program to encourage joint ventures with schools of education. The organization now has partnerships with 30 colleges and universities. Last year in the Chicago area, faculty members from Elmhurst College and Northwestern University worked with the Facing History staff to develop a new professional development model based on Facing History's content and methodology. In New England, Facing History Program Evaluator Dennis Barr and Harvard Professor Robert Selman taught a semester-long course for masters and doctoral students at the Harvard Graduate School of Education entitled "Promoting Ethical Awareness in Children and Adolescents: Practice-based Research." The course included an intensive two-day Facing History workshop.

Adult education classes have long been a way for parents and others in the community to experience Facing History's approach to citizenship education. Last year, the New York regional office hosted a course entitled "Judgment, Reconciliation, Remembering, Forgiving." Co-sponsored by the Humanities Program at the Charles Simin Center for Adult Life and Learning at the 92nd St. Y, the course addressed questions such as: How do individuals, communities, and nations acknowledge difficult, even painful, histories? To what extent do reparations offer a basis for reconciliation?

National initiatives and exhibitions have been a particularly successful way of introducing large numbers of people in a community to the work of Facing History. Memphis was the latest city to host Facing History's most popular national initiative, *Choosing to Participate*. Over 20,000 students, teachers, parents and other community members toured the multi-media exhibition at the Memphis/Shelby County Public Library and Information Center. Many also took part in public events related to the themes of the initiative. Featured speakers included Elizabeth Eckford, one of the "Little Rock Nine," Unita Blackwell, a member of the Mississippi Freedom Party's delegation to the 1964 Democratic National Convention, and Marion Pritchard, who took extraordinary risks to rescue Jews in The Netherlands during the Holocaust.

Vivendi Universal is the national sponsor for the exhibition, which premiered in Boston in 1998, traveled to Chicago and New York in subsequent years, and will open in Los Angeles in February 2003. International Paper was the lead sponsor in Memphis. And the S. Mark Taper Foundation has taken the lead in Los Angeles in providing funding for *Choosing to Participate*.

Last year, the Chicago regional office celebrated its 10-year anniversary with a retrospective exhibition entitled *From the Classroom: 10 Years of Facing History in Chicago* at the Harold Washington Library Center. Underwritten by Allstate Financial, the exhibition showcased artwork by Facing History students reflecting on themes of social justice and civic participation.

The program staff in Chicago also took part in the city's "One Book, One Chicago" initiative by facilitating community-wide discussions of Elie Wiesel's *Night*, the book that all Chicagoans were encouraged to read and discuss.

Evaluation

For over 26 years, Facing History has been documenting the effectiveness of its work. A number of evaluation studies were completed in the past year; each helped the organization gain insights into the impact of its programs on students and teachers.

Facing History in the Classroom. A study supported by the Safe and Drug-free Schools and Communities Program replicated the findings of an important earlier evaluation funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York. The earlier effort assessed the effectiveness of Facing History in predominately suburban schools in Massachusetts; the new study focused on urban schools in Tennessee. The two sets of findings indicate that Facing History promotes positive interpersonal and inter-group relations among students across a range of populations and school settings. In both studies, Facing History students showed an increased capacity for self-reflection and a greater ability to resolve peer conflicts. Both sets of teachers noted that Facing History students were more likely to believe they could make a difference in the world, see a role for themselves in society, think deeply about issues of racism, prejudice and discrimination, and to be active participants in promoting social justice.

Maybe the **WRONGS CAN'T BE RIGHTED.**

Maybe the only way to **undo the past** is to **counteract the effects** of the past so that

what has come before **DOES NOT HAPPEN AGAIN.**

What if enough people said, **'it stops here — and it stops with me'?**

Pre-Service Institutes. Facing History also evaluated the long-term effects of the intensive six-day institutes it has offered pre-service teachers at Teacher’s College of Columbia University since 1996 and Simmons College since 1998. The survey revealed that participants viewed their experience with Facing History as an essential component of their pre-service teacher education. Participants regarded the approaches and methods they were taught at the institutes as highly useful to them in their teaching assignments and attested to the positive impact of the program on their own work with students.

Summer Institutes. The third study surveyed participants in institutes held in 2001. Most viewed the experience as extremely positive, with over 95 percent planning to implement Facing History into their teaching in the 2001-2002 school year.

After-School Programs. Yet another study assessed the effects of an innovative after-school program developed by Facing History for students in three under-served middle schools in Memphis, Tennessee, during the 2001-2002 school year. Overall, students were enthusiastic about attending, positive about the programming, and willing to recommend it to their peers. They believed that the sessions improved their leadership skills, promoted positive feelings about themselves and others, and fostered their ability to stand up for themselves and others.

Research and Dissemination

As part of a continuing effort to meet the needs of teachers and their students and keep programs relevant and timely, not only does Facing History evaluate its programs and materials but also conducts research, initiates new projects, and publishes a variety of materials. The organization then disseminates those materials to its network of teachers at workshops, seminars, and conferences.

Last year, Facing History published its newest resource book, *Race and Membership in American History: The Eugenics Movement*. It is based on longstanding research at Facing History on the roots of racism and antisemitism. Eugenics—an early 20th century movement to rid society of “inferior racial traits”—is part of that history. Numerous scholars have traced the connections between the history of “race science” and eugenics in the United States and Nazi programs that aimed at “purifying the race” by murdering millions of children, women, and men.

Over the past year Facing History introduced the new book at institutes and workshops. A number of those teachers will be piloting the program in the 2002-2003 school year. The staff has also begun work on an online course based on the book.

Last year, Facing History also developed a combination of online and traditional print materials to help educators incorporate Anna Deavere Smith’s film *Twilight: Los Angeles* into their curriculum. The dissemination of these resources was

With **FACING HISTORY’S** support
I am able to teach a **rigorous** **ACADEMIC**
CURRICULUM that deals with the issues of
fear, hatred, ostracism, war,
and the **CHOICES THAT WE ALL FACE.**

Sandy Simpson, teacher, Dorchester High School



funded in part by a generous grant from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. The film, a powerful account of the violence that erupted in Los Angeles in 1993, shows a community in crisis. It illuminates many of the issues that are central to Facing History and Ourselves—issues related to history and identity, community and membership, race and racism, and justice and peace.

Facing History held workshops to introduce educators to the study guide and the film and provided classrooms with an online discussion forum. A formal evaluation of the program suggests that the study guide helped teachers raise awareness of the dynamics of culture, race, racism, and power in society and issues of justice, social action, and violence prevention. The online module encouraged not only an exchange of ideas but also opportunities to encounter other perspectives. One teacher described *Twilight* as a critical educational tool because it “reinforced the idea that these issues are not being discussed in isolation. As an educator, isn’t communication across boundaries and borders, what we ultimately want, what we ultimately teach towards?”

At the year’s end Facing History had begun to develop new study guides, including a one to accompany Bill Moyers’ forthcoming documentary series *Becoming American: The Chinese Experience*, and another for the PBS series *Matters of Race*. Both reinforce and extend classroom explorations about race and racism, past and present.

The events of September 11th demonstrated that no country exists in isolation. The Goldman Sachs Foundation is supporting the development and implementation of a five-year plan to help expand the global reach of Facing History. This will build upon the success of Facing History’s recently completed three-year program to expand outreach in Europe, which was made possible by a grant from the Germerhausen Foundation. The new international efforts will spark more profound conversations and coursework between teachers and their students about issues central to building and sustaining civil societies. As we enter the 21st century, those conversations are more important than ever. Facing History’s content and pedagogy has never been more relevant or necessary to teachers and students worldwide.



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Facing History and Ourselves is a national educational and professional development organization whose mission is to engage students of diverse backgrounds in an examination of racism, prejudice, and antisemitism in order to promote the development of a more humane and informed citizenry. By studying the historical development and lessons of the Holocaust and other examples of genocide, students make the essential connection between history and the moral choices they confront in their own lives.

If you receive more than one Annual Report, contact us at (617) 735-1623 and indicate which address is preferred. Please use your extra copy to introduce a friend to Facing History.

Thank you for your support and cooperation.



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