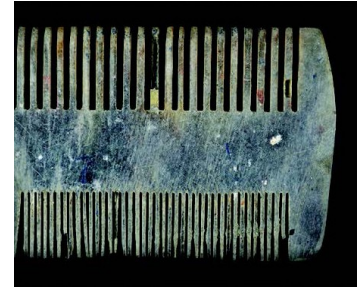


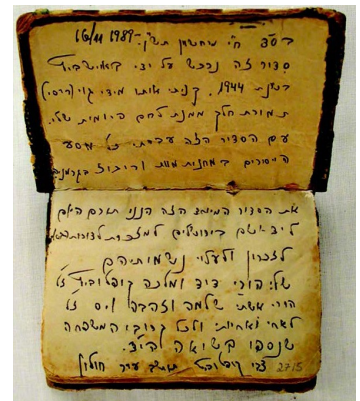
In his memoir *Memory Fields* (Knopf, 1992) Shlomo Breznitz writes:

“When mother died, with the exception of a few photographs, I did not care to keep any of her material possessions. However, there is one small item that Judith [Shlomo’s sister] and I cherish above everything else. It is the dirty and broken comb that she brought back from Auschwitz. She traded it for a full day’s ration of bread in order to have a chance to comb her closely cropped head.”



“This prayer book was purchased in Auschwitz in 1944. I received it from a Russian inmate in exchange for a portion of my daily ration of bread. It accompanied me throughout my entire journey of suffering in the concentration and death camps in Germany. I donate today this unique prayer book to Yad Vashem in Jerusalem as a memorial for future generations and in memory of my parents David and Malka Kopolovich z”l, my wife’s parents Shlomo and Zehava Weiss z”l, my brothers and sisters and all of my relatives who were murdered in the Holocaust.”

— Zvi Kopolovich, Holon
18th of Cheshvan, 5750,
November 16, 1989



Annie Fisk Levinger was born in Austria; later her family moved to Czechoslovakia. In September 1944, she was deported with her family to Theresienstadt. While in Theresienstadt, Annie married Pawel Bisk, who was deported to Auschwitz three days later. Annie was deported to Auschwitz shortly thereafter. The entire time he was imprisoned in the camp he kept a photograph of his beloved wife. At first, he kept the photograph in his mouth, and then hid it in his sock.

Both Annie and Pawel survived the war.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How do these items take on additional meaning when studied within the context of the Holocaust?
- How do these items relate to the Primo Levi quote: “...consider...what meaning is enclosed...in the hundred possessions which even the poorest beggar owns...These things are part of us, almost like limbs of our body...”?
- What do we learn from studying these artifacts about spiritual resistance and humanity?
- How do these items help us understand the struggle of inmates in the camps to remember who they were and hold on to their identities?
- Why do you think this handout is titled “Life in the Shadow of Death”?