

*Number the Stars* Essay by Samantha T.

Number the Stars, by Lois Lowry reflects how courageous individuals, through pride and human decency, cope with oppressive acts of genocide during the Holocaust. Just as Robert H. Jackson made it a point to publicize the Holocaust, many non-Jewish people fought for the restoration of their Jewish friends' rights. Two specific examples of genocide protestors were two ten year old girls, by the names of Annemarie Johansen and Ellen Rosen. Other support came from their parents and older adults, such as Peter, Uncle Henrik, and his fellow fisherman.

Both Annemarie and Ellen are prime examples of children who lived during the Holocaust and successfully helped the Jews escape to Sweden. Despite the danger associated with being a friend to a Jew, Annemarie was willing to die for her friend's cause. As a reply to her father's remark of fighting till death she bravely answered "I would too." By directly confronting the Nazi soldiers in an effort to free the Jews, Annemarie proves that compassion and friendship overcome genocide oppression. Through Annemarie's love for Ellen she built enough confidence to defy the Nazi army.

Examples of adults who helped the Jews escape are shown through the actions of Uncle Henrik, Mrs. Johansen, the fisherman, Peter and his deceased fiance, Lise. Uncle Henrik took it upon himself, along with his fellow fisherman, to relocate numerous Jewish families to the safe country of Sweden. In addition, parents, such as Mrs.

Johansen, as well as family friends, like Peter, assisted in supplying food and clothing to Jewish people against Nazi rules. These adults were motivated by their deep concern for the well being of their Jewish friends that they endangered their own lives to help save the lives of others. One such extreme example of this devotion is shown through the shortened life of Lise, who was killed while communicating with the Jews.

As portrayed by the courageous efforts made by various non-Jewish children and adults, there will be some people who despite the dangers will help others in need. Not only in this novel, does genocide occur, but even today nations are suffering from injustices towards others. One example is in Rwanda where Africans are being murdered for their ethnicity. If more people are aware of injustices being made against others and are taught to stand up for their rights, then oppressive forces will not threaten the lives of others.