

CentropaStudent.org lesson plan: Kindertransport [Refugee Children Movement]

Structure of the lesson plan

Topic	The Refugee Children Movement in Europe from November 1938 to September 1939
Target audience	High school students
Potential subjects	Social science classes (e.g. World History, Civics)
Media	Audio-visual material may require an overhead projector and a video projector

I Outline

The class period begins with a twelve-minute-film on the Refugee Children Movement which is available online from CentropaStudent.org. The film depicts the life of Kitty and Otto Suschny, an elderly Jewish couple living in Vienna. Kitty and Otto Suschny both grew up in Vienna, only a couple of streets away from each other, but they never met while growing up. After the Reichspogromnacht in November 1938, both fled Austria for their lives; Kitty went to England, while Otto emigrated to Palestine. After the war, they returned to Vienna, desperate to find out what had happened to their parents. That's where they met, and they never separated again...

In the course of the lesson the students will get to know Kitty and Otto Suschny's personal accounts of the Refugee Children Movement. The experiences made during the lesson will be deepened with the help of a homework. The lesson plan can be used as part

of a longer syllabus on forced displacement or (forced) migration and integration. The personal accounts of Kitty and Otto Suschny and the audio-visual material, including a twelve-minute-film available at CentropaStudent.org, offer a low-threshold approach to these fields of study. This lesson plan is initially developed for a 40-50 minutes class period.

II Goals of the lesson plan

High school students should adapt competences in the following fields with the help of this lesson plan:

- to work with different kinds of media (e.g. biographic accounts, short films, photos), to analyze and compare them
- to deepen their knowledge on the Refugee Children Movement and its consequences for Jews in Central Europe
- to become acquainted with Jewish forced migration before the Holocaust and to reflect about the personal experiences of Kitty and Otto Suschny
- to compile biographic and historic information in teamwork and to communicate the findings inside the group.

III Steps in advance

- a TV-set with a DVD-Player or a computer with Internet access and a video projector is needed to show the film (which is available on the Internet or on a Centropa DVD)
 - copies of the enclosed study material need to be prepared
 - join CentropaStudent.org's Border Jumping Community to download password-protected study materials
- <http://centropastudent.org/?nID=62>

IV Class period structure

- I. **Introduction** [app. 5 min.] A presentation of the picture on the following page can serve as an introduction to this class period's topic. The picture shows the arrival of Jewish refugee children at the port of London in February 1939. During the presentation, first questions can be raised. (What does the picture show? At which point of time could this picture be taken? Where could the ship have landed? What do you think might have happened to the children on the photo?)
- II. **Film** [app. 10 min.] Introduce the Refugee Children Movement to the students by playing Centropa's film about Kitty and Otto Suschny. Ask the students to prepare the following points while viewing the film: Why did Kitty and Otto flee from their homeland? In which way did they flee, what was different about their escape routes? What did they do after the war, where did they spend the rest of their life? Also ask the students to write down cities and locations mentioned.
- III. **Class discussion** [app. 5-10 min.] Have students share their findings in a class discussion, answer questions concerning the historical background of the Refugee Children Movement.
- IV. **Group discussion** [app. 15-20 min.] Make use of the enclosed study materials in groups of four. Each group member should read one of the texts and inform the other members of the group on his or her findings.
- V. **Homework** [app. 5 min.]

V Other Films on the Refugee Children Movement

One of the first documentary film made on the subject of the Kindertransport was <<My Knees Were Jumping: Remembering the Kindertransports>> which was shown, and nominated for the Grand Jury Prize, at the Sundance Film Festival in 1996 and released

theatrically in 1998. The director, Melissa Hacker, is the daughter of a Kindertransport child.

<<Into the Arms of Strangers: Stories of the Kindertransport>>, narrated by Judi Dench and released by Warner Bros. Pictures, won the Academy Award in 2001 for best documentary feature. There is also a companion book by the same name. The film's producer, Deborah Oppenheimer, is the daughter of a Kindertransport survivor. The director, Mark Jonathan Harris, is a three-time Academy Award winner.

<<The Children Who Cheated the Nazis>>, narrated by Richard Attenborough is a British documentary film by Sue Read and Jim Goulding, first shown on Channel 4 in 2000.



Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-S69279
Foto: o.Äng. | Februar 1939

Kindertransport (Children's Transport) was the informal name of a series of rescue efforts which brought thousands of refugee Jewish children to Great Britain from Nazi Germany between 1938 and 1940.

Following the violent pogrom staged by the Nazi authorities upon Jews in Germany known as Kristallnacht (Night of Broken Glass) of 9-10 November 1938, the British government eased immigration restrictions for certain categories of Jewish refugees. Spurred by British public opinion and the persistent efforts of refuge aid committees, most notably the British Committee for the Jews of Germany and the Movement for the Care of Children from Germany, British authorities agreed to permit an unspecified number of children under the age of 17 to enter Great Britain from Germany and German-annexed territories (namely, Austria and the Czech lands).

Private citizens or organizations had to guarantee to pay for each child's care, education, and eventual emigration from Britain. In return for this guarantee, the British government agreed to allow unaccompanied refugee children to enter the country on temporary travel visas. It was understood at the time that when the "crisis was over," the children would return to their families. Parents or guardians could not accompany the children. The few infants included in the program were tended by other children on their transport.

The first Kindertransport arrived in Harwich, Great Britain, on December 2, 1938, bringing some 200 children from a Jewish orphanage in Berlin which had been destroyed in the Kristallnacht pogrom. Like this convoy, most transports left by train from Berlin, Vienna, Prague, and other major cities in Central Europe. Children from smaller towns and villages traveled from their homes to these collection points in order to join the transports. Jewish organizations inside the Greater German Reich -- specifically the Reich Representation of Jews in Germany, headquartered in Berlin (and after early 1939, its successor organization the Reich Association of Jews in Germany), as well as the Jewish Community Organization (Kultusgemeinde) in Vienna -- planned the transports.

Source: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, <http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/article.php?ModuleId=10005260>

Work assignment: Write down a short summary of the text above. Then inform your fellow students (who have not read the text) about your findings.

Text II **The children of the Kindertransport in Britain, 1938-1940**

The first Kindertransport arrived in Harwich, Great Britain, on December 2, 1938, bringing some 200 children from a Jewish orphanage in Berlin which had been destroyed in the Kristallnacht pogrom. Like this convoy, most transports left by train from Berlin, Vienna, Prague, and other major cities in Central Europe. Children from smaller towns and villages traveled from their homes to these collection points in order to join the transports. Jewish organizations inside the Greater German Reich -- specifically the Reich Representation of Jews in Germany, headquartered in Berlin (and after early 1939, its successor organization the Reich Association of Jews in Germany), as well as the Jewish Community Organization (Kultusgemeinde) in Vienna -- planned the transports.

These associations generally favored children whose emigration was urgent because their parents were in concentration camps or were no longer able to support them. They also gave priority to homeless children and orphans. Children chosen for a Kindertransport convoy traveled by train to ports in Belgium and the Netherlands, from where they sailed to Harwich. In all, the rescue operation brought about 9,000-10,000 children, some 7,500 of them Jewish, from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Poland to Great Britain.

After the children's transports arrived in Harwich, those children with sponsors went to London to meet their foster families. Those children without sponsors were housed in a summer camp in Dovercourt Bay and in other facilities until individual families agreed to care for them or until hostels could be organized to care for larger groups of children. Many organizations and individuals participated in the rescue operation. Inside Britain, the Movement for the Care of Children from Germany coordinated many of the rescue efforts. Jews, Quakers, and Christians of many denominations worked together to bring refugee children to Britain. About half of the children lived with foster families. The others stayed in hostels, schools, or on farms throughout Great Britain.

After the war, many children from the children's transport program became citizens of Great Britain, or emigrated to Israel, the United States, Canada, and Australia. Most of these children would never again see their parents, who were murdered during the Holocaust.

Source: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, <http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/article.php?ModuleId=10005260>

Work assignment: Write down a short summary of the text above. Then inform your fellow students (who have not read the text) about your findings.

Text III **Kitty's Biography**

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Source: URL

Work assignment: Write down a short summary of the text above. Then inform your fellow students (who have not read the text) about your findings.

Text IV **Shards of Kristallnacht still cut deep**

Seventy years on, the memories have not faded. Kitty Suschny was a terrified schoolgirl of 13 when the Nazis unleashed a night of violence against Vienna's Jews on November 9, 1938.

"I saw the brown shirts marching from our window but my mother pulled me inside. I heard them shouting 'Jews go to hell'. There was screaming, shouting, the synagogues were set on fire. Many people committed suicide," recalled Mrs Suschny, who was evacuated to Britain but returned to Vienna where she lives with her husband, Otto.

Thousands of Jews were arrested and sent to concentration camps on Kristallnacht, the night of broken glass, a harbinger of the destruction to come.

The dazzling era of Jewish Vienna, that brought the world the psychiatrist Sigmund Freud, the writer Arthur Schnitzler and the composer Gusztav Mahler, soon evaporated in the crematoria of the Nazi concentration camps. Of the city's 185,000 Jews, one third perished in the Holocaust and the remainder emigrated.

Pogroms erupted across the Third Reich that night but the onslaught against Vienna's Jews was especially ferocious. Annexed by Nazi Germany in March 1938, Hitler's homeland was his most devoted disciple. Vienna was a "laboratory for anti-Jewish violence", writes the historian Mark Mazower, in *Hitler's Empire*.

This weekend Austria and its neighbours commemorate the 70th anniversary of Kristallnacht.

But behind the diplomatic dinners and sombre speeches lies a darker reality: of a nation much of whose post-war prosperity was built on looted Jewish assets, numerous members of whose elite were personally enriched by the Holocaust, and which has only just started to face the darkest chapter in its history.

Austria may be unwilling to return much of its looted wealth, but the younger generation at least is coming to terms with the country's dark past. The government has donated €1 million to Centropa.org, a digital archive of Jewish history in central Europe, which works with schools and youth organisations and records the stories of Vienna's Jews such as Kitty Suschny.

Source: The Times Online, <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/europe/article5110473.ece>

Work assignment: Write down a short summary of the text above. Then inform your fellow students (who have not read the text) about your findings.

Text V **March 1938 - August 1940: A Personal History of My Family During 30
Turbulent Months**
by Hans Schneider

When the German army marched into Austria in March 1938, my father expected a return to some kind of ghetto existence. Both my parents were dentists in Vienna: my mother, Bella (Isabella), worked for the municipal dental service inspecting school children, and my father, Hugo, had a successful private practice. My father believed that he would lose all his non-Jewish patients; on the other hand many Viennese Jews went to non-Jewish dentists, and some would now come to him: not good, but tolerable. Within three months he realized that he had been quite wrong. The immediate cause was the appearance of a young man at his door in SA uniform who announced that he was also a dentist and one of my parents' two consulting rooms now belonged to him.

I was 11 years old in 1938. At this remove, I have a sense that I was quite aware of restrictions and possible dangers in the three months that I lived under Nazi rule, but nevertheless my daily activities continued much as before. On one occasion, I remember being called out into the courtyard of my school with all other boys of Jewish descent and being told by the headmaster that it was impossible for true Germans to associate with us, and he probably added some less than complimentary words about the group in front of him. My parents reacted by remarking: First this man was red (which meant a supporter of the moderate social democrats that ran the city until 1934), then black (a supporter of the Catholic oriented government that took over Austria in 1934), and now he is brown (a Nazi). Wise words, they stopped me from taking seriously anything he may have said.

My father was a very careful and cautious man, yet he took an extraordinarily bold action which was crucial to our survival. In June 1938 we took a train to Czechoslovakia. As the Nazis' aim was to drive out Jews, leaving Austria was possible and legal, but the difficulty of getting permission to enter another country was huge. In our case, a Czech border guard had been bribed and we entered the country illegally. Thus ended what had been a secure middle class existence up to the annexation of Austria by Germany, and we became refugees without resources, status or prospects; three lives in limbo. My parents and I went to live with one of my father's brothers in Karvina, the town where my father was born. This town was very close to the Polish border and it was ceded to Poland by the Munich agreement in late 1938, and thus we found ourselves illegally in Poland.

In the fall of 1938, my parents managed to get a place for me in a Quaker school in the Netherlands which had been established for German and Austrian refugee children.

I had to travel to Warsaw to obtain a visa from the Dutch consul there and then, to get to Holland without entering Germany, I would need to take a plane to Prague and then a plane direct to Amsterdam. But the first plane could not leave because of bad weather, and there was a wait of 10 days for the next available seat on the plane from Prague and no hotel would take a person without papers. My father, who was accompanying me, had to find a way for me to stay in Warsaw. He asked the first reliable looking man he saw in the street for help, who sent us to a member of the German embassy in whose apartment I then stayed.

Equally amazing, the man who sent us there turned out to be a Polish policeman in the very department charged with deporting illegal aliens. I presume there was an anti-Nazi underground in both organizations. This is one of the few stories my father would tell about our experiences; surely the family I stayed with was German and I was told to say that I was a relative from Vienna if anyone asked.

While living with my uncle in Karvina, my parents were denounced to the authorities, but the local police, instead of deporting them back to Germany according to regulations, allowed them 24 hours to flee to the interior of Poland. There they again lived illegally with distant relatives and waited for British or American visas, whichever would come first. In April 1939, my father was one of about 40 German or Austrian dentists permitted to enter Britain, which my parents reached by boat from Poland. They lived in London for some months, but there was pressure from the refugee organizations for the refugees to disperse to other parts of the country. My parents chose to move to Edinburgh where I rejoined them in August 1939, just before the outbreak of war. I do not know if I realized during our separation that I might never see them again. I imagine my parents must have had such thoughts, but I do not know for sure, for the events I am writing about here, or even our previous lives in Vienna, were never discussed later.

In retrospect, I see the decision to leave Austria as a huge gamble. Had my parents not been in a town annexed by Poland before the German invasion of Czechoslovakia in March 1939, had the Nazis invaded Poland six months earlier, or had Polish policemen not acted contrary to their duty on two occasions, their fates and mine would have ended very

differently. Our survival was a mixture of skillful and decisive action, and extraordinary good luck.

My father urged his brother to give up his clothing store and to leave for the west. I do not think he tried to do so, but, even if he did, it is highly unlikely that any country would have admitted my uncle, his wife and young son in time. They were killed in the Holocaust, a fate that seems particularly poignant as my father's eldest brother fell fighting for Austro-Hungary in World War I.

There was a second disruption of my parents' lives.

In May 1940 Germany invaded the Low Countries and France, and a rumor swept Britain that Germany's rapid progress was due to the help of German spies disguised as refugees.

My father, who had just managed to complete his examinations for dental surgery which was required in order to exercise his profession again, was interned like all other German or Austrian refugee men living in Edinburgh, a town considered sensitive in view of its location on the East coast. All had previously been classified by a British tribunal as "friendly enemy aliens". My mother was not interned but had to leave Edinburgh and went to live with three or four other refugee women in one room in Glasgow, while I (being under 16) could stay in Edinburgh and attend one of the best schools there, living with a single Scottish lady of independent means (who later took in several Austrian and Hungarian refugee boys who had reached Scotland without their parents). Sometimes I think this may have been the worst part of my parents' lives as they were forcibly separated. While my father was interned on the Isle of Man, some refugees were transported to Canada, and one such ship was sunk by a German U-Boat. It was several weeks before my mother heard that my father was safe. I do not think that such thoughts occurred to me at the time, then aged 13. I was focused on doing well at my academically oriented school and I am still grateful for the education I received.

My father was released from internment in August 1940 largely through the efforts of the Church and some members of Parliament. He was among the first; dentists were needed since many had been conscripted to serve in the armed forces. He established a practice in Edinburgh and thus ended a period when we had been supported by charity, living in

two rooms in some landlady's flat. My mother did not attempt to resume her professional life; I do not know why. During the next five years we shared the experience of the British people at war, a remarkable people whom the world owes gratitude for their decision in September 1939 to fight Hitler. For a teenager, this was an exciting time; though I was an avid reader of newspapers, I did not realize the full horror of it until the war was over.

I have already mentioned that the past was never discussed in my family in subsequent years. As a postscript I'd like to give an explanation. In my opinion, the reason is not at all that thinking about the past was unbearably painful, for I was aware that up to the German annexation of Austria we had led a privileged life compared with the great majority of mankind, whatever the difficulties that I may have been unaware of as a child. Rather, there was a tremendous need for assimilation and adaptation to our new lives in Scotland, particularly for me as a teenager. Attachment to a dead past is a burden when coping with the difficulty of rebuilding your life in a new country; for many years our eyes were firmly fixed on the present and future. I used to remark "I was born in Edinburgh at the age of 12", a joke with serious content. Until I reached my late sixties, I claimed that I had no recollection whatsoever of the first eleven years of my life - and believed it; my prenatal existence was hard to admit and remains shadowy in spite of a conscious effort to recapture it.

Source: The Kindertransport Association, http://www.kindertransport.org/voices/schneider_personalHistory.htm

Work assignment: Write down a short summary of the text above. Then compare your findings to Kitty Suchny's biography and answer the following questions:

--which escape routes did Hans Schneider and Kitty Suschny use, and why?

--which experiences did they make in the United Kingdom?

--how did these experiences shape their lives after the war, how do they feel about Austria today?

Use the CentropaStudent.org Study Guide for this task. You can reach it by choosing the film on Kitty Suschny from CentropaStudent.org's film list. Simply click on the button „Study Guide“ next to the film.



Text VI **Walter Kohn (The Nobel Prize in Chemistry 1998): Autobiography**

My feelings towards Austria, my native land, are – and will remain – very painful. They are dominated by my vivid recollections of 1 1/2 years as a Jewish boy under the Austrian Nazi regime, and by the subsequent murder of my parents, Salomon and Gittel Kohn, of other relatives and several teachers, during the holocaust. At the same time I have in recent years been glad to work with Austrians, one or two generations younger than I: Physicists, some teachers at my former High School and young people (Gedenkdiener) who face the dark years of Austria's past honestly and constructively.

On another level, I want to mention that I have a strong Jewish identity and – over the years – have been involved in several Jewish projects, such as the establishment of a strong program of Judaic Studies at the University of California in San Diego.

My father, who had lost a brother, fighting on the Austrian side in World War I, was a committed pacifist. However, while the Nazi barbarians and their collaborators threatened the entire world, I could not accept his philosophy and, after several earlier attempts, was finally accepted into the Canadian Infantry Corps during the last year of World War II. Many decades later I became active in attempts to bring an end to the US-Soviet nuclear arms race and became a leader of unsuccessful faculty initiatives to terminate the role of the University of California as manager of the nuclear weapons laboratories at Los Alamos and Livermore. I offered early support to Jeffrey Leiffer, the founder of the student Pugwash movement which concerns itself with global issues having a strong scientific component and in which scientists can play a useful role. Twenty years after its founding this organization continues strong and vibrant. My commitment to a humane and peaceful world continues to this day. I have just joined the Board of the Population Institute because I am convinced that early stabilization of the world's population is important for the attainment of this objective.

After these introductory general reflections from my present vantage point I would now like to give an idea of my childhood and adolescence. I was born in 1923 into a middle class Jewish family in Vienna, a few years after the end of World War I, which was disastrous from the Austrian point of view. Both my parents were born in parts of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire, my father in Hodonin, Moravia, my mother in Brody, then in Galicia, Poland, now in the Ukraine. Later they both moved to the capital of Vienna along with their

parents. I have no recollection of my father's parents, who died relatively young. My maternal grandparents Rappaport were orthodox Jews who lived a simple life of retirement and, in the case of my grandfather, of prayer and the study of religious texts in a small nearby synagogue, a Schul as it was called. My father carried on a business, Postkartenverlag Brueder Kohn Wien I, whose main product was high quality art postcards, mostly based on paintings by contemporary artists which were commissioned by his firm. The business had flourished in the first two decades of the century but then, in part due to the death of his brother Adolf in World War I, to the dismantlement of the Austrian monarchy and to a worldwide economic depression, it gradually fell on hard times in the 1920s and 1930s. My father struggled from crisis to crisis to keep the business going and to support the family. Left over from the prosperous times was a wonderful summer property in Heringsdorf at the Baltic Sea, not far from Berlin, where my mother, sister and I spent our summer vacations until Hitler came to power in Germany in 1933. My father came for occasional visits (the firm had a branch in Berlin). My mother was a highly educated woman with a good knowledge of German, Latin, Polish and French and some acquaintance with Greek, Hebrew and English. I believe that she had completed an academically oriented High School in Galicia. Through her parents we maintained contact with traditional Judaism. At the same time my parents, especially my father, also were a part of the secular artistic and intellectual life of Vienna.

After I had completed a public elementary school, my mother enrolled me in the Akademische Gymnasium, a fine public high school in Vienna's inner city. There, for almost five years, I received an excellent education, strongly oriented toward Latin and Greek, until March 1938, when Hitler Germany annexed Austria. (This so-called Anschluss was, after a few weeks, supported by the great majority of the Austrian population). Until that time my favorite subject had been Latin, whose architecture and succinctness I loved. By contrast, I had no interest in, nor apparent talent for, mathematics which was routinely taught and gave me the only C in high school. During this time it was my tacit understanding that I would eventually be asked to take over the family business, a prospect which I faced with resignation and without the least enthusiasm.

The Anschluss changed everything: The family business was confiscated but my father was required to continue its management without any compensation; my sister managed to emigrate rather promptly to England; and I was expelled from my school.

In the following fall I was able to enter a Jewish school, the Chajes Gymnasium, where I had two extraordinary teachers: In physics, Dr. Emil Nohel, and in mathematics Dr. Victor Sabbath. While outside the school walls arbitrary acts of persecution and brutality took place, on the inside these two inspired teachers conveyed to us their own deep understanding and love of their subjects. I take this occasion to record my profound gratitude for their inspiration to which I owe my initial interest in science. (Alas, they both became victims of Nazi barbarism).

When I arrived in England in August 1939, three weeks before the outbreak of World War II, I had my mind set on becoming a farmer (I had seen too many unemployed intellectuals during the 1930s), and I started out on a training arm in Kent. However, I became seriously ill and physically weak with meningitis, and so in January 1940 my "acting parents", the Hauffs, arranged for me to attend the above-mentioned county school, where – after a period of uncertainty – I concentrated on mathematics, physics and chemistry.

However, in May 1940, shortly after I had turned 17, and while the German army swept through Western Europe and Britain girded for a possible German air-assault, Churchill ordered most male "enemy aliens" (i.e., holders of enemy passports, like myself) to be interned ("Collar the lot" was his crisp order). I spent about two months in various British camps, including the Isle of Man, where my school sent me the books I needed to study. There I also audited, with little comprehension, some lectures on mathematics and physics, offered by mature interned scientists.

In July 1940, I was shipped on, as part of a British convoy moving through U-boat-infested waters, to Quebec City in Canada; and from there, by train, to a camp in Trois Rivieres, which housed both German civilian internees and refugees like myself. Again various internee-taught courses were offered. The one which interested me most was a course on set-theory given by the mathematician Dr. Fritz Rothberger and attended by two students. Dr. Rothberger, from Vienna, a most kind and unassuming man, had been an advanced private scholar in Cambridge, England, when the internment order was issued. His love for the intrinsic depth and beauty of mathematics was gradually absorbed by his students.

Later I was moved around among various other camps in Quebec and New Brunswick. Another fellow internee, Dr. A. Heckscher, an art historian, organized a fine camp school for young people like myself, whose education had been interrupted and who prepared to

take official Canadian High School exams. In this way I passed the McGill University junior Matriculation exam and exams in mathematics, physics and chemistry on the senior matriculation level. At this point, at age 18, I was pretty firmly looking forward to a career in physics, with a strong secondary interest in mathematics.

I mention with gratitude that camp educational programs received support from the Canadian Red Cross and Jewish Canadian philanthropic sources. I also mention that in most camps we had the opportunity to work as lumberjacks and earn 20 cents per day. With this princely sum, carefully saved up, I was able to buy Hardy's Pure Mathematics and Slater's Chemical Physics, books which are still on my shelves. In January 1942, having been cleared by Scotland Yard of being a potential spy, I was released from internment and welcomed by the family of Professor Bruno Mendel in Toronto. At this point I planned to take up engineering rather than physics, in order to be able to support my parents after the war. The Mendels introduced me to Professor Leopold Infeld who had come to Toronto after several years with Einstein. Infeld, after talking with me (in a kind of drawing room oral exam), concluded that my real love was physics and advised me to major in an excellent, very stiff program, then called mathematics and physics, at the University of Toronto. He argued that this program would enable me to earn a decent living at least as well as an engineering program.

However, because of my now German nationality, I was not allowed into the chemistry building, where war work was in progress, and hence I could not enroll in any chemistry courses. (In fact, the last time I attended a chemistry class was in my English school at the age of 17.) Since chemistry was required, this seemed to sink any hope of enrolling. Here I express my deep appreciation to Dean and head of mathematics, Samuel Beatty, who helped me, and several others, nevertheless to enter mathematics and physics as special students, whose status was regularized one or two years later.

After my junior year I joined the Canadian Army. An excellent upper division course in mechanics by A. Weinstein had introduced me to the dynamics of tops and gyroscopes. While in the army I used my spare time to develop new strict bounds on the precession of heavy, symmetrical tops. This paper, "Contour Integration in the Theory of the Spherical Pendulum and the Heavy Symmetrical Top" was published in the Transactions of American Mathematical Society. At the end of one year's army service, having completed only 2 1/2

out of the 4-year undergraduate program, I received a war-time bachelor's degree "on – active – service" in applied mathematics.

Source: *The Nobel Foundation*, http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/chemistry/laureates/1998/kohn-autobio.html

Work assignment: Write down a short summary of the text above. Then compare your findings to Kitty Suchny's biography and answer the following questions:

--which escape routes did Walter Kohn and Kitty Suschny use, and why?

--which experiences did they make in the United Kingdom/Canada?

--how did these experiences shape their lives after the war, how do they feel about Austria today?

Use the CentropaStudent.org Study Guide for this task. You can reach it by choosing the film on Kitty Suschny from CentropaStudent.org's film list. Simply click on the button „Study Guide“ next to the film.

