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**Title of presentation:** Witnessing Extermination: Using Diaries to Understand the Holocaust in Poland

**Abstract**

December 1942 the International world learned about the atrocities of the German extermination camps. In January 1942 the Final Solution to the 'Jewish Question' had been finalized – by the Germans – as extermination. As the violence to the Jews grew more extreme, the populace started to take notice of events. When exactly did people in Poland understand that the Final Solution for the Germans was killing the Jews? And how did witnesses within Poland record these events? By examining these questions, my research investigated the reactions of Polish witnesses as they noted the changes to the German's Final Solution. My research focused on using the diaries and memoirs to analyze when witnesses noted the change in German action. Through my research, I discovered that those in Poland noticed the shift of the Holocaust – to extermination – at least half a year before the international world received notice of events.