For decades author, historian, and speaker Gerda Weissmann Klein has captivated audiences worldwide with her powerful message of hope, inspiration, love and humanity. In her speeches and books, Klein draws from her wealth of life experiences: from surviving the Holocaust, meeting her future husband on the day of her liberation, to her journey to the United States, accepting an Oscar and Emmy for a documentary based on her life, and her constant fight to promote tolerance and combat hunger.

In 1939, 15 year-old Gerda Weissmann Klein's life changed forever as German troops invaded her home in Bielsko, Poland. After being forced to live in the basement of her childhood home for nearly three years, Gerda was separated from her parents. Never losing hope, Gerda Weissmann Klein would spend the next three years in a succession of slave-labor and concentration camps, until she was forced to walk in a 350-mile death march in which 2,000 women were subjected to exposure, starvation, and arbitrary execution and fewer than 120 of them survived. Despite such atrocities, Klein never lost the will to survive. Gerda Weissmann Klein's account of her experience is documented in her classic autobiography, All But My Life, which is now 51 years in print in 62 editions. It was the foundation for the Oscar and Emmy-winning HBO documentary One Survivor Remembers.

One of the most remarkable chapters in Gerda Weissmann Klein's life began when her future husband, Kurt Klein, a U. S. Army intelligence officer--and himself a refugee from Germany--liberated her. Their story of meeting and life together has been featured on numerous television shows including Oprah, 60 Minutes and CBS Sunday Morning. A book of their letters, The Hours After, is a poignant collection of correspondence between Gerda and Kurt Klein following the war.

In 2004, Gerda Weissmann Klein released A Boring Evening at Home. The book offers glimpses into her life, and into the thoughts that have always vindicated her belief that the most treasured place on earth is home, and that the most beautiful and desirable aim for people is to spend "a boring evening" there with family. The book is dedicated to her late husband to whom
she was married for 56 years.

The Kleins’ story is portrayed in the film Testimony, a permanent exhibit at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington. In 1997, President Clinton appointed Gerda Weissmann Klein to the Holocaust Museum’s governing council.

Gerda Weissmann Klein has authored books on a wide variety of topics for an array of different audiences. These include The Blue Rose, a story about a mentally-disabled child. The book subsequently became a film in India. Her work, Promise of a New Spring, is devoted to teaching young children about the Holocaust, while A Passion for Sharing is a biography of New Orleans philanthropist Edith Rosenwald Stern, which garnered its author the Valley Forge Freedom Award. In 1996, Gerda Weissmann Klein was one of five women to receive the prestigious international Lion of Judah award in Jerusalem.

More recently, she has been featured on the cover of the McDougal-Littell high school textbook, The Americans, alongside such other notable figures as Franklin D. Roosevelt, Martin Luther King Jr., Ronald Reagan, and Gen. Norman Schwartzkopf. In January 2006, Gerda Weissmann Klein was the keynote speaker at the United Nation’s first annual official observance of the Holocaust.

Gerda Weissmann Klein’s constant striving for the preservation of human rights and dignity has earned her seven Doctorates of Humane Letters, along with countless other awards. In 1998 along with her husband, Klein founded the Gerda and Kurt Klein Foundation. Dedicated to easing human suffering wherever it may be, Gerda Weissmann Klein has worked tirelessly with her foundation to fight hunger, violence and prejudice, and to promote tolerance as well as encourage and teach young people to engage in community service and social action. As a public non-profit organization, this small but most important foundation relies upon contributions and grants in order to accomplish its mission.

In 2003, 2005 and again in 2007, The Klein Foundation partnered with TIME Classroom to create a unique multimedia educational kit sent to over 20,000 high school teachers across the country. This curriculum shares the Kleins'
Gerda Weissmann Klein experiences as the basis to teach students about the importance of respect, responsibility and acceptance of differences and, most importantly to provide them with skills to take action. This Klein Foundation/TIME Classroom program entitled Stand Up, Speak Out, Lend a Hand, was nominated as one of four finalists for outstanding student publications from the prestigious Educational Publishers Association of America in 2004.

In the Fall 2005, a significant and exciting partnership was created between the Klein Foundation and Southern Poverty Law Center to address the issues of anti-Semitism and intolerance in its larger context. To date, there have been over 98,000 requests for this unique educational curriculum. This project is available FREE to every school in the country upon request.

Gerda Weissmann Klein lives in Scottsdale, AZ and has three children and eight grandchildren.

http://us.macmillan.com/allbutmylife