

## Impact Statement

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***Young Unsung Hero: Agnes Lackovic, 2025***

Digital Art, 11 x 10.3 inches

Lawrence High School, Lawrence, KS

Unsung Hero: Agnes Lackovic

This story about Unsung Heroes will talk about Agnes Lackovic and the work that she did to make an impact on society. We will discuss techniques that have been used in this artwork, her influence on the youth's outlook on life, and why I chose to talk about her story of becoming a spy.

The first reason as to why I chose this Unsung Hero is because she became a spy at such a young age, which is surprising to most when they first hear about her story. This caught my attention and brought me to dig for more information about her. I discovered many fascinating details about her upbringing as a secret agent involved in heroic missions. Furthermore, her story has really inspired me in many ways, one of which she taught me to not lose hope in life and to have empathy for other people in this world because other people might be struggling in the same way. The true story of a WWII undercover teenager begins in Czechoslovakia, where, in a tiny rural area, one little girl named Agnes Lackovic, grew up as the fifth out of seven other children, where the family barely had enough money to feed themselves. Moreover, Agnes was a girl who was often sick, which created a major burden on the family. Due to her condition, she moved to live with her Aunt Rosa Schneider in Munich at the age of 10, where she attempted to help Agnes during her recovery. That was when her new life began.

Later, Rosa found a tutor so Agnes could learn German and start attending local school. When Rosa and her husband, Georg, quickly realized that Agnes was an extremely smart and hardworking girl, they decided to pull her out of school and hire tutors that would live with them for six months at a time in Italy so she could speak other languages. By age 14, along with her native Slovakian, she also knew German, French, and English. When she returned to Munich, Rosa began training her as a spy. Agnes began writing and passing codes to her allies. By then she was registered as an official spy with the U.S. government. Although her first code name was 3-6-9, she was very young to be an agent, and since there were very few agents her age, her aunt decided to add "KID" at the end. Years later, since Agnes couldn't stand to see people dying and suffering without a logical reason, Agnes and Aunt Rosa started helping the Jewish people imprisoned by the Nazis. Aunt Rosa would distract the Nazi guards while Agnes crept over to the prisoners and whispered a secret code in French to let them know that she was a secret agent and could help them. Through these courageous acts, Agnes

Lackovic made a major impact in WWII by helping many Jews in the concentration camps.

For my artwork, I opted to pick an ordinary photo of Agnes Lackovic as my reference. The reason was her lovely smile and beautiful face. I selected warm colors because of her warm personality, and I chose very colorful depictions due to her bringing life in color to a dark and scary situation as a caring, selfless, and courageous person with a big heart. I also added some elements that reflect her work. The keys in the background symbolize that she has a lot of secrets that she had to hide in order to protect and save people. In addition to that, in her missions, she would use a drawing of a flower that she incorporated to share secret codes amongst other agents, which is why I added some flowers attached to her hair in the work.

Additionally, Agnes Lackovic made me realize that even young children can make a major difference in the lives of others through their actions. It's not surprising that many people perceive young individuals as unserious and naive. However, there are children who put hard work into changing the world. Besides Agnes, 10-year-old Samantha Smith is another example of a young child who significantly changed the lives of others. Despite her young age, she managed to ease tensions between the United States and Russia during the Cold War with a single letter. I believe that these two girls' actions show that everyone, no matter how young they are, can help anyone if they really set their mind to it. As Charles Dickens said, "No one is useless in this world who lightens the burdens of another." In conclusion, it is clear that the work of Agnes Lackovic changed our society. I argue that her becoming an agent has allowed me to learn her story and create this piece to honor her, and her impact on other young children can encourage more people to be more courageous.

#### References:

"3-6-9 KID: How Child Spy Agnes Láckovič Saved Hundreds from the Nazis." *YouTube*, LowellMilkenCtr, 20 Sept. 2023, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=3O2ew5vgPxx&t=2s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3O2ew5vgPxx&t=2s).