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An Interesting Acquisition



The Center for Holocaust Studies recently joined with Special Collections to purchase a pair of artists' books by Tatana Kellner. Kellner, a photographer, printmaker, and book artist based at the Women's Studio Workshop in Rosendale, New York, is also the daughter of Holocaust survivors. The two volumes *B-11226: Fifty years of silence, Eugene Kellner's story* and *71125: Fifty years of silence, Eva Kellner's story* give artistic expression to her parents' memories of internment in several concentration and extermination camps.

The titles come from the parents' decades-long refusal to talk about their experience, a silence not uncommon among survivors. What is unusual is what Kellner has done with their hand-written testimony.

Artists' books are handmade volumes, unified in content in such a way as to have a singular impact on the reader. Kellner's two creations are striking examples of the genre, presented in simple wooden boxes marked solely by the number painted on each lid. When the cover is removed, a flesh-colored papier-mâché cast of the parent's forearm is revealed, complete with tattooed number. The pages of the books, die-cut to fit around the cast, contain two sets of text. Images of the hand-written Czech accounts



are printed on translucent pages, while the English translations are superimposed on contemporary and historical images. Family photographs add a personal context and provide specificity to the horrors of the Holocaust.

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POEM

b(re)aking bread
(for Aranka)

all
i knead
rolls
under my hands
a world
self-contained
animal, vegetable, mineral
sugar-fed yeast exhaling
gas
growing the loaf
until starvation
or the oven
end life
the same fates
met
your parents
sisters brothers
so many relatives
leaving
only two
to remember
how your mother
when the notice came
turned the starter—
that round of dough
saved from each baking
a token of womanhood
shared mother to daughter
upon marriage
(the future of your dreams)—
from its keeping tin
mixed the last grains of flour
into the ancestral microcosm
and baked the whole
ending more than one world
needing bread
she fed her family
with all she had

also
from a line
of women
who baked
their daily bread
i knead
by choice
seeking solace
from the tension
of our current state
your story
a mene tekell
as i slide
my supple dough

into the greased bowl
to rise
pinching a bit
i lay it on my tongue
let it dissolve
in remembrance
of her
wondering
what became
of the empty tin
did it perhaps
shelter
one single
surviving
spore

katherine quimby johnson

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Connell Gallagher, the director of Research Collections at Bailey Howe Library, shared the books with the students in this year's summer seminar. The many quick intakes of breath when the lids were removed made clear the visceral impact of the book. "They were amazing," said Deborah Shapiro, a non-traditional student in the class. "I had never seen anything like that and the thought of the effort that had to go into making them...."

In addition to being impressive works of art, the Kellner's works will find their place in the curriculum. David Scrase, director of the Center for Holocaust Studies, made clear his plans to use them in courses. "I would use them with the Holocaust and the Humanities, my TAP [the Teacher Advisor Program for first-year students] course, but I could just as easily use them in any of my other courses. I see their greatest use in providing an individual student once in a while with a fascinating topic that will appeal to students with certain interests and or expertise."

K.Q.J.

THE WRITER AS A MEDIUM: REPRESENTING THE ORAL HISTORY OF THE HOLOCAUST

Jonathan Trutor

This past academic year, I worked with Henri Weinstock, a “hidden child” of the Holocaust. While recording Henri’s poignant experiences, I became interested in the representation of the Holocaust’s oral history. The generation that experienced the Holocaust imparts through its recollections a diverse and intimate wealth of personal historical narratives. These stories have been repeated to friends, family, and the public; in turn, they continue to be transmitted, as people tell others what they have heard from survivors, and sometimes culminate in works of art, such as, for example, Claude Lanzmann’s *Shoah*. The documentary acts as a conduit, allowing those who experienced the Holocaust to transmit, through the medium of film, their stories, and pass them on to large audiences. In the same way, the writer who represents the oral history of a Holocaust survivor provides a medium for transmitting emotions and memories.

Representing the oral history of the Holocaust requires an answer to what Michael Rothberg lays out in *Traumatic Realism*, his text on Holocaust representation. To borrow from his concept of appropriate and respectful representation, those transcribing experiences though an oral history parse the continuities and discontinuities of history (Rothberg 2000, 272). Rothberg suggests three principal impulses in Holocaust representation: the realist demand for reference, the modernist ethical imperative to reconceptualize culture “after Auschwitz,” and the postmodernist acknowledgment that culture is continuously being transformed by new techniques and technologies (272). Oral history is not a narrative, nor is it a scientific analysis to be run through the academic rigors of cross-referencing and verification; to examine personal experience in great detail undermines the power of a good story.

The realist demand for reference can be satisfied by the authentic article of engaging one who has experienced the Holocaust. To reconceptualize culture “after Auschwitz,” historians have the opportunity to accept a compelling narrative told by a survivor whose strength lies more in cultural and emotional relevance than in journalistic detail. Oral history proves irrefutable in that one can not, with any authority, deny the experience of a survivor as a whole simply because some details might be inaccurate, and it proves impeachable in its perceived weakness, namely historical inconsistency. Objectivity defeats cultural growth by forcing a one-size-fits-all scientific analysis of culture into otherwise compelling, but perhaps factually inaccurate personal narratives. Objectivity removes historical agency from the survivor, because the survivor’s subjective, incongruous memories preclude a scientific analysis. The soul of a story is lost in favor of the mechanics.

Oral history is among the most valuable resources of Holocaust Studies. Those who have not experienced the horror and degradation of the Nazi state can not presume to fully comprehend it through bullet-point facts and figures; nor can the experi-

ence be approximated by listening to an oral account. However, the emotions and nuances of Holocaust oral history, passed down from one generation to the next through depositions and interviews, present the observer with an undeniably unique interpersonal exchange with someone speaking from experience. The academic study of the Holocaust must incorporate a history of emotions and a history of this emerging oral tradition in order to preserve the benefit of the contemporary observer’s ability to reach out to someone affected by the Holocaust and hear their memories, long after the passing of that generation.

Transcription appears to be the simplest form of maintaining oral history, whether it is in written or recorded form. The oral history of the Holocaust does not stop being an oral history when it is written down or recorded. It maintains its original distinction as oral history, because it signals to the reader that it can be accepted as one person’s experience, as opposed to a verified, painstakingly researched treatise on life during the Holocaust.

Nechama Tec proposes a strategy for presenting the history of hidden children during the Holocaust that applies to anyone attempting to record an oral history of the Holocaust (Tec 1993). The writer, according to Tec’s system, creates the context, using figures, historical data, and historical narrative in order to characterize both Nazi actions and the response of those targeted by the Holocaust.

Along with providing context, the writer points out any historical inconsistencies in a respectful, non-judgmental way in order to augment the text with a backbone of research underlying the recounted experience. If an oral history becomes entirely unbelievable because of several factual inconsistencies, it should be viewed logically as suspect, but if fifty years of memory have chiseled away small details of the survivor’s experience, then these can be noted by historians recording these oral histories without interfering with the reader’s experience of the story.

Oral history is akin to Holocaust memoirs, autobiographically derived works of fiction, and survivor art. People telling their individual stories, and having those stories recorded and maintained for future generations practice a form of personal expression that should be viewed as part of the survivor’s contribution to the field of Holocaust Studies. By recording and adding elements of historical narrative to these stories, the writer maintains a small position in the text, clarifying, but never correcting the stories of others.

Works Cited:

- Rothberg, Michael. *Traumatic Realism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000.
- Tec, Nechama “A Historical Perspective: Tracing the History of the Hidden-Child Experience.” In *The Hidden Children: The Secret Survivors of the Holocaust*, ed. Jane Marks. New York: Fawcett Columbine, 1993.

ROMANIES AND GENOCIDE: RECORDS, MEMORIES, AND RECONSTRUCTION OF ROMANY EXPERIENCES UNDER THE NAZIS

Elizabeth McGraw

On Wednesday, 30 March 2005, the Center for Holocaust Studies at the University of Vermont presented a lecture in honor and memory of Gabrielle Tyrnauer, a member of the Center's advisory board. Professor Susan Tebbutt, Senior Lecturer and Head of German Studies at Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick, delivered this lecture. Professor Tebbutt has published extensively on the Romany experience in Germany. This lecture was based on her most recent book, *The Role of the Romanies: Images and Counter-Images of 'Gypsies'/Romanies in European Cultures*, which she co-edited with Nicholas Saul.

The title of Tebbutt's lecture was "Romanies and Genocide: Records, Memories, and Reconstruction of Romany Experiences under the Nazis," a topic that has been relatively under-explored in relation to the Holocaust, until recently. The lecture was divided into two distinct sections: the reconstruction of the Romany experience by non-Romanies, followed by the same reconstruction by Romanies themselves.

Before exploring those two categories, however, Tebbutt considered the definition of who the Romanies were in relation to the Nazis and the Holocaust. The term Romany refers to those the Nazis and most of Europe identified as gypsies during the early part of the twentieth century. The term gypsy originates from the belief that the group so designated originated in Egypt and is somewhat misleading when we consider the Romanies, or all the gypsies in Germany, as well as Eastern Europe.

Professor Tebbutt first examined the portrayal of the Romany experience as depicted by images and photographs. Due in part to the outsider status of Romany culture, most of the images recorded of the Romanies before and during the Holocaust were by non-Romanies. Tebbutt showed examples from Otto Pankok's "Passion" cycle, a series of paintings featuring Romanies that was deemed degenerate art by the Nazi regime. Tebbutt quoted Pankok describing the Romany as one of the "most childlike and innocent races of all of Europe."

The Nazi regime had another view, one Tebbutt summarized with a quotation from Yehuda Bauer, "...the Nazis wanted to eliminate the Roma as an identifiable group of people, the bearers of a culture." However, persecution of the Romanies was not a new phenomenon and did not begin in 1933, but rather was a centuries-old tradition. In the twentieth century there is evidence of Romanies being fingerprinted for identification purposes as early as 1911. Tebbutt described how this persecution increased after the Nazis rose to power.

A number of photographs and images of the Romanies were recorded in 1943 by a German woman, Eva Justin. Justin's work was compiled during the course of her research as part of Dr.

Robert Ritter's Berlin-based Racial Hygiene and Demographic Biology Research Unit. Tebbutt described the images and notes from Justin's dissertation as the most complete visual record of the Romany experience during this period. Another series of photographs, collected by Roland Barthes after World War II, offers us another look into the culture of the Romanies and their experiences. Of his work, Barthes is quoted as saying, "I recognize with my whole body, the straggling villages I passed through on my long-ago travels in Hungary and Rumania."

The Romany experience during the Holocaust was also documented by other prisoners in the camps. Yehuda Koren told of a beautiful gypsy girl with artistic talent, whose striking looks soon attracted the attention of the man in charge of the working party. On learning that she was an artist, he exempted her from this harsh work and sent her to paint numbers on the barracks." This artistic talent put the Romany woman in a "privileged" place within the camp. "Word of her artistic talents spread, and the SS guards supplied her with watercolours and paper and gave her photographs of their wives and girlfriends to copy in return for small gifts of cigarettes, which she exchanged for an extra bowl of soup for her mother." These extra rations were extremely important in the camps, as prisoners were not given the enough food to ensure their survival.

The accounts of two Jewish doctors, Lucy Adelsberger and Nickolas Nylszli, approached the subject of the Romanies with a more clinical objectivity. Adelsberger described the condition of the Romanies in the camps:

Like the adults, these children were no more than skin and bones, with no muscles and no body fat. Their transparent, parchment-like skin was chafed and rubbed sore over the sharp angles of their bones and erupted in festering wounds. Scabies covered their undernourished bodies from head to foot and sucked out their last ounce of strength. Their mouths were infested with malignant noma ulcers that riddled their lips and perforated their cheeks....

Nylszli, on the other hand, reported on the fate of the Romanies in the camps, specifically Auschwitz. "Once again Europe's pyromaniacs had organized a gigantic display of fireworks. Once again the setting was the Auschwitz concentration camp. This time, however, the victims thrown to the flames were not Jews, but Christians: Catholic Gypsies from Germany and Austria. By morning their bodies had been transformed into a pile of silvery ashes rising in the crematorium courtyard." It has been estimated that by 1943, ninety percent of all gypsies in Auschwitz had been gassed.

An equally important, yet much less widely-known history of the Romany experience is that depicted by Romanies themselves. Two Romanies, however, broke this mold, the siblings Ceija and Karl Stojka. The Stojkas' accounts utilize painting, poetry, and autobiographical prose to depict their experiences during their persecution under the Nazi regime. The purpose of the Stojkas' endeavors is not simply for historical documentation. Rather, the artworks represent part of the siblings' healing process, and were a way for them to come to terms with their persecution and horrific experiences. Another Romany who took up the task of recording his experiences under the Nazis was Alfred Lessing. His autobiography depicts the fear and dread he felt while hiding his Romany identity from the Nazis.

While the works of Romanies depicting their own experiences offer a more colorful and deeper insight than that of non-Romanies, the former are scarce. Over the past forty years of research and exploration of genocides, the Holocaust in particular, it is still common to find no reference to Romanies in Holocaust historical accounts. However, with scholars like Susan Tebbutt and Professor Nicholas Saul, who visited UVM during the fall of 2004, that trend may be changing.

**“INVOLVE ME AND I’LL
UNDERSTAND”***
**THE HOLOCAUST AND HOLOCAUST
EDUCATION, 2005**
Deborah Schapiro

“When is the past the past?” asked Professor Robert Bernheim. This was the first of several provocative questions that would be posed during our week of intensive exploration and study of the Holocaust. We, a composite of high school educators, UVM undergraduates, and interested community members, had dedicated a week of our Vermont summer to study this complex historical event. I, the daughter of a survivor, had committed to learn answers to many of the questions I had not yet asked.

Bernheim, members of the UVM Department of History and the Department of German and Russian, the survivor community and the Vermont community participated in a week of lectures and presentations that covered the topic from an emotional, intellectual, and historical perspective. In support of the Center for Holocaust Studies’ commitment to education and outreach, this course, now in its twelfth summer, provides secondary school educators with the knowledge and motivation to teach the Holocaust in an involved and engaging manner.

The course outline was extensive and comprehensive. Rather than a chronological review of history that can be found in countless texts, this course effectively and creatively introduced us to the Holocaust as we might have experienced it in durational time.

Early in the week, after an initial morning lecture entitled “A Twisted Road to Auschwitz? The Course of German History and the Nazi Holocaust” we were introduced to several survivors. Aranka Siegal, an award-winning author of two books and a frequent speaker at high schools and conferences, joined us the first day. Many of us found that, as we viewed newsreels and films later in the week, Aranka’s face and voice were imprinted on the

images, creating a level of connection and comprehension that would otherwise have been missed. We had the pleasure of speaking and dining with Aranka throughout the seminar and in each conversation she added a few more details, anecdotes, and insights to our gradually evolving knowledge of the topic.

Other survivor testimony was equally emotional and engaging, challenging us with questions such as, “Who would you risk you life for?” and “What would you do if you saw someone in danger?” We learned that for many survivors it was the motivation to stay alive with and for someone that kept them going. Gabe Hartstein, Simon Barenbaum, Henri Weinstock, Michael Bukanc, Yehudi Lindeman, and Susi Learmonth all acknowledged that they were “one of the luckiest people in the world” and after hearing their stories one couldn’t help but admire their “glass-half-full” perspective. We engaged in a lively discussion, initiated by Yehudi Lindeman, exploring the concepts of “historical imagination” versus “historical sensation” and we were enthralled by Marion Pritchard, a Righteous Gentile who was so clear about the distinctions between right and wrong during a time when so many were ambivalent that, in the short term, she saved 150 Jewish lives. The differences in age, location, and circumstances of these speakers underscored for us, in a very direct way, how pervasive the effects of Hitler’s leadership and Nazi ideology were throughout Europe and provided many perspectives on the experience.

In addition to Bernheim, Professors David Scrase, Jonathan Huener, and Wolfgang Mieder packed a semester’s worth of ideas, facts, queries, and enthusiasm into their two-hour presentations. Summarizing this aspect of the seminar is an overwhelming challenge. My pages of notes and commentaries reflect the detail and significance they each brought to their topics.

Scrase, whose lectures were entitled “Art of the Holocaust” and “Literature of the Holocaust,” stressed that one of the primary roles art and literature serve in history is to restore a human dimension. When considering Hitler’s effective propaganda or a survivor’s recollections, art and literature serve to humanize the experience. This same concept was also apparent in Lois Price’s presentation on “Music and Survival During the Nazi Holocaust.” She asked, “How much does art express what is going on with anyone at any given moment?” and shared the stories of prisoners who went to great extremes to compose and play under even the most restricted circumstances. We had the privilege of hearing music composed in the camps performed by Ms. Price and two colleagues on flute, violin, and cello. It was beautiful and haunting.

It is unlikely any of us has looked at language the same way since hearing Wolfgang Mieder’s lecture, “The Use of Language and the Third Reich: Hitler’s *Mein Kampf* and the Diaries of Viktor Klemperer.” Mieder enlightened us to the power of language and the mass media as primary tools the Nazis used to manipulate the German population. He also shared the publishing history of *Mein Kampf* as well as his own passion for proverbs, folklore, and the significance of lessons and beliefs passed orally from one generation to another.

While many of the week’s presentations immersed us in the events and experiences of the Holocaust, other lectures led us to think about the aftermath. Huener’s lecture, “Auschwitz: Its Origins and Place in Historical Memory,” provided a transition between the way the events of the time were perceived and the significance they have taken on since. “Auschwitz, in addition to

* From an Italian proverb: “Tell me and I’ll forget, show me and I may remember, involve me and I’ll understand.”

HITLER'S JEWISH SOLDIERS: BRYAN RIGG'S SUMMER LECTURE

Derek Weaver

being a metonym for the Holocaust, is a symbol that functions in different ways for different groups," explained Huener. Beginning with graphic images of the camp, he proceeded with a thorough review of its systems and evolution, explaining why Auschwitz holds such a prominent place in Holocaust history.

After all we had heard about the Holocaust from the week's presenters and the survivor testimonies, it was difficult for any of us to believe that there are "Liars, Deniers, and Revisionists: Holocaust Denial in the Twenty-first Century," the title of another lecture by Bernheim. However, within moments we were introduced to a community of well-known, well-educated, and well-publicized individuals who believe that the Holocaust never happened, that it is a fabrication of the Jews who used their control of the media, finances, and industry to create the drama, and that the Jews deserved whatever suffering they experienced.

"In considering the Holocaust and its consequences, is there any such thing as justice?" This question was posed by historian Craig Pepin in "The Nuremberg Trials and the Search for Justice." Pepin masterfully guided us through this remarkably complicated trial—from the initial issues regarding the who, what, where, and when of participation to the complexities of the legal issues and precedents that had to be considered throughout the process. That the Nuremberg trials did not put the issue of Nazi war crimes to rest was clear from Steve Rogers' presentation, "Tracing Nazi War Criminals and Holocaust Era Assets." Rogers, a senior historian in the Office of Special Investigations at the US Department of Justice, spoke about his experiences identifying and deporting those Nazis who came into the United States by lying about their past.

This brief review can only touch upon the vast quantity of knowledge shared during this week of study, and imply the enthusiasm with which every session was presented and received. Many of my classmates felt and expressed a similar sentiment, that this was one of the best education experiences of our lives. It is difficult to know exactly how many young people have been enlightened as a result of the fifty-five educators who have completed the course since it began in 1994, but they do represent a significant percentage of the middle and high schools in northwestern Vermont, especially Chittenden and Addison counties.

Although it is designed with high school educators in mind, this seminar has relevance and importance to anyone with an interest in this period of history. The Center for Holocaust Studies plans to offer this program again next summer and welcomes your participation.

German officers such as Field Marshal Erhard Milch, General Helmut Welberg, and Admiral Bernhard Rogge and many others were in a unique position during the Second World War—they were Jews serving in the armed forces of Nazi Germany. How was it possible for Jews to be part of the German military when the regime targeted them for wholesale destruction? Professor Bryan Rigg, of American Military University, addressed this apparent paradox in a public lecture on the evening of Tuesday, 28 June, held in conjunction with the Center for Holocaust Studies' 2005 Summer Seminar on the Holocaust and Holocaust Education.

Rigg began his lecture and PowerPoint presentation by introducing the three officers previously mentioned. Field Marshal Milch and General Welberg were both what were known as "half Jews" under the Nazi Racial Laws of 1935 (the Nuremberg Laws). To be labeled as a half-Jew in the Nazi legal system, one only had to have two Jewish grandparents. The third man, Admiral Rogge, had only one Jewish grandparent and was therefore, according to Nazi racial law, one-quarter Jewish. According to Rigg approximately 160,000 half and quarter Jews served in the Wehrmacht (army), Kriegsmarine (navy), and other branches of the German military during the Second World War. These statistics and stories were the result of hundreds of hours of research Rigg conducted in Germany and Austria. Much of his research involved personal interviews with surviving Jewish veterans of the German armed forces. His interviews and related documents are now housed in The Bryan Mark Rigg Collection of the German National Military Archive in Freiburg, Germany.

According to Rigg, the German military applied to its members the same racial laws as the state did to its citizens. A full Jew was defined as having three or more Jewish grandparents or as someone who practiced Judaism. The only way that a full Jew, as defined by the Nuremberg Laws, could serve in the German military was with false identification papers. However, half and quarter Jews were initially required to serve in the military, even though they were not originally permitted to become officers. As the weight of the Final Solution began to bear down, the only way those Jews in the military could continue in service was by special permission from Hitler.

Paradoxically, according to Dr. Rigg, Hitler granted thousands of exemptions to Jews in the military, exemptions that fell into three categories. The first type of exemption was simply permission to remain in the military. The second type allowed a Jew to not only remain but to also be promoted. The third type of exemption was called a German Blood Declaration. Even with a single Jewish grandparent, a person could be classified as a *Mischling*, a pejorative term meaning mixed-race. The German Blood Declaration voided the *Mischling* status and made the person a full citizen, a status Jews had been denied since the September 1935 Nuremberg Laws.

In addition to identity and ethnic roots, appearance was important to the Nazis and they often looked for soldiers who exemplified the perfect Aryan. One such person, according to Rigg, was Werner Goldberg. He had all the typical Aryan features and

absolutely none of the stereotypical Jewish characteristics the Nazis emphasized in their propaganda. The Nazis had selected Goldberg's photo to use for recruiting purposes. There was just one problem with Werner Goldberg as a propaganda tool—he was a half-Jew, a fact not immediately known to the Nazis while he was being used for propaganda purposes. Rigg noted that while half- and quarter-Jews could legitimately serve in the Wehrmacht, to join the SS one's family history had to be traced back hundreds of years to ensure "purity of blood".

Few in the audience were familiar with the lecture topic and many questions were posed during the ninety-minute talk, including several on the subject of motivation. Why would Jews want to serve a country that was slaughtering their brethren by the millions? Based on interviews he conducted with Jewish veterans of the German armed forces, Rigg found a variety of answers. Some of them felt an intense nationalism that overcame their sense of unity with other Jews. Many more felt that serving Hitler would spare them and their families from the horrors of the Holocaust. This thought was not entirely misplaced; early in the war Jewish soldiers' families did receive better treatment than others. However, by the end of the war this preferential treatment was largely discontinued. Other members of the audience asked about a hypothetical situation involving Jewish soldiers if the Germans had won the Second World War. Rigg theorized that Hitler would have fully carried out his "Final Solution" and would have eventually exterminated all the Jews in Germany and the conquered lands, including those who served him in the military. A more complete account of Jews in the Wehrmacht can be found in Dr. Rigg's book *Hitler's Jewish Soldiers*.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

2005 Hilberg Lecture

Claudia Koonz delivers the thirteenth annual Raul Hilberg Lecture on Wednesday, 2 November 2005 in Campus Center Theater, Billings Student Center at 8:00 p.m. The title is "Jewry in Nazi Historical Scholarship." Koonz is the author of the award-winning *Mothers in the Fatherland* (1987) and most recently of *The Nazi Conscience* (2003). She is currently professor of history at Duke University, where her research interests include how ethnic fears are formed both historically and in contemporary society.

CD Release

Pianist Paul Orgel has released *Music of the Holocaust*, a CD containing works by Karel Berman, Pavel Haas, Gideon Klein, and Viktor Ullmann. Look for a review in the next issue of the *Bulletin*. For more immediate information see the article in *The View*, at <http://www.uvm.edu/news/?Page=News&storyID=6679>.

Save the Date

The next **Miller Symposium**, "Jewish Life in Nazi Germany" will be held Sunday, 23 April 2006. The speakers include Steven Aschheim, Avraham Barkai, Michael Brenner, Marion Kaplan, and Beate Meyer.

BOOK REVIEWS

Daniel Half Human and the Good Nazi. David Chotjewitz. Translated by Doris Orgel. New York: Jackson/Atheneum, 2004. Cloth. \$17.95. ISBN: 0-689-85747-0.

Originally published in 2000 as *Daniel Halber Mensch* by Carlsen Verlag in Hamburg, this novel designated by the publisher for ages twelve and up was a Batchelder Honor Book in 2005. The Batchelder prize is awarded by the American Library Association for works in translation; certainly this novel merits recognition. Not only did Doris Orgel, the author of *The Devil in Vienna*, provide a smooth translation, but, more importantly, Chotjewitz, a teacher and playwright, has created an outstanding novel.

At its core is the relationship between two boys, told in the third person. Early adolescents when the story opens in 1933, Daniel and Arnim share contempt for the Communist Party to which Arnim's working-class, alcoholic father belongs, and a commitment to the ideals of the Nazi Party. They paint Nazi graffiti on walls and taunt Red Front marchers; arrested by the *Schupo*, the police, they swear blood brotherhood in their cell. As history takes its course, Daniel decides to join the Hitler Youth, but his father, an attorney and a veteran of World War I, refuses to sign the application and Daniel discovers that his mother is Jewish.

Over time the family becomes more isolated, as Daniel's father is first marginalized and then dismissed from his position, because he will not abandon his wife. Daniel likewise is excluded, first from sports, then from school. The situation becomes more complicated when Daniel's uncle, (his mother's brother), and his cousin Miriam come to stay. By that time the young people are full-fledged adolescents. Arnim, who has succeeded in joining the Hitler Youth, falls in love with Miriam. He defies his squadron leader and continues to see her and to do what he can to protect Daniel and his family. The novel climaxes on *Kristallnacht* in a tangle of friendship, betrayal, truth and lies.

This main story is framed, and interrupted, by a separate narrative set in Hamburg in 1945, told in the first person and set in a different typeface. The narrator is Daniel, returning like so many young men—including Stephan Lewy, who shared his story in *The Holocaust: Personal Accounts*—as a soldier to the country he had fled. Through his eyes we see the aftermath of war, the destruction wrought in the city that had once been his home. These interruptions provide a different perspective on the main story; they include snapshots that have no other place in the story; and, most importantly, they break the narrative tension. Rather than being caught up in events, the reader can step back and see how larger historical forces shape individual lives. They also allow space for reflection on class differences, individual responses to stress, the appeal of risk and violence to teenage boys, and adolescent longing to belong to a greater group.

Although this novel is a gem, several facets shine more brightly. One is its historical accuracy and the skill with which the author has woven that research into the fiber of his story. Both he and the translator are to be credited with their adherence to the language of the period, but the author alone deserves credit for fully recreating the mentalité of the era. All too often, authors of historical fiction may get the details of external life down, but

their characters' inner lives—whether it is the thoughts they can have while feeling rebellious about their parents, or the way they express their feelings toward the opposite sex—are contemporary to our time. Chotjewitz is especially commendable for the way he makes clear the abundance of group activities in Germany prior to 1933, from political marches to sports leagues, and the vociferousness of political groups, including not only the Hitler Youth, but the Red Front and the Social Democrats. In addition, Hamburg itself comes alive, from the streets of Altona to the house Daniel lives in on the Flottbeker Chaussee.

Chotjewitz also refuses to take the easier of two narrative paths. For example, when Daniel's parents admit that his mother is Jewish, rather than feel that the law is horrible to single out his mother, he blames his father, saying, "That's why I'm half Jewish now, . . . [b]ecause you married a Jewess." The reader can feel how thoroughly indoctrinated he has been by Nazi doctrine. Likewise, the ending brings the story full circle, with an unexpected, but entirely fitting twist. Without divulging any of the details, let me simply say that, with the ending, Chotjewitz raises questions that have no clear answers.

For this and many other reasons, *Daniel Half Human* would be an excellent resource for the high school classroom. The ambivalent ending; the believability of Daniel and Anrim as individuals, rather than representatives of certain groups; the moral and ethical issues raised by the behavior of individual characters, including Daniel's parents, are all great fodder for a book discussion, whether the group is teenagers or adults. The first question I would ask is, what does the title mean? It could as easily have been "Daniel Half Jew", or "Daniel Mischling/Mixed Race." Second, why did the American publisher alter the original title by adding "and the Good Nazi," and what is the significance of that wording. Readers are unlikely to come to the same responses to these questions, but openness to interpretation is one of the hallmarks of a work of literature, which is what this fine novel truly is.

Katherine Quimby Johnson

Defying the Tide: An Account of Authentic Compassion during the Holocaust. Reha and Al Sokolow with Debra Galant. Jerusalem and New York: Devora Publishing, 2003. Cloth. \$21.95. ISBN: 1-930143-71-0.

The subtitle of this intriguing book states its theme in a nutshell. This is a memoir that focuses not only on the horrors of being Jewish in Hitler's Germany, but also on a brave German woman who risked her own safety to help her fellow human beings.

The book opens with a prologue that immediately draws the reader into the intriguing story of Ruth Abraham, mother of the author Reha Sokolow. The year is 2000, the place is the United States, and Ruth, about to undergo heart bypass surgery at age eighty-seven has her mind on only one thing—attending, along with her entire family, the ninetieth birthday party for her friend Maria Nickel in Berlin. When she arrives in Berlin she introduces Maria to her family by announcing, "This is Maria, our angel. If it weren't for her, none of us would be alive."

What follows is the almost unbelievable account of why this is true. Reha begins her mother's story with her childhood in Löbau, Poland, and her youth in Berlin. As a twenty-five-year-old, Ruth met her future husband in August of 1938. The beginning of their courtship during that time of the Nuremberg Laws was not easy, but things took a decided turn for the worse after *Kristallnacht* in November. At that time, as Walter's family's business was destroyed and his father was deported to Dachau, Ruth began to demonstrate her great fortitude and commitment to survival. Not only did she manage to help free Walter's father, but she also made up her mind that she would never allow herself to be deported and that somehow she would survive.

After their marriage Ruth and Walter made contingency plans to go into hiding when the time came. Although the other members of their families lost their lives in the Holocaust, with cleverness and good luck Ruth and Walter managed to avoid this horrible fate. Ruth's blond hair and "Aryan" good looks perhaps helped them in this endeavor, but things were not made easier by her pregnancy and the subsequent birth of Reha midway through the war years.

It is at this point that Maria Nickel enters the story. Maria, as we learn from chapters about her life interspersed through the book, was not a political person, but she was unswervingly moral and ethical. As she viewed the suffering of the Jews in Berlin, she made a vow to herself to try to help one Jewish person survive. It was Ruth Abraham's luck that she turned out to be that Jewish person. And in helping Ruth, Maria helped not just one Jewish person but three to survive.

This is a short (168 pages) memoir, but the story is absolutely fascinating. Without the prologue and epilogue to help keep the story based in reality, one might almost believe it to be a work of fiction. The story of Ruth and Walter Abraham and their daughter Reha is suspenseful and thrilling, while that of Maria Nickel reinforces the belief that *every* individual can make a difference in this world. The eleven pages of photographs at the end of the book help the reader to visualize these amazing people. It is fitting that the final photograph is of Maria's ninetieth birthday in Berlin attended by members of both the Abraham and Nickel families, for the book thus ends right where it began.

This book definitely deserves to be on the bookshelf of private, school, and public libraries as a testament to the importance

of personal humanity. It proves that acts of kindness, no matter how small the scale, have the ability to transform lives.

Barbara Mieder
Milton High School

An Ethics of Mourning: Grief and Responsibility in Elegiac Literature. R. Clifton Spargo. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004. 328 pp. Cloth. \$49.94. ISBN: 0-8018-7977-9.

R. Clifton Spargo's *An Ethics of Mourning* proposes to advance an ethics of mourning influenced primarily by the philosophical categories of Emmanuel Levinas and Donald Williams. The treatment of Levinas is clear and nuanced. The similarities between Williams, who comes out of the British tradition of philosophy, and Levinas, the foremost thinker in the twentieth-century continental tradition are cogently presented. Such an ethics emphasizes urgency, a responsibility for the death and life of others and an ongoing defense of a social bond prior to all contract theory. The author makes an important distinction between 'ethics' and 'morality.' Ethics articulates the social bond of time and alterity and is governed by the category of the responsibility of the one for the other. Ethics founds morality. Morality offers specific prescriptions and as such is almost completely bracketed, or set aside, by the author. For this reason he does not consider degrees of responsibility, moral judgment, legal claims, matters of restitution, forgiveness, pardon, and reconciliation.

The central portion of the text is taken up with expositions and interpretations of themes of mourning in Greek tragedy, Shakespeare (*Hamlet* in particular), and modern (Milton, Hardy) and contemporary elegiac literature. The author reads and interprets this literature through a variety of lenses including those of Freud, Lacan, and Ricoeur. The amount of material dealt with, both in terms of primary and secondary sources, shows an impressive and at times sparkling erudition.

The author explores some of the literature of the Holocaust in the last two chapters of his book. He introduces Levinas' re-evaluation of Nietzsche's notion of "bad conscience" to indicate the subject's awareness of and responsibility for what is lost in the transition from experience to art. It is through the category of "bad conscience" that Spargo explores the phenomenon of representation in poetry, and to a lesser extent in cinematic expression. He explores the poetry of Randall Jarrell and devotes the entire last chapter to the poetry of Sylvia Plath.

In an important aside, Spargo contrasts Claude Lanzmann's epic documentary *Shoah* to the poetry of Jarrell. He argues that *Shoah* is not without its own artifices in terms of visual and narrative editing and juxtapositions of the pastoral surroundings that provide such an eerie contrast to the theme of bureaucratic annihilation in the death camps. His comments on *Shoah* are relevant to the emerging polemic within the study of the Holocaust concerning the adequacy or limitations of all forms of visual representation. However, he makes his point in a non-polemical manner and without emphasizing the pedagogical implications of the discussion in which he finds himself.

The chapter on Sylvia Plath provides a searching description of her imaginative association with the Holocaust in her late poems. This discussion occurs within the context of critical reflections on her work by such figures as Irving Howe, George Steiner, and Alvin Rosenfeld. All of the commentators on Plath are critical of her disproportionate attempts to describe the tragedy of her own life in terms of the language and images of the Holocaust.

What is most disturbing about the book is that the author seems to leave behind the task of searching for an ethics of mourning, except perhaps in his discussion of "bad conscience." Given the seriousness with which Spargo sets out his reflections on the ethics of "mourning," it is surprising and regrettable that he does not return to the subject of ethics itself to illuminate his study of poetry and representation in Holocaust literature. The notes at the end of the book show an astonishing degree of erudition and insight. Still, the center of the book appears to be found on its periphery.

Richard Sugarman
University of Vermont

Our Contributors

Nancy Gallagher is the author of *Breeding Better Vermonters: The Eugenics Project in the Green Mountain State* (1999).

Elizabeth McGraw is a junior at the University of Vermont, with a minor in Holocaust Studies.

Barbara Mieder teaches German and English at Milton High School in Milton, Vermont.

Deborah Schapiro lives in South Burlington. She is the daughter of Holocaust survivors.

Richard Sugarman is Professor of Religion at the University of Vermont. His research interests include phenomenology, philosophy of religion, and Jewish philosophy.

Jonathan Trutor is a 2005 graduate of the University of Vermont and has begun graduate study at the University of Minnesota.

Derek Weaver is a sophomore at the University of Vermont, with a minor in Holocaust Studies.

Extreme Measures: The Dark Visions and Bright Ideas of Francis Galton. Martin Brookes (New York & London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2004). 298 pp. Cloth. \$49.95. ISBN 0-7475-6666-6.

Each year brings new books on eugenics, often enticing readers with stock formulas: the mad scientist, the dark and sinister ghosts that haunt our most trusted institutions, and revelations of the secret crimes of our forefathers. Over the past decade, writers have invoked all of these to restore the repressed memory of eugenics history embedded within the origins of medical genetics, behavioral psychology, anthropology, and statistics. *Extreme Measures: The Dark Visions and Bright Ideas of Francis Galton*, by science author and former biologist Martin Brookes, is a colorful, informative addition to this genre.

Brookes begins his story with a pilgrimage to Francis Galton's grave in Clarendon, "in an iron-fenced enclosure, isolated from all the other gravestones." The tomb becomes a metaphor for Galton's place in history: "Yet however grand this hallowed grave once appeared, it now looks tired and scruffy. The grave seems to have been abandoned by the living. There are no fresh flowers, just a forest of lichen and stone, as if to mask his memory." Brookes proceeds with an overview of Galton's "bright ideas" and the "dark visions" that inspired them. Galton pioneered concepts, such as "eugenics" and "Nature vs. Nurture," that continue to define our debates over the significance of human diversity, and he invented research methods—statistics of regression and correlation, pedigree and twin studies, and anthropometrics—that formed the empirical foundation for the various fields of human biology and behavior mentioned above. Yet Galton's scientific journey, Brookes contends, was motivated by his dark vision of "a future society built upon a race of pure-breeding supermen" and his consuming obsessions that brought him on "frequent excursions to the fringes of madness."

The first half of the book is devoted to Galton's distinguished ancestry, his formative years, and the emergence of personal eccentricities that molded his character and motivated his achievements in later life. Born in 1822 in Birmingham, England, he was the youngest of seven children of Samuel Tertius Galton, son of a self-made industrialist and speculator, and Violetta Darwin, daughter of the famous physician and natural philosopher Erasmus Darwin. The Galtons, Darwins, and their kin formed a closely-knit community of wealth, social status, and scientific and intellectual distinction centered in the Lunar Society, one of several English intellectual societies that fostered the scientific and industrial revolutions. Parents and siblings doted on young Francis; his sister Adele, house-bound as a result of rheumatic fever, tutored him from infancy, turning out a precocious, confident, and self-absorbed five-year-old, who boasted that he had read all the works of Homer and could read anything in the English language. His youthful academic success further inflated his sense of superiority, unchallenged until his failure to graduate with honors in mathematics at Cambridge despite a three-year effort that drove him to a physical and mental breakdown. He completed his degree the fourth year, and spent the next eight years living off his father's estate, traveling, hunting, and socializing, and casting about for something to give his life purpose and earn him distinction.

Galton's expedition to South Africa in 1850-1852 to map the interior of Namibia marked the turning point in his life, the ful-

fillment of his ambition to join the ranks of famous British scientific explorers and the experience that launched his scientific career. Galton's infatuation with measurement and his lust for adventure join in a display of conceit, arrogance, and uninhibited racism in his travel account, *Tropical South Africa* (1853), a combination of Robinson Crusoe adventure and treatise on physical and cultural geography. Brookes is startled by Galton's "vicious, racist rhetoric," which he judges to be extreme, bordering on mania. Galton's addiction to measurement and infatuation with human traits is epitomized in his use of a sextant and trigonometric calculations to measure and verify the renowned curves of the bust and buttocks of Hottentot women. Brookes concedes that Victorian readers would hardly be offended at Galton's prejudices; *Tropical South Africa* was immensely popular, and the Royal Geographical Society rewarded him with a gold medal and a seat on their council.

The second half of the book chronicles Galton's fifty-year scientific career and builds on the themes of the previous chapters. Brookes gives a colorful, comprehensive account of Galton's projects and inventions, from the events that inspired them, to his resulting publications, lectures, and their reception. He resurrects Galton's frivolous projects, such as his scientific approach to brewing a cup of tea, to illustrate his obsessive-compulsive nature and presents Galton as a tragic figure, hampered by periodic nervous breakdowns from overwork and blinded by prejudice and a sense of self-importance.

Charles Darwin's 1859 publication of *Origin of the Species* provides the stimulus for Galton's eugenic epiphany. In "Hereditary Talent and Character" (*MacMillan's Magazine*, 1864-65), Galton set out a plan to create a superior race of humans through selective breeding of men and women who had excelled in a series of physical and mental examinations. In *Hereditary Genius* (1864) Galton used pedigrees of the families of eminent scientists and devised a linear scale to rate human intelligence to make a case that intellectual achievement was a product of heredity, not education. Swiss botanist Alphonse de Candolle published a book that demonstrated the opposite. In response, Galton devised additional methods and amassed more data to prove his hereditarian assumptions. In *English Men of Science* (1874) Galton acknowledged the role of social class and culture in human intellectual development with the introduction of the phrase "Nature and Nurture" and introduced comparative studies of twins to show the more important influence of heredity.

During the 1870s and 1880s, Galton continued to refine his plan for race improvement through selective breeding and developed more methods to measure and rank human traits, apply them to various populations, and demonstrate their heritability. Galton dubbed the study of human heredity for racial improvement "eugenics" in *Inquiries into Human Faculties* (1883). With his amassing of quantitative data by class, race, and gender, and no means to interpret it, Galton invented statistical tools to determine the degrees of certainty, probability, strength of association, and correlation from simple charts of numbers. For providing an empirical foundation for the study of heredity, Galton received the Royal Society Gold Medal in 1886. In the Science Galleries of the South Kensington Museum, Galton established a Eugenics Record Center, a data bank on the British population and research center on human heredity that became the Anthropometric Laboratory in the 1890s. In his waning years Galton continued to refine his vision of a program for national eugenics and inspire the next

generation of British scientists to study human heredity. In 1904 Galton established a research fellowship in eugenics and the Eugenics Record Office at University College London, the first of its kind throughout the world.

For the role of Galton's vision of eugenics in Germany, the reader will have to consult other sources. Brookes does mention that anthropologist Alfred Ploetz, founder of the Journal for Race Hygiene in 1904 and the German Eugenics Society in 1905, deeply admired Francis Galton and made him an honorary Vice President of the Society in 1909. This was but one honor in a very long list of awards Galton received late in life, including the Royal Society's Darwin Medal, an Honorary Fellowship of Trinity College, a knighthood, and the Royal Society's prestigious Copley Medal. Galton died in 1911, the same year that fledgling eugenics organizations from Europe and the Americas convened in London for the First International Congress on Eugenics, where they celebrated Sir Francis Galton as their founder.

Brookes' epilogue returns to the present with another pilgrimage, this time to Birmingham in search of the site of the Galton estate, the Larches. It was difficult to find, since the estate had been razed long ago and the area rebuilt; no markers or street names commemorate Galton as they do Birmingham's other noted scientists, Joseph Priestley and Erasmus Darwin. The erasure metaphor serves as a point of departure for a cogent discussion of Galton's legacies, beginning with the long list of human abuses of the twentieth-century eugenics movement (chief among them the Nazi racial ideology that culminated in the Holocaust) and continuing through the repressed memory of eugenics and its re-emergence in ethical debates over the collection, interpretation, and use of personal and genetic information.

Academic readers may be frustrated by the absence of specific source citation or acknowledgment of the vast scholarship on eugenics and Francis Galton. Brookes' sources evidently included family letters, professional correspondence, newspapers, and Galton's speeches and publications. He relies heavily on Galton's *Memory of My Life* (1908) to analyze Galton's character and interpret his innermost thoughts, with a heavy dose of literary license. While his approach breathes life into history and makes for good story-telling, the line between fiction and history is a blurry one. Often I felt Brookes' portrayal of Galton to be cavalier and derisive and his case for Galton's "madness" overstated in terms of the supporting evidence. After all, many of the eminent Victorian polymaths were as eccentric as Galton. Yet this approach tends to strengthen the book's popular appeal and certainly makes Francis Galton unforgettable. Despite these criticisms, the book has many merits. Brookes' concise and lucid explanations of biological theories and statistics are accessible to the lay reader and adroitly placed within their historical and scientific contexts. *Extreme Measures* is well structured, informative, and entertaining to read. Most important, by restoring Francis Galton's scientific contributions, their motivation, and legacies to public memory, Brookes' work allows us to recognize the eugenic impulse and social implications of our continued infatuation with measuring, comparing, and judging human differences.

Nancy L. Gallagher

With this issue the *Bulletin* reaches the milestone of ten volumes. The brain-child of Robert Bernheim, the *Bulletin* first appeared in the summer of 1996. We have featured articles on diverse topics such as the notorious Austrian right-wing politician Jörg Haider, Jews in Austria during the Nazi era and after 1945, and on the Romany Holocaust, from contributors that have included the internationally known scholars Margit Reiter, Helga Embacher, and Nicholas Saul. Other contributors have included survivor/writer Bernard Gotfryd, UVM faculty members and students, members of the Center's advisory board, and interested individuals from Vermont and further afield. We have reported on our own activities, we have reviewed books, exhibits, printed poems, and translations. We have endeavored to embrace Horace's dictum *delectare et prodesse* and we hope we have been successful in pleasing at least some of our readers some of the time, if not all of our readers all the time. We intend to continue our efforts to present items with a broad appeal and we appreciate your interest and welcome your comments.

D.S. and K.Q.J.

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Editor: Professor David Scrase
Associate Editor: Katherine Quimby Johnson

The Center for Holocaust Studies at The University of Vermont was established in 1993 to honor the scholarly and pedagogical legacy of Raul Hilberg, Professor *emeritus* of Political Science at The University of Vermont. His monumental work, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, changed the way historians and students around the world view the Holocaust. Since Dr. Hilberg began his research at the University of Vermont in the late 1950s, what was a reluctance to confront the facts of the Holocaust has given way to a hunger for the truth.

**THE BULLETIN OF THE CENTER FOR
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VOLUME 10, NUMBER 1**

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Thirteenth Hilberg Lecture
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Claudia Koonz
Duke University

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The Center for Holocaust Studies
Old Mill, Room A301
University of Vermont
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