

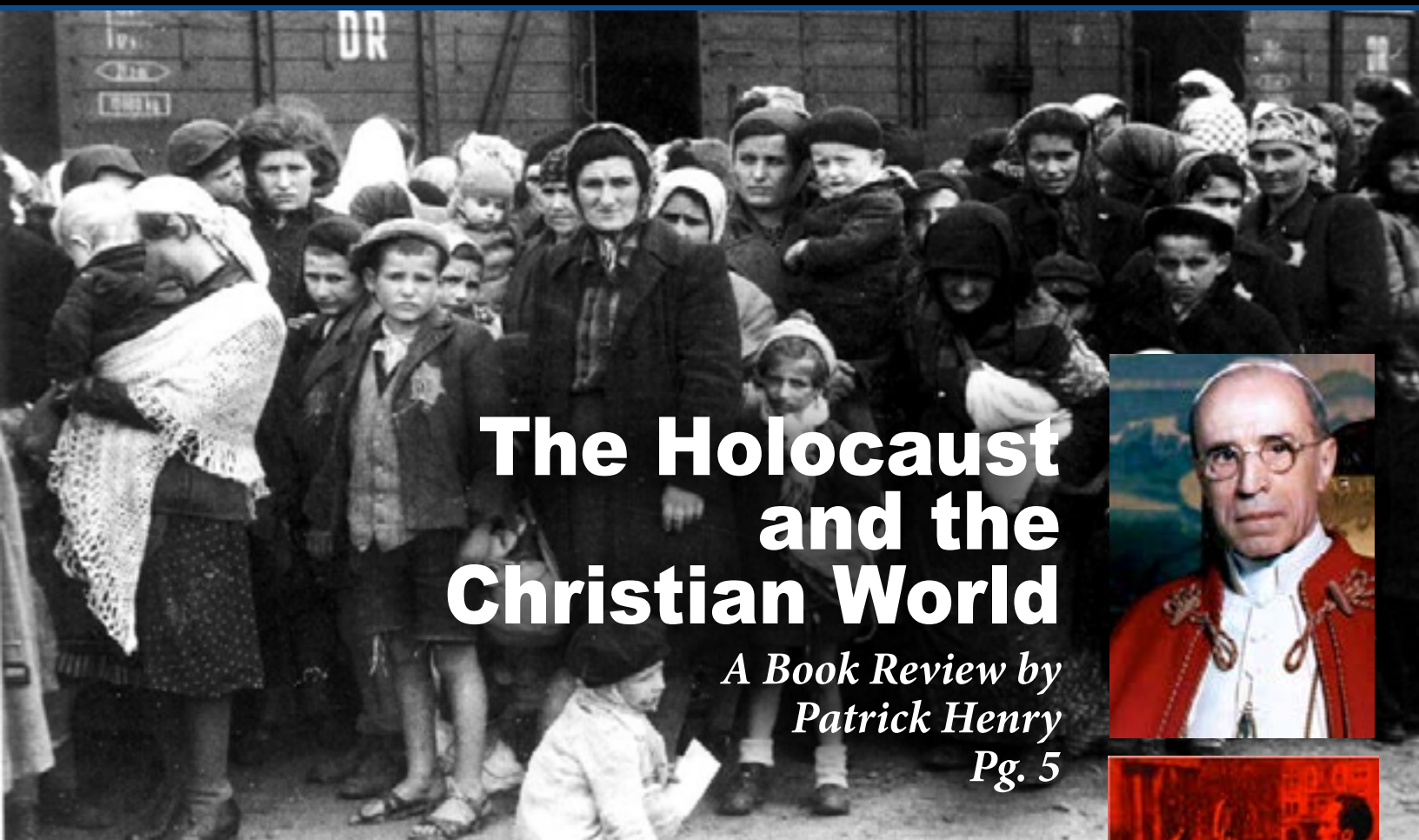
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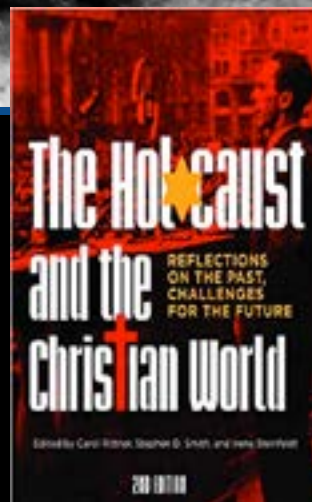
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From Where I Sit

Stefan Merken

This is why we work to make a better world.

STEFAN MERKEN
is co-editor of *Shalom* and
the Chair of the JPF.

Numbed by the News

What does a normal person do with the really bad news that we hear and read in the newspaper or on the evening news? We are constantly bombarded with news of death from war in Afghanistan and Syria, immigrants young and old drowning trying to reach safety, young students dying from school shootings, people dying from natural disasters and fires. How does an individual deal with all of this and still remain sane? Dr. Robert J. Lifton dealt with this issue for years and he has come to understand how the human mind copes with these terrible atrocities. He calls it psychic numbing.

When we hear about terrible events and see the suffering, it causes our mind to eventually block the ability to feel it any longer. In other words, the human spirit can only take so much bad news before it numbs itself.

When Dr. Lifton was interviewing Japanese survivors who had been in Hiroshima when the bomb fell, he said they would describe the experience they had. "I saw this array of dead and dying people around me. But suddenly I simply ceased to feel anything." It was as though the mind shuts itself off. We do the same with the news we hear on a daily basis.

Too often those of us who are trying to better the world in so many different ways are caught up in being critically aware of the atrocities that are being committed and those who suffer the most from these atrocities. I am sure many of us cease to feel the full impact of the suffering in order to be able to cope.

As I sit and write this, the first news is coming in from New Zealand about the shooting in the mosques. I turned on the TV and was able to see the families of those who had died trying to cope with the loss. I can feel their pain and would reach out to them if I could. It is just such atrocities that we have come to deal with too often. This is why we work to make a better world. ☆



In this March 18, 2019, file photo, a student lights candle during a vigil to commemorate victims of March 15 shooting, outside the Al Noor mosque in Christchurch, New Zealand. (Vincent Yu, File/Associated Press)

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Whom Selective Service Selects

Center on Conscience & War (CCW)

Since 2015 when all combat positions were opened to women, the rationale for excluding women from the draft no longer holds.

Male-Only Draft Registration Declared Unconstitutional

On Feb. 22, 2019, a federal judge in Houston, TX, ruled that requiring only men to register with Selective Service is unconstitutional, in that it violates the equal protection clause (*National Coalition for Men v. Selective Service System* [Civil Action H-16-3362]). The decision comes at a critical time as a government-appointed Commission has been studying Selective Service since last year and is expected to make recommendations to Congress on the future of draft registration in about one year from now.

Constitutional challenges to a male-only draft date back to the Vietnam era. In 1981, the Supreme Court settled the matter for the time, ruling that a male-only draft was not unconstitutional because “[t]he purpose of registration was to prepare for a draft of combat troops. Since women are excluded from combat, Congress concluded that they would not be needed in the event of a draft, and therefore decided not to register them” (*Rostker v. Goldberg*; 453 U.S. 57).

Over the past 38 years, however, the role of women in the military has gradually expanded, leading to an Obama Administration decision in 2015 to open all combat positions to women. With this change in Department of Defense (DOD) policy, the rationale for excluding women from draft registration no longer holds. As the major defense bills were up for debate in Congress in 2016, so began debate on the future of Selective Service. While some members of Congress called for women to be required to register with Selective Service and be included in any future draft, others questioned the need for a draft at all. To help settle the matter, Congress established the National Commission on Military, National and Public Service in 2017. While a large part of its work is centered on how to engage more Americans in service, the Commission is specifically tasked with studying whether Selective Service (draft) registration should continue, and if so, should changes be made

to the current system, such as including women in the registration requirement.

The *National Coalition for Men* case has been pending for several years. The group says it does not have a position as to whether or not there should be a draft. Their concern is that if there is a draft, it should apply equally to both men and women. The government argued that no decision should be made at this time, while the Commission is still studying the issue. However, the court noted that we don’t know what the Commission will recommend, and there is no certainty that Congress will act to make any changes to current Selective Service policy. In the meantime, the disparity in treatment between men and women continues, and the judge ruled, therefore, that male-only registration is unconstitutional.

So what does this decision mean?

This recent ruling does not mean that women are now required to register with Selective Service. The court does not have the authority to extend the law to women; only Congress could do that. Although the National Coalition for Men did request an injunction to stop male-only registration, they only made arguments on the constitu-

Continued on next page



Debra Wada, Vice Chair and members of the Interim Report of the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service

tionality issue. In the end, the court declared male-only registration unconstitutional, but it did not order any changes to the current registration process. Consequently, the registration requirement for males between the ages of 18 and 26 continues, and the various 'Solomon' laws that penalize those who do not register remain in force.

In light of this decision, those who do not register, which remains a federal felony offense, could argue that they are not intending to violate the law, as the law has been declared unconstitutional. This decision could also be used to challenge those Solomon laws. Additional court decisions or Congressional actions would be required to change the current way the Selective Service registration requirement is implemented. It is likely the government will appeal this decision. So, on the one hand not much has changed. On the other hand, it is significant that a U.S. court has declared the current draft registration to be unconstitutional.

In the meantime, the Commission will continue its work. A series of formal hearings on a variety of topics is taking place this year. The hearing about the future of Selective Service will be held at Galaudet University in Washington, DC, on April 24th and 25th.

The debate about drafting women has been simplistically (and inaccurately) framed in this way: Feminists, advocating for equal rights for women, support drafting women, while conservative religious communities are opposed because of their understanding of the different roles women and men have in society. This false dichotomy is a simplistic way of avoiding the heart of this issue and what is actually up for debate: *Freedom of conscience and the right to be free of coerced participation in militarism and war.* Additionally, this reductionist view also misrepresents feminism, as it seems to equate support for equality under the law with a tacit acceptance of militarism. Feminist movements throughout history have often called militarism into question. In fact, the first woman elected to Congress, Jeannette Rankin, is the only member of Congress to vote against U.S. involvement in both WWI and WWII. While feminists believe women and men should be treated equally, the best way that can be accomplished is to end the registration for both men and women. Doing so upholds both equality *and* freedom of conscience. ☆

What do you think?

The Commission is taking public comments until the end of this year at <https://www.inspire2serve.gov/content/share-your-thoughts>. To register your comment, you can also go to <http://www.centeronconscience.org/> or call CCW at 1.800.379.2679 or 1.202.483.2220. You can also testify at the hearings in April. We will pass along the exact details as they unfold. The CCW Web site has lots of background information on this issue and more. As always, please contact CCW at 1.202.483.2220 if you have any questions or thoughts to share.

Thank you!

This article originally appeared at <http://www.centeronconscience.org/co/conscientious-objection-and-the-draft/354-male-only-draft-ruled-unconstitutional.html>.

BILL GALVIN is Counseling Coordinator and **MARIA SANTELLI** is Executive Director of The Center on Conscience & War.

Book Review

Review by
Patrick Henry

The Holocaust and the Christian World

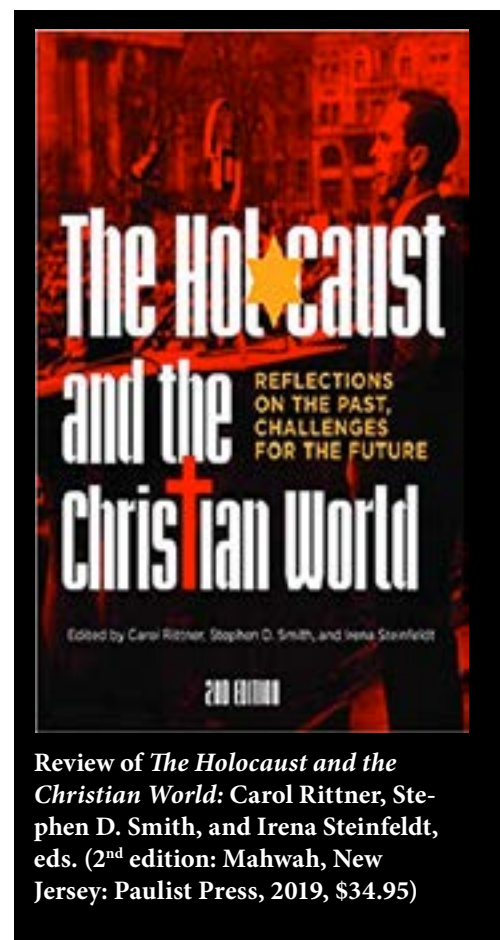
The publication of the second edition of *The Holocaust and the Christian World* couldn't be more timely. Holocaust scholars were stunned last year by the results of the April 2018 survey of Americans and the Holocaust, according to which 31% of all Americans believe that two million or fewer Jews were killed during the Holocaust, while 41% of Americans cannot say what Auschwitz was. Additionally, 22% of millennials (ages 18-34) "haven't heard" or "are not sure if they have heard of the Holocaust." Other survey questions concerning the names of countries where the Holocaust took place, the names of ghettos and concentration camps, and the persistence of antisemitism also yielded low awareness rates.

At the same time, we are experiencing a dangerous racism in our society that consistently targets Jews, blacks, Latinos, Muslims, and LGBTQ persons. A recent FBI report shows that hate crimes in the U.S. spiked 17% in 2017 alone. This marked a general rise for the third straight year and a staggering 37% increase in antisemitic hate crimes. Six months after the survey was announced, we witnessed the worst antisemitic attack in our nation's history, the massacre at Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, where eleven congregants were murdered during Shabbat services.

So we welcome, once again, *The Holocaust and the Christian World*, which informs us of how Christian churches failed during the Holocaust and teaches us how we might all do much better in fighting antisemitism in the future. The volume's contributors are among the leading Holocaust scholars of their generation: John K. Roth, Franklin H. Littell, Michael Berenbaum, John T. Pawlikowski, Michael R. Marrus, Nechama Tec, Michael Phayer, Hubert G. Locke, and Harry James Cargas, to name only the most prominent. The editors are emblematic of the ecumenical

nature of this ethical undertaking: Carol Rittner, a Catholic nun who is Distinguished Professor Emerita of Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Richard Stockton University; Stephen D. Smith, the Protestant co-founder of Beth Shalom, Britain's first Holocaust Memorial, and current Executive Director of the USC Shoah Foundation; and Irena Steinfeldt, a Jewish educator and former Director of The Righteous Among the Nations Department at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem.

Two impulses drive the text from beginning to end: the frank admission of the role played by Christianity in the Holocaust and the current project of completely ridding Christianity of all anti-Judaism. Carol



Review of *The Holocaust and the Christian World*: Carol Rittner, Stephen D. Smith, and Irena Steinfeldt, eds. (2nd edition: Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 2019, \$34.95)

Two impulses drive the book: (1) frank admission of the role played by Christianity in the Holocaust, and (2) completely ridding Christianity of anti-Judaism.

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Book Review

Rittner and John Roth elucidate the history and Christian roots of antisemitism (“the longest hatred of human history”) found in the New Testament and such early Church Fathers as Saint Augustine and Saint John Chrysostom, as well as in later Christian preachers and theologians, such as Bernard of Clairvaux and Martin Luther. They paint the institutional anti-Judaism of Christian churches, the negative depiction of the Jewish people in Christian preaching and liturgy, and the process by which the Jew became “the other”—“marginalized, persecuted, blamed for every woe, from unemployment and slums, to military defeats and unsolved murders.”

In addition, they present a chilling chart that lists Nazi measures on the one hand and prior Canonical Laws on the other, for example, “Nazi Measure: Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honor, September 15, 1935 (Canonical Law: Prohibition of intermarriage and of sexual intercourse between Christians and Jews, Synod of Elvira, A.D. 306); Nazi Measure: Book Burnings in Nazi Germany (Canonical Law: Burning of the Talmud and other books, 12th Synod of Toledo, A.D. 681); Nazi Measure: Decree of September 1, 1941—the Yellow Star (Canonical Law: The marking of Jewish clothes with a badge, 4th Lateran Council, 1215).”

After centuries of Jews being “cast outside the universe of moral obligation,” it is not surprising that most churches and most Christians were indifferent to the fate of Jews during the Nazi plague. Their history had, in the words of Pope John-Paul II, “lulled their consciences.” Centuries of Christian anti-Judaism had served as a precursor to Nazi antisemitism. Franklin Littell does not fail to mention that, whereas Protestant and Catholic bishops in Germany rose in the pulpit to denounce the euthanasia practiced against the mentally retarded and physically handicapped, “no such firm positions [were] taken in defense of the Jews.”

Chapter after chapter depicts this collective indifference of churches which, for the most part, acted in their own self-interest. Simultaneously, however, as we move from country to country, these chapters and others also record the heroism of that tiny minority, both inside and outside the church, that found “the courage to care” and risked their lives and in many cases those of their children to shelter the targets of Nazi hatred.

Although the authors in this volume clearly state that Christianity cannot be seen as the cause of the Holocaust, they nonetheless convince

readers that Christianity prepared the way and then allowed it to happen. As a result, the Shoah is accepted here as part of Christian history, indeed as “a Christian tragedy.” The enormity of Christian responsibility means that the Holocaust can no longer be conceived of as solely what happened to the Jewish people but what also happened to Christians who claimed to be disciples of a Jew named Jesus.

Having clearly established the anti-Jewish bias of traditional Christianity, the text then moves to the contemporary task of ridding Christianity of its anti-Judaism. It explains what has been done since 1945 and what still needs to be done now in the 21st century. Although the initial work of confronting the Shoah came from mostly individual Protestant theologians rather than institutional leaders, our authors establish Vatican



Pope Pius XII served as Pope from 1939 to 1958. In 2020, Church archives will be opened, finally allowing historians to determine what he did and did not do on behalf of Europe's Jews from 1939-1945.

As a result of Roman Catholic Church's 1965 Nostra Aetate statement, many churches affirmed that antisemitism is an affront to the Gospels

Continued on next page

Book Review

Council II (1962-65) and the Roman Catholic Church's 1965 *Nostra Aetate* (In Our Time) as the moment of "virtual revolution of Christian thinking" regarding Judeo-Christian relations. Symbolic of a reversal of roughly 1900 years of what Jules Isaac called "the teaching of contempt" was the removal of the expression "the perfidious Jews" from the Good Friday liturgy. The invitation for a Jewish-Christian dialogue had the additional advantage of creating an inter-Christian dialogue. As a result, many

churches issued post-Holocaust statements of contrition, rejected the scapegoating idea that Jews were responsible for the death of Jesus, and affirmed in unison: God's continuing covenant relationship with His people Israel; the responsibility to teach about Judaism from Judaism's own texts; and the fact that antisemitism is an affront to the Gospels.

The book's authors offer several strategies to strengthen this interfaith dialogue and enable Jews and Christians to move forward together in hope. Stephen Smith, for example, wants Christians to take an active part in the remembrance of the Shoah, given that the perpetrators, collaborators, and bystanders were not Jewish. In search of Tikkun (Healing), Marcia Sachs Littell stresses the importance of developing a Christian liturgy on

the Holocaust and the faithful observance of Yom HaShoah (the Day of Holocaust Remembrance) by the joint Christian-Jewish community, "not to place guilt, but to seek reconciliation and to renew faith in humanity and commitment to life." Michael Phayer, Carol Rittner, and Isabel Wollaston call for the development of Holocaust education and courses in Hebrew Scripture and post-WWII Jewish-Christian relations in Christian seminaries, Christian colleges and universities, even in Sunday school training. They also suggest a moratorium on terms such as "Old Testament" which implicitly connote Jewish displacement.

Five other voices seem particularly pertinent in the attempt to cleanse Christianity of its anti-Judaism and help Christian churches learn the lessons of the Holocaust. The first is that of Gareth Lloyd Jones who, finding the basic root of modern antisemitism in the New Testament, traces the road from the Gospels to Auschwitz. Jones points to three passages and insists that we face up to their antisemitic potential: 1 Thessalonians 2:15-16 where Paul states that the Jews killed Christ and are the deserved recipients of God's wrath; John 8:44 where Jesus refers to his Jewish audience as the children of the devil; and Revelations 2:9 where we encounter the

reference to "the synagogue of Satan." New Testament writings such as these, argues Jones, must be submitted to searching criticism and placed in their historical and sociological context so that "the teaching of contempt" might be ended. Three other voices speak directly to the idea of conversion: Michael McGarry, "Our God [the God of Christianity] loves the Jewish people as Jews and not simply as potential Christians;" Hubert Locke, "the appropriate stance of the Church in the presence of the Jewish people is that of penitence, not proselytization;" and Harry Cargas, who notes that the only conversion that should occupy



Survivors of Auschwitz arrive at the International Monument to the Victims of Fascism at the former Nazi German concentration and extermination camp KL Auschwitz II-Birkenau walk to place candles on International Holocaust Remembrance Day in Oswiecim, Poland, Sunday, Jan. 27, 2019. (AP Photo/Czarek Sokolowski)

Contributor Franklin Littell writes that the most important lesson to be mastered by post-Holocaust Christians is "the responsibility of churches to condemn publicly criminal acts by legitimate governments."

Continued on next page

Book Review

“Who is part of our universe of obligation today?”

PATRICK HENRY is Cushing Eells Emeritus Professor of Philosophy and Literature at Whitman College. He is the author of *We Only Know Men: The Rescue of Jews in France during the Holocaust* (The Catholic University of America Press, 2007) and the editor of *Jewish Resistance Against the Nazis* (The Catholic University of America Press, 2014).

Christians is “our conversion to a Christianity free of antisemitism.” Finally, in another context, while meditating on the genocidal 20th century, Franklin Littell remarks persuasively that the most important lesson to be mastered by post-Holocaust Christians is “the responsibility of churches to condemn publicly criminal acts by legitimate governments.”

In the much debated and polarized case of Pius XII, there are seven detailed articles written by priests, rabbis, and secular historians that present every possible point of view. If there is one more or less general opinion that emerges despite the differences, it is that no action should be taken regarding Pius’s proposed sainthood until all the Vatican archives have been opened, as well as relevant archives of national governments and pertinent individuals, and a complete scholarly assessment has been made of his overall record.

It is ironic that, as I write this review, Pope Francis has just announced, on March 4, 2019, that the Vatican archives regarding the pontificate of Pope Pius XII will be opened for consultation by researchers. This will take place officially on March 2, 2020. March 2nd of this year marked the 80th anniversary of the election of Pius XII who served as pope from 1939 to 1958. He has been condemned for not speaking out against the Holocaust and defended for his hidden but active diplomacy on behalf of European Jewry. In its statement about Pope Francis’s decision, Yad Vashem said that it “expects that researchers will be granted full access to all documents stored in the archives.” All Holocaust historians hope that these files will help to ascertain just what Pius XII did and did not do on behalf of Europe’s Jews from 1939-1945.

The Holocaust and the Christian World never seems excessively accusatory. To learn retrospectively what should have been done by churches and individual Christians during the Holocaust is not tantamount to knowing what we would have done had we been in their place. This wisdom permeates the text whose authors recognize that their responsibility lies in the present, in the creation of a world where another Auschwitz would be unthinkable. Accordingly, this rich, probing, and provocative volume asks many more questions than it answers and contains a series of questions for meditation in the margins of every essay. Here are a few of them:

- “What would have happened if the Churches—Protestant and Catholic alike—had defied Hitler during the Third Reich and stood in solidarity with the Jews?”
- When does silence become an active form of collaboration?”
- “What should it mean—and not mean—to be a post-Holocaust Christian?”
- “How can we help people to develop faith without prejudice?”
- “What obligation do we have to stand up for people whose beliefs we do not share?”
- “Who is part of our universe of obligation today?” ☆



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Credible Fear

Carol Ascher

The Long Uncertain Slog to “the Other Side”*A Volunteer’s View from Tijuana*

The Tijuana of my memories is a sleepy border town, entertaining day-tourists like me from San Diego with colorful Mexican restaurants and quaint souvenir shops. Yet these days the San Ysidro Port of Entry between Tijuana and San Diego is the busiest land border crossing in the Western Hemisphere. With an average of 90,000 people passing north through the crossing each day, 70,000 in cars and 20,000 by foot, Tijuana has changed.

“It’s the capital of the world! It’s mind-blowing!” said Abby Nathanson, who volunteered to help migrants in Tijuana during her

Christmas holiday. What Abby saw was an international city, bustling with immigrants arriving daily from Central and South America, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia. Farsi, French, Russian, Q’eqchi, Urdu, and of course Spanish could all be heard on the street. As Abby told me, “Wherever they’re originally from, rumor among migrants has turned Tijuana into a popular place to try to get into the United States.”

After November flooding rendered the vast tent city in Benito Juarez, Tijuana’s sports arena, unsanitary, two thousand migrants were moved to El Barratel, a former nightclub on the southern outskirts of town. But El Barratel is ten miles away from the U.S. Port of Entry at El Chaparral. Thus, many migrants have developed their own nearby shelters, taking over abandoned buildings and creating rogue tent villages—one, comprised of tents pitched five deep, lies directly against the wall.

During the year, Abby works at Grace Episcopal Church in Millbrook, New York, directing a leadership program for Latino high school students and a residential fellowship year for college graduates. Fluent in Spanish and French, Abby arrived in Tijuana, hoping to use her language skills to prepare migrants for the “credible fear” interviews that, at best, lead to their being provisionally designated a refugee, and so placed on the docket for a formal court hearing in San Diego.

What Abby found was an uncoordinated array of governmental and nongovernmental organizations, churches and other voluntary associations, each trying to assist the migrants according to its own philosophy and strategy. After an abortive stint with a New York-based church group, which was having difficulty matching volunteers’ skills to its prioritized tasks, Abby joined an ad hoc group of *gringos* who were placing themselves between the Mexican Police and migrants to prevent their eviction from an aban-



Tents are lined up in sports complex turned shelter in Tijuana by the border fence, Nov. 26, 2018.

“Credible fear interview” is what people call the official interview that migrants undergo when hoping to be designated as refugees.

Continued on next page

Credible Fear

doned warehouse whose owner had given the migrants permission to live there.

Abby also joined *Al Otro Lado* (meaning both “on, and to, the other side”), a courageous legal advocacy organization that serves indigent refugees, migrants, and deportees on both sides of the border. In Tijuana, *Al Otro Lado* occupies three stories of Enclave Caracol, a space that doubles as a food co-op, vegan café, bicycle workshop, and music venue. Working alongside *Al Otro Lado*’s legal team, Abby translated the five requirements for passing the “credible fear” interview into understandable Spanish or French for migrants from Haiti and Central America.

A handout, or *manita* (little hand), created by *Al Otro Lado* shows a hand with five fingers, each with a point proving they are refugees that must be made during the interview, and argues that, “your case is in your hands.” [See image] Though their case may be partly in their hands, their hands are tied. This is because the five points are based on the definition of a refugee developed by the United Nations following Hitler’s genocide of Jews, gypsies, communists, and homosexuals during World War II. Thus, the migrants must prove that they have fled ongoing violence, rather than starvation, economic destitution, or the devastation of their land; and that, even when they’ve fled violence, this violence is based on their race, religion, nationality, or other group membership, rather than caused by gangs, drug traffickers, domestic abuse, and the corrupt police and judiciary left by a failed state, which comprise the current situation. With immigrants forced to rework the conditions from which they are fleeing into ill-fitting niches, it

is hard to imagine the migrants making the most convincing cases in their own behalf.

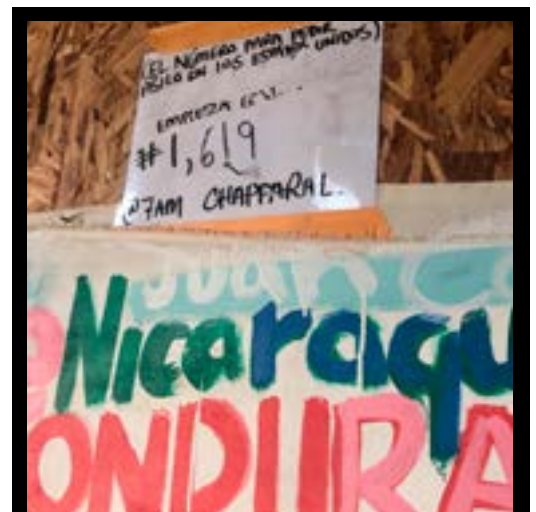
To slow down immigration, U.S. Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) has instituted arbitrary “metering” of the number of migrants who can enter the asylum-seeking process. In Tijuana, migrants applying for asylum are given numbers by CBP. While the plaza at El Chaparrel is filled each morning with migrants standing by, waiting to hear their number, CBP agents avoid direct contact with them, having assigned a migrant woman to call out the day’s numbers. According to statistics Abby passed onto me, over 2700 migrants waited for their number to be called each day in January 2019, with an expected wait time of 22 days simply to enter the system.

Although a migrant must respond to his or her number within an hour or two of its being called, no effort is made to inform migrants dispersed across Tijuana concerning the numbers being called on a given day. Since those staying in tents in El Barratel, ten (10) miles south of the border, must take a bus into central Tijuana, and many have jobs, responsibility for childcare, and other reasons for not spending hours at El Chaparrel, migrants often take communication into their own hands, texting friends back in the camp or shelter the day’s beginning number. Migrants in the warehouse Abby helped guard posted the beginning number on the warehouse wall each day [see image], and an

Continued on next page



A handout shows a hand with five fingers, each with a point proving they are refugees that must be made during the interview,



According to statistics, over 2700 migrants waited for their number to be called each day in January 2019.

Credible Fear

Border patrol agents visit incarcerated migrants to suggest that they might be happier being sent back to their home country.

CAROL ASCHER writes regularly on immigration issues. Her latest book, *A Chance for Land and Fresh Air: Russian Jewish Immigrants in Sharon and Amenia, 1907-1940* (Grey House, 2017), recently won a Northwest Connecticut Council on the Arts Culture Max Award. See carolascher.net.

anonymous website has been created within the past month to inform migrants of the numbers being called on a given day. Nevertheless, on an average day in January, only about a third of the migrants whose numbers were called actually entered the process.

Once the migrants respond to their number, they become invisible from the Mexican side. Taken across the Mexico–U.S. border, they are detained, either in “temporary holding cells” recently built in San Ysidro, or in more permanent detention facilities, until they are given the initial “credible fear” interview, often by phone.

As late as December, some migrants were apparently still being separated from their children during detention. The anguish of this separation is exacerbated by the fact that migrants have their cell phones taken from them and lose whatever ID they may have brought from their home countries. *Al Otro Lado*, the organization for which Abby helped prepare migrants for their “credible fear” interviews, makes sure that migrants’ documents are scanned before they enter detention, and that the migrants receive a secure password to retrieve them once they are free.

Because the detention facilities in San Ysidro are famously cold, one of Abby’s tasks was to make pregnant women, mothers of babies and young children, as well as migrants in precarious health, aware of the health risks of entering the asylum process, even if this meant losing their place in line. Not surprisingly, border patrol agents pay periodic visits to the incarcerated migrants to suggest that they might be happier simply being sent back to their home country!

The situation appears to be in flux for those migrants who pass the initial credible fear interview. Until recently, they were bused to a San Diego street, where they were dropped off to find their own way while they awaited a formal court hearing. But, according to the Trump administration’s new “remain in Mexico” policy, migrants are to return to Mexico, where they wait until the date of their actual court hearing in San Diego. Mexico has apparently pushed back, and I could not corroborate whether, or to what extent, the “remain in Mexico” policy is in effect.

In late January two attorneys for *Al Otro Lado* had their passports taken by Mexican border patrol and were denied entry into Mexico. While the attempt to bar the attorneys from Mexico makes fairly clear that the country is collaborating with U.S. policy, it also suggests how that the Trump administration is pushing back against efforts to assist migrants in crossing the border.

Abby told me when we talked that she’d booked an airline ticket to return to Tijuana in early March. When I asked her why, she answered thoughtfully, “I’m not entirely sure. I suppose I feel it’s a historic moment, and I believe in walking the walk.” ☆