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Sexual Violence Against Jewish Women During The Holocaust (HBI Series On Jewish Women)



Synopsis

Finalist for the National Jewish Book Award Using testimonies, Nazi documents, memoirs, and artistic representations, this volume broadens and deepens comprehension of Jewish women's experiences of rape and other forms of sexual violence during the Holocaust. The book goes beyond previous studies, and challenges claims that Jewish women were not sexually violated during the Holocaust. This anthology by an interdisciplinary and international group of scholars addresses topics such as rape, forced prostitution, assaults on childbearing, artistic representations of sexual violence, and psychological insights into survivor trauma. These subjects have been relegated to the edges or completely left out of Holocaust history, and this book aims to shift perceptions and promote new discourse.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Sadly, Hedgepeth and Saidel may be asking too much of their readers: three hundred pages chronicling the literal and metaphorical rapes of women (who were often subsequently murdered) is a visceral discomfort few will be willing to undertake. But these essays, describing experiences of forced sex, "sex for survival," prostitution, sterilization, abortion, and general sexual humiliation, add greatly to what is known about the lives of Jewish women during WWII. Much of the content here is a philosophical extension of first-person accounts of sexual torture. One essay on victim psychology demonstrates how trauma can render the first-person unreliable. Several essays deal with WWII sexual violence as depicted in fiction and film. Taken together, these essays illustrate how this

subject is discussed, or not, across the globe. The fact that this exhaustive volume represents the first set of essays on the subject written in English underpins a fundamental truth held by the editors: while English-speaking countries are comfortable discussing these horrors, the fates specific to the murdered women and survivors of sexual assault are considered by many to be too shameful for discourse. (c) Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved.

“Saidel and Hedgepeth knew rape was not documented in the same way as the number of trains that traveled to a concentration camp, but they sought out scholars from seven countries and collected 16 essays, drawing upon oral histories, literature, psychoanalysis, eyewitness reports and diaries. The stories of rape and sexual abuse began to emerge as if they were old photographic film waiting for the right chemicals, and long-erased pictures of Jewish women who had suffered sexual abuse began to emerge.”

•Cindy Cooper, Women’s E-News

“This revelatory anthology would be crucial as long-overdue truth even if it were unique, but the suppression of its truth probably left us even less prepared for sexual abuse in Bosnia, Rwanda, the Congo and more. Rochelle and Sonja have given us the greatest gift: a truth of history that can keep us from repeating its suffering.”

•Gloria Steinem, reported in The Forward

“Saidel and Hedgepeth demonstrate that there is ample documentation of the most vicious sexual abuse in the heart of civilized Europe during the Holocaust. In their excellent collection, they go far in shining a spotlight on this fraught topic.”

•Women’s Review of Books

“The subject of sexual brutality against women in the Holocaust has been pretty much neglected; this book is a vital addition to women’s history, Jewish history and the history of the world.”

•Naamat Woman

“These essays, describing experiences of forced sex, sex for survival, prostitution, sterilization, abortion, and general sexual humiliation, add greatly to what is known about the lives of Jewish women during WWII. Much of the content here is a philosophical extension of first-person accounts of sexual torture. . . . These essays illustrate how this subject is discussed, or not, across the globe. The fact that this exhaustive volume represents the first set of essays on the subject written in English underpins a fundamental truth held by the editors: while English-speaking countries are comfortable discussing these horrors, the fates specific to the murdered women and survivors of sexual assault are considered by many to be too shameful for discourse.”

•Publishers Weekly

“The rape and sexual abuse of Jewish women during the Holocaust have been long overlooked. But when researchers probed, stories began to emerge as if they were old photographic film waiting for the right

chemicals. [Haaretz and Jewish Journal](#) “After a pre-eminent Holocaust scholar questioned whether sexual violence had really occurred during WWII, scholars Sonja Hedgepeth and Rochelle Saidel got working on the recently published *Sexual Violence Against Jewish Women During The Holocaust*, the first book on the topic in English, which comprises 16 essays examining the rape, forced prostitution, sexual slavery, forced abortion and sterilization that took place during the war. While the Holocaust has been examined from myriad perspectives in both academia and popular culture, sexual violence, which was largely directed against women, has received little attention. Hedgepeth and Saidel, along with a small group of academics and writers, are fighting to change that. [Haaretz.com](#) [Haaretz.com](#)

Nothing but a bunch of philosophical elitism. The author is trying too hard to sound intelligent with rambling, large words and never ending philosophical sentences, but in actuality, saying absolutely nothing.

This book is a major contribution to Holocaust studies, with its sophisticated, powerful, well-documented chapters by various authors on a difficult subject.

I read this book for a graduate class at The University of Oklahoma. I loved this book! I would read it again.

A truth need it to be told!

Well researched. Rarely dealt with subject matter.

The book, *Sexual Violence Against Jewish Women During the Holocaust* is a well researched, scholarly discussion about a subject that has been rarely covered and is often considered taboo. The book is categorized into several long essays. Each is well footnoted for further exploration of this neglected but important subject. The essays do not sensationalize, but give you the knowledge of the horrors that happened to women, including rape and all kinds of sexual abuse and humiliation, by the SS, other guards, kapos, and even by those who hid Jewish girls.

I absolutely loved this book!! It was rather well written. I couldn't put book down, I had to know what was going to happen next. I suggest for those that may find this book upsetting or may get

emotional, not for you.

Too serious a book to try and comment on in this short space. No more words. NO. NO. NO. NO.

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