

Historians, Journalists and the challenges of
GETTING IT RIGHT

*The Jews of
Europe Before
the Second World War*

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HISTORIANS, JOURNALISTS & THE CHALLENGES OF GETTING IT RIGHT

Historians, Journalists and the Challenges of Getting It Right is a partnership of the Lear Center, USC Annenberg's Center for Communication Leadership & Policy and the American Historical Association's National History Center. It begins with the premise that both professions, historians and journalists, are in the business of finding and assessing evidence; of analyzing events; and of narrating events. Both are storytellers. Both could enhance their work by learning from each other, by establishing networks that connect them, by sharing expertise and by sharing practical knowledge about media and methods.

In order to explore what these professions have in common and where they differ, to begin to understand what each of these professions mean by "getting it right," to examine the impact of journalism on history and of history on journalism, the project launched in 2012 at the American Historical Association annual meeting with four case studies: American Biography and the Cold War; Publishing in the American Century; Interpreting the Arab Spring; American Intervention. For more information on the project, please visit: www.learcenter.org/html/projects/?cm=gettingitright

ABOUT THE PANELISTS



ANN MILLIN is special assistant to the director of the Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies and is also the program coordinator of the Miles Lerman Center for the Study of Jewish Resistance at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Prior to joining the staff of the center, Millin was the historian in the museum's photo archives, specializing in the photographs of German Jewry, the Aliyah Bet and the European Roma, as well as in the work of the Wehrmacht Propaganda Company photographers. She received a B.A. from Macalester College, an M.A. in Religious Studies from Vanderbilt University, and a Ph.D. in Jewish History at the Hebrew Union College-JIR.

Formerly a research fellow at the University of Göttingen and an Inter-University Fellow at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, she has taught Jewish history, Judaic studies, world religions and Holocaust studies at the Hebrew Union College-JIR, the University of Cincinnati and the University of Kentucky-Lexington.

ANDREW NAGORSKI, who spent more than three decades as a foreign correspondent and editor for Newsweek, is vice president and director of public policy for the EastWest Institute, an international affairs “think tank” with offices in New York, Brussels and Moscow. Nagorski is based in New York but continues to travel extensively, writing for numerous publications. His most recent book is *Hitlerland: American Eyewitnesses to the Nazi Rise to Power* (Simon & Schuster, 2012) From January 2000 to July 2008, Nagorski served as senior editor for *Newsweek International* and has served as bureau chief in Berlin, Warsaw, Moscow, Rome and Hong Kong. Nagorski is the author of the non-fiction books: *Reluctant Farewell: An American Reporter's Candid Look Inside the Soviet Union* (New Republic/Henry Holt, 1985); *The Birth of Freedom: Shaping Lives and Societies in the New Eastern Europe* (Simon & Schuster, 1993); and *The Greatest Battle: Stalin, Hitler, and the Desperate Struggle for Moscow That Changed the Course of World War II* (Simon & Schuster, 2007).



BERNARD WASSERSTEIN was born in London and has taught at Oxford, Sheffield, Jerusalem, Brandeis, and Glasgow Universities. He is now Ulrich and Harriet Meyer Professor of Modern European Jewish History at the University of Chicago. He won the “Golden Dagger” Award for Non-Fiction from the Crime Writers’ Association for *The Secret Lives of Trebitsch Lincoln*. His books have included *Secret War in Shanghai*, *Divided Jerusalem*, and *Israel and Palestine*. His book, *On the Eve: The Jews of Europe before the Second World War* was published in 2012. This is the portrait of a world on the eve of its destruction. His book presents a new

interpretation of the collapse of European Jewish civilization even before the Nazi onslaught. Wasserstein demonstrates that, by 1939, the Jews faced an existential crisis that was as much the result of internal decay as of external attack.



GEOFFREY WHEATCROFT has written for *The Atlantic* on subjects as diverse as Margaret Thatcher and Salman Rushdie, the Republic of Ireland and the island of Antigua, and has been affiliated over the years with some of England's best-known publications. In the late 1970s he was a columnist for *The Spectator*, and also its literary editor. In the following years he was first the editor of the “Londoner's Diary” in the *Evening Standard* and then that newspaper's opera critic. He is currently a columnist for the *Daily Express*. In the interstices of regular employment he has written many freelance articles and published two books – *The Randlords* (1985), a

study of South African mining magnates, and *Absent Friends* (1989), a collection of biographical sketches. His book, *The Controversy of Zion, about the history of Zionism*, was published in September, 1996, by Addison-Wesley. He is also a frequent contributor to *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *The Guardian*.



MARTY KAPLAN is the Lear Center founding director, a former associate dean of the USC Annenberg School, and holds the Norman Lear Chair in Entertainment, Media and Society. A *summa cum laude* graduate of Harvard in molecular biology, a Marshall Scholar in English at Cambridge University, and a Stanford PhD in modern thought and literature, he was Vice President Walter Mondale's chief speechwriter and deputy presidential campaign manager. He has been a Disney Studios vice president of motion picture production, a film and television writer and producer, a radio host, print columnist and blogger.

HISTORIANS, JOURNALISTS & THE CHALLENGES OF GETTING IT RIGHT: The Jews Before the Second World War



Marty Kaplan: Good morning. Thank you for being here. My name is Marty Kaplan. I am on the faculty of the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism at the University of Southern California where I direct the Norman Lear Center for the study of entertainment, media and society.

A few years ago the Lear Center and another center at the Annenberg School, the Center for Communication, Leadership and Policy, directed by my colleague, Geoffrey Cowan, launched an exciting collaboration with the National History Center, a center within the American Historical Association, on the topic of what became called for us “Historians, Journalists, and the Challenges of Getting It Right.”

The thought behind the project is that historians and journalists are in the business of finding and assessing evidence, of analyzing events and of narrating events. They are all storytellers. They could enhance their work by learning from one another, by establishing networks that connect them, and by sharing expertise and practical knowledge about media and methods.

In order to explore what these professions have in common and where they differ and to begin to understand what each of these professions means by “getting it right,” we began last year at the American Historical Association Conference with four case studies. We were delighted with how that went. Here we are in New Orleans doing it again.

Today, we’re talking about historians, journalists, and getting it right and getting it wrong – both those things, in

particular, on the topic of the Jews in Europe on the eve of World War II and the depiction of what was happening in Germany in journalism in the US, as well as the depiction in history.

Our principal presenter today is Bernard Wasserstein, who is the Harriet and Ulrich E. Meyer professor of Modern European Jewish History at the University of Chicago. He began his academic life at Oxford and then via Sheffield and Hebrew University spent a dozen years or so at Brandeis University, including a stint as the dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. His research interests are modern Jewish and Middle Eastern history and the politics and diplomacy of 20th century Europe.

Among his works, just to mention a few is the *Vanishing Diaspora: The Jews in Europe Since 1945*, which is a kind of warm-up to the book here, though in reverse order.

In 2007, he published *Barbarism and Civilization: The History of Europe In our Time*. For me, the most intriguing award that he received was for his book, *The Secret Lives of Trebitsch Lincoln* was the Golden Dagger prize for Nonfiction by the Crime Writers’ Association, something that you might not have known.

Geoffrey Wheatcroft is a journalist whose work has appeared in virtually any publication on either side of the Atlantic. He began his career in publishing in London, also an Oxonian before that. He was a reporter in South Africa, and then worked for publications including the *London Evening Standard*, the *Sunday Telegraph*, the *Daily Express*, the *Guardian*, the *Times*, *TLS*, the *New York Review of Books*, *New Republic*, *Boston Globe*, etcetera, etcetera.

Of the books that he’s written, I’ll mention just one germane to our conversation this morning called *The Controversy of*

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Zion: How Zionism Tried to Resolve the Jewish Question, although in the United States, the subtitle is “Jewish Nationalism, the Jewish State, and the Unresolved Jewish Dilemma,” which won a National Jewish Book Award.

Andrew Nagorski wrote the book *Hitlerland: American Eyewitnesses to the Nazi Rise to Power*. Andy is a vice president and director of Public Policy at the East West Institute. But before that he had a career for more than 30 years at *Newsweek* as Bureau Chief in Hong Kong, Moscow, Rome, Bonn, Warsaw, and Berlin.

At *Newsweek*, he set up international editions based in other locations other than New York. He launched *Newsweek Arabic*, *Newsweek Polska*, which became Poland’s leading news magazine, *Newsweek Russia*, and *Newsweek Argentina*.



He is a journalist writing history, including the books *The Greatest Battle: Stalin, Hitler, and the Desperate Struggle for Moscow That Changed the Course of World War II*, which *The New York Review of Books* described as “a new and beautifully researched account of what had been a poorly understood part of the war.”

So we have two journalists on the panel who also have written history. Andy is also the author of a novel, *Last Stop Vienna*, which made it onto the *Washington Post*’s Best Seller list.

Ann Millin is a historian at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Dr. Millin has worked in the National Institute for Holocaust Education, the Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies, the Center for the Study of Jewish Resistance, in the Museum’s photo archives, and in its Law Enforcement and Society program, and she has been historian and staff member in each of those areas.

Her doctorate is in Jewish history from Hebrew Union College, Jewish Institute of Religion. She has taught Jewish history, Judaic studies, world religion and holocaust studies, and she’s also the curator of the website for Holocaust Museum’s special exhibit, which also is particularly relevant to what we’re talking about today.

So with all that, I would ask you to join me in please welcoming our panelists.

We’ll start with Bernard Wasserstein and then afterward we’ll turn to Geoffrey Wheatcroft who will get our conversation going. And then everybody will have a chance to explore different avenues, both raised by the book and also by the umbrella issues of journalists and historians, and then we would be delighted to include you in the conversation.

Bernard Wasserstein: In *On the Eve* I try to paint a picture and present an argument.

The picture is a portrait of European Jewry in its final moments before it was destroyed. It may sound strange but as a modern Jewish historian I often feel rather like an ancient Egyptologist. To engage with the Jewish world of just a generation ago, before the genocide of the greater part of European Jewry, before the establishment of Israel, and before the dissolution of most of the communities of the Diaspora, is akin for me to entering Tutankhamen’s tomb, in all its exotic otherness.

And so I have tried not just to write about institutions, organizations, and anonymous collectivities but to capture something of the inner as well as the outer lives of individuals, whether they were bankers, butchers, yeshiva bokhers or luftmenshen, religious or secular, Communist, socialist, Zionist, or liberal, their hopes and beliefs, their anxieties and ambitions, their family ties, internal and external rela-

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tions, their cultural creativity, amusements, songs, poetry, fads and fancies, their dress and diet, and, in so far as they can be grasped, the things that made life meaningful and bearable for them. My fundamental objective has been to try to breathe renewed life momentarily into those who were soon to be dry bones.

The argument of the book has four chief prongs. First, I maintain that the story of European Jewry in the 1930s is, in its fundamentals, a common story. Secondly, that European Jewry, far from being in a flourishing condition was already far advanced on a trajectory towards demographic decline, social disintegration, and cultural dissolution. By 1939 the Jews, collectively and individually, faced an existential crisis almost everywhere on the continent, a crisis, I suggest, that came as much from within as without. Thirdly, I show that to a greater degree than is often appreciated, European Jews realized that they stood on the edge of a precipice. And fourthly, what emerges from the evidence that I present is that they did not react to their predicament passively.

Let me say a little more about each of those points.

1. A common story

For all the regional, social, religious and other differences, the story of the Jews of Europe in the 1930s is in its basic characteristics a common story.

The challenge to European Jewry came not just in Germany and not just from Nazism. Almost everywhere that Jews lived, they faced enemies who wished to extrude them from common human fellowship. It is no exaggeration to say that by 1939 the greater part of the continent was being transformed for the Jews into a gigantic concentration camp. Indeed, in the summer of 1939, there were far more Jews in Europe held behind barbed wire in camps outside Nazi Germany than in it – and not just in the authoritarian countries

of eastern Europe but even in democracies such as France, Belgium, and the Netherlands.

Let me give one striking example of the commonality of the European Jewish experience in this period, drawn from the realm of social geography. Here we see a continent-wide trend – the decline of the archetypical form of Jewish settlement, namely the *shtetl*. In the late 18th century a majority of European Jews had lived in small towns or villages. The largest communities on the continent, in cities such as Prague or Constantinople, numbered no more than a few thousand. In the inter-war period we witness the last stages of the disappearance of the *shtetl* – and it is striking that that was happening as much in Poland as in the Soviet Union – and indeed to the village and small-town Jewish communities of Germany, Hungary, the Netherlands, and Alsace-Lorraine.

Take, for example, Alsace. The small towns of Alsace had once held a number of flourishing small communities. But now, a contemporary observer wrote, “the great human reservoir of Alsatian Jewry, the countryside, is exhausted; there remain there above all old people waiting to die, caretakers of the beautiful synagogues that were once filled with the vibrancy of youth.”

2. Existential crisis

I have tried in the book to set aside all sentimentalism in assessing the character of Jewish society in the 1930s. In particular, the book questions the natural tendency for us to think of the victims of the shoah as a flourishing Jewish civilization that was cut down in its prime by external forces. Yes, the Jews faced violent hostility on all sides in the 1930s. Yes, the challenge came from external pressures. But in its essence the crisis came as much from within as without. My central finding is that European Jewry was in 1939 already launched on the trajectory towards the post-war “vanish-



ing Diaspora” discussed in my book of that title published in 1996. Many of the processes identified among European Jews in the later part of the century were already present before the war: rapid demographic decline, changes in occupational structure, movement out of areas of high Jewish population density, disappearance of Jewish languages, secularization, and loss of collective cultural identity.

Perceptive contemporary observers understood this. “Vienna Jewry is moving towards extinction,” wrote the pre-eminent sociologist of the Jews in the period, Arthur Ruppin, in 1936. A sober observer, not given to hyperbole, Ruppin did not foresee the Nazi genocide. He was referring to the extraordinarily low birth rate of Jews in Vienna – replicated in all the major Jewish communities of central Europe. Ruppin noted other “disruptive forces in Jewry”: assimilation, decline of Jewish cultural specificity, including that of religion, “weakening of the links of common descent and fate”, “loosening of family ties”, and more. All this led him to fear for the survival of the European Jews. Ruppin’s pessimism proved tragically prophetic, albeit for reasons that he could not know.

The dismal demographic projections were not limited to Austria and Germany. Similarly gloomy statistics were cited in east-central Europe and in western Europe. In Strasbourg in 1938 a commentator despaired of the prospects for Judaism in Alsace. Data of birth and death rates as well as of geographical shifts, he concluded, could be summed up in one sentence: “Alsatian Jewry is dying.”

All over Europe Jewish natural increase was rapidly slowing and in many areas had turned into absolute decrease. If we add to that the effects on Jewish demography of intercontinental emigration, social assimilation, and acculturation, it is hardly surprising that the prospects for Jewish survival in the continent in the interwar period appeared bleak. In

fact, European Jewry on the eve of the Second World War was already, quite independently of the looming threats of Nazism and ubiquitous anti-Semitism, far advanced on the path towards dissolution.

The signs were not limited to demography. They were also perceptible in social and cultural trends. Take, for example, the primary vehicle of any culture, language. Everywhere on the continent Jewish languages, were dying. In 1926 70 percent of Soviet Jews had declared a Jewish language as their mother tongue; by 1939 only 40 percent did so. In the 1939 census no major city in Russia or Ukraine recorded a majority of Jews as declaring Yiddish as their mother tongue. Moreover, Yiddish was largely the language of the older generation of Soviet Jews. Only 20 percent of Jewish recruits in the Red Army in 1939 declared a Jewish mother tongue.

The three million Jews of inter-war Poland were the foremost stronghold of Yiddish and Yidishkeit. But there is too often a tendency in retrospect to exaggerate the strength of Yiddish there. By the late 1930s Polish acculturation was widespread. The circulations of the Yiddish daily and weekly newspapers were declining fast and they competed with a Jewish press in Polish. Many of the leading Jewish writers in Poland, such as Julian Tuwim and Bruno Schulz, wrote in Polish. By 1939 half of Jewish high school children in Poland declared Polish rather than Yiddish as their first language. Poland boasted impressive Yiddish and Hebrew school systems, but two thirds of Jewish children attended state schools in which the language of instruction was Polish.

As for Judeo-Espagnol, from the sixteenth to the late nineteenth century the common language of the Jews of the Balkans, it was losing ground even faster. In Serbia, where 80 percent of Jews had spoken Judeo-Espagnol in 1895, only 30 percent did so in 1931. Similar decreases were recorded throughout south-east Europe. Thanks in particular to the

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influence of the schools of the Alliance Israélite Universelle, French had by this time become the favoured language of educated Jews in the region.

If we turn from the medium to the message, from the means of communication to the substance of the culture, the picture is no less dim. Whatever view one might take of the possibilities of secularism, it would be hard to deny that, at any rate until the late 19th century, the foundation of Jewish culture was religious belief and ritual. But in Europe in the 1930s Judaism, especially orthodox Judaism, was in crisis and the younger generation of Jews was in wholesale retreat from religious practice.

In the Soviet Union, as one might expect, the impact of state-sponsored anti-religious propaganda and considerable anti-religious coercion had a certain effect on the population. Yet that should not be exaggerated. The 1937 census included, allegedly at Stalin's personal insistence, a question as to whether the respondent was religious or a non-believer. No fewer than 57% of the total population declared themselves believers. What is striking is that among Jews the proportion was only 10%.

The decay of Jewish religious life cannot be explained wholly or even largely by Soviet anti-religious propaganda but rather proceeded from forces within Jewish life. The best indication of this is that the trend was by no means restricted to the USSR but was observable throughout the continent. In Salonica, for example, declining Jewish religious observance was reflected in a story published in the newspaper *Aksyon* in 1939 in which a character criticizes mothers who bring parcels of food to the synagogue for their children – on Yom Kippur.

In Germany, even before the Nazis, the distinctive brand of orthodoxy pioneered by Samson Raphael Hirsch and his

successors had lost much of its earlier élan, and was gradually yielding authority and legitimacy to east European orthodoxy.

Yet the decline of orthodoxy was discernible even in its heartland, Poland and Lithuania. The recent memoir by Ben-Zion Gold of his youth in an orthodox milieu in Poland in the 1930s stresses the extent to which orthodoxy was on the defensive even in its bastions. Gold's picture of Polish orthodoxy leaves an impression of almost terminal decay. The pressing demands of the secular world had impinged on the culture of the *Beis Hamidrash* (study hall), in which, in the previous generation, laymen would occupy their spare time in study of holy texts. Before the First World War this "unique, voluntary system of higher education without formal appointments, salaries, budget, or administration" had been at the centre of orthodox Jewish life and the *shtiblekh* (conventicles) had been frequented round the clock by Talmudic autodidacts. But Gold writes, "what had recently been the norm became in my time an exception." In his home town of Radom only one of the twenty *shtiblekh* was used by young Talmudists; the rest were used for prayer but otherwise stood empty most of the time. "In cities with large Jewish populations such as Warsaw and Łódź... one could still find shtibls full of young men studying", Gold continues, "but on the whole the traditional community was on the defensive and losing ground."

Lest it be imagined that all this is the hindsight of a former yeshiva bocher who later became a Conservative rabbi in the United States (director of the Harvard Hillel), we can turn to contemporary statements of the highest authorities of east European orthodoxy themselves. Among the most influential rabbis of the misnagdic tendency was Chaim Grodzinski of Vilna, who headed the *Va'ad Ha-yeshivot* (Council of Yeshivas) of eastern Poland and served as president of the rabbinical board of the orthodox Agudas Yisroel



party. Recognized as an *ilui* (genius) from his youth, he was an unbending opponent of Zionism, of secular education, of Reform Judaism, and of any form of religious innovation. In influential responsa published in 1939 he lamented the spiritual disintegration of the Jewish community, in particular its laxity in the observance of the Sabbath, kashrut, and the laws of marital purity. Sages such as Grodzinski felt that the only way to stem the tide of modernism was to mount the ramparts of unyielding conservatism. But they felt that they were fighting a losing battle against an almost inexorable forces.

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This picture is supported by a remarkable set of contemporary documents that I came across in the archives, the financial accounts and annual reports of yeshivas of eastern Europe. These documents, and the abundant statistics that they contain paint a depressing picture not only of the financial condition of all these institutions of higher Talmudic learning, but also of their diminishing significance in Jewish life. The total number of students studying in yeshivot in Poland in the late 1930s was no more than around twenty thousand. To put that number in perspective, it is probably smaller than the number of yeshiva students studying today in the borough of Brooklyn.

Language and religion are the most striking but by no means the only indices of decay of the Jewish cultural superstructure in this period. I could cite many others. Almost everywhere what had been a self-sufficient, thick Jewish culture was giving way to a thin, hybrid sub-culture in which the Jewish components were more and more subordinated to other elements.

3. On the edge of an abyss

It is often maintained that before the outbreak of war, in spite of abundant accumulating evidence, European Jews were blithely insouciant of the gathering forces of hatred

that were about to consume them, that they were not aware, indeed could not possibly be aware of the magnitude of the threat that confronted them. Yet the evidence shows that, contrary to the received version, there was a growing and widespread recognition by Jews in Europe that they stood on the edge of an abyss.

As early as the spring of 1933, a matter of weeks after Hitler’s assumption of power in Germany, Rabbi Leo Baeck, who emerged as the German Jewry’s leader and spokesman in its final decade, declared “The thousand-year history of German Jewry has come to an end.”

About the same time, one of the most acute contemporary analysts of European Jewish politics and society, Jacob Lestchinsky, wrote for the *New York Times* from Berlin that the Nazis aimed at “a mass slaughter of Jews.”

In the face of the hostility of their neighbours, some Jewish thinkers in the late 1930s advocated that the Jews should voluntarily embark on what they termed a “return to the ghetto”. In April 1938, after the horrors of the Anschluss, the Lublin-born New York Yiddish poet Jacob Glatshiteyn published his “Goodnight, world”, a savage, unsparing, petulant cry of rage:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>A gute nakht, brayte velt.</i> | Good night, wide world. |
| <i>groyse, shtinkendike velt.</i> | Big, stinking world... |
| <i>oyf mayn aygenem gebot –</i> | At my own behest – |
| <i>gey ikh tsurik in geto.</i> | I return to the ghetto. |

As sometimes happens when an idea is already in the air, publication of the poem fanned smouldering embers into a fiery controversy. The acerbic Warsaw literary critic Yeshue Rapoport wrote that for several weeks he could “neither swallow nor spit out” Glatshiteyn’s poem. “So Glatshiteyn goes willingly into the ghetto? Not me!” he thundered. And if the day should come that Rapoport was confined in a



ghetto, he insisted, he would go not with misplaced pride but shouting out loud that he was being shoved in by force and creating a great commotion in order to let in a breath of the wider world.

Perhaps the most terrifying utterance was issued by grand old man of yidishkayt. In an open letter published in the Warsaw Yiddish daily *Haynt* on August 25, 1939, the 79-year-old Simon Dubnow, the leading Jewish historian of the age, commented:

The last two Hitler-years, 1938-1939, have left many people with the impression that we are at the beginning of the destruction (khubn) of European Jewry.

Hitler's "extermination-system" (*oysrotungs-sistem*), he maintained, was a straightforward recreation of Haman's plan "to destroy, to massacre, and exterminate all the Jews", with the difference that in Haman's case it had remained merely a plan. The Jews, Dubnow argued, were standing "not at a cross-roads but on a battlefield."

Dubnow rejected the call for a "return to the ghetto" as a collapse into passivity and resignation. He discountenanced the summons to repentance and reliance on God. He agreed that every great disaster in the life of a people called forth a *heshbon nefesh* (spiritual reckoning). But the proper time for that would come later. Now, in the very midst of the catastrophe, he wrote, the urgent necessity was saving bodies, not souls: "*friher yidn, dernokh yidishkayt*" ("first Jews, then Jewishness!").

Of course, the voices that I have quoted were those of a handful. But they were accompanied by a great chorus who spoke eloquently with their feet. More than a million Jews left Europe in the inter-war period, ten percent of the Jewish

population of the continent. At least 400,000 left Poland alone. In the 1920s many were economic migrants. By the late 1930s they were fleeing for their lives and they knew it – as did the much larger numbers who were prevented from leaving by the barriers to Jewish immigration that were erected almost everywhere.

4. Captains of their souls

That, I suggest is the best evidence that the Jews did not react to their predicament passively. They were actors in their own history. If they were not masters of their fate, they were captains of their souls. They sought by every possible means, individually and collectively, to confront the threats that loomed on every side. They tried emigration: but the exits were blocked. They tried persuasion: but few would listen and anyway the blaring loudspeakers of Nazi propaganda deafened ears. They tried political organization of every kind: but they were politically weightless. A handful, even before the war, tried violent resistance: but their enemies could wreak vengeance a thousandfold – as the Nazis demonstrated on Kristallnacht. Some tried prayer: but their God betrayed them.

I do not believe, therefore, that it makes sense to view the Jews in the 1930s merely as passive objects of a history imposed on them by external forces beyond their control. Yet most of what passes for writing on Jewish history in Europe in the 1930s does exactly that. It is really not the history of Jews at all but the history of anti-Semitism – which is something quite different. It is concerned less with what went on in the minds and hearts of Jews than with the thought and actions of their enemies. Rather than concentrating on what was done to the Jews, I turn the focus squarely on the Jews themselves rather than their persecutors. In other words, I try to give the Jews back what is sometimes called, in the awful jargon of our profession, "agency", to show that they were actors in their own history. I try to show how they un-

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derstood and coped with the existential crises with which they were confronted.

And what we discover, if we approach Jewish history that way, as it were from the inside looking out, is that Jews, while, of course, confronted with a critical existential challenge in the late 1930s, did not react passively. On the contrary, we find an array of political, social, cultural, and spiritual thought and argument, and proactive, not just reactive behaviour that, far more than the Nuremberg Laws or the Kristallnacht, or anything else that was done to the Jews, constitutes the stuff of the history of the European Jews in their final hour.

Marty Kaplan: Much to chew on and talk about. And to initiate that discussion, Geoffrey Wheatcroft.

Geoffrey Wheatcroft: Ladies and gentlemen, Bernard Wasserstein's book is quite remarkable, if profoundly dispiriting. Not a bedside book if you want to have sweet dreams.

The quotation from Rabbi Baeck is very telling, but I remember in Fritz Stern's marvelous book, *Golden Iron*, his biography of Bismarck's Jewish banker Gerson von Bleichröder, he says that no one in 1870 could have imagined a Hitler and no one in 1933 could have imagined an Auschwitz.

That doesn't contradict what Baeck and others said. Other Jews in 1930s began to see that their fate was not merely another episode in the long and morose history of persecutions but something of a radically different nature. It's still hard to grasp, even at the time it was going on. That is one of the reasons it's wrong to blame the victims when the extermination began in earnest in 1942. The victims did not believe what was happening to them because it was unbelievable.

The decline of Jewish life in the Diaspora, which Bernard has described so well: Was it inevitable? I'm slightly allergic to the idea of historic inevitability, which is used selectively by historians. British historian EJ Hobsbawm, who died recently, to the end of his life insisted that there was no prospect of liberal democracy taking root in Russia. Therefore, the October revolution and all that followed from it was inevitable, and in his view, to some extent, desirable. But he would never have argued that in the objective circumstances of 1932, liberal democracy was not likely to survive in Germany and that what happened afterwards was inevitable. I don't think it was.

The decline, which Professor Wasserstein's book describes, was if not inevitable, then very likely. Traditional Jewish life was scarcely likely to survive even if there had not been such a crescendo of ostracism and persecution in the 1930s. It was a decline in society along with peasant societies elsewhere in Europe.

Nowadays, people who saw *Fiddler on the Roof* look back with a sentimental longing on a way of life which wasn't enormously enjoyable for those who lived in shtetl. Their lives were impoverished and in many ways squalid.

A man like Chaim Bermant who used to write a marvelous column for *The Jewish Chronicle* in London was deeply attached to his rabbi father. At the same time, he was very conscious of the impoverishment of his father's intellectual life because he was a man whose life was entirely devoted to the study of sacred scripture and who regarded all secular literature – from Shakespeare to Tolstoy – as being impure. The decline of religion, which was certainly a feature of this period, had been going on elsewhere earlier.

And one of Bernard Wasserstein's earlier excellent books, which I remember reading, *Herbert Samuel*, he was an Eng-

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Geoffrey Wheatcroft

lish Jew brought up in an assimilated and very prosperous home but devout. And he discarded the faith of his father’s fathers. Then it struck one that he was in that respect merely late 1930 20th century Western European bourgeois, and his rejection of that faith was no different from that of his contemporaries who were rejecting evangelical Christianity that they’d been brought up in.

At that time, go back 40 years or more for the fourth period with which this book deals, everybody then spoke of a Jewish question. It’s a phrase we shy away from today, particularly when we remember what use the national socialists put it to.

The classic answer seemed to be emancipation and assimilation, to which so many hopes were attached in the 19th century. Then in the optimistic heyday, known as the mid-19th century, it seemed as though it would be possible perhaps for the Jews to achieve what, for example, English Jews or the emancipated and prosperous ones wanted, which was simply to become a religious group otherwise indistinguishable from their other citizens.

By the end of the 19th century, the hopes for assimilation and emancipation were already turning sour. One consequence of that, of course, was Zionism, when Theodor Herzl, who had passionately wanted to identify with German culture but was rejected by it and decided that if you can’t join them, beat them by inventing a new national movement of his own. Famously, he had witnessed the degradation of Captain Alfred Dreyfus in Paris. And he’d also seen the rise of radical right anti-Semitism in Vienna.

The Zionist answer was the creation of what was actually an invented tradition, a quite new form of Jewish nationality, which had few roots in existing Jewish tradition of the time.

The answer, of course, that Hitler proposed in the end was mass murder. But the other answer that Bernard has touched upon was emigration. It’s hard to believe that the traditional Jewish life of Eastern Europe would have survived forever, even if there had not been a rising tide of nationalism and national hatred directed at the Jews.

With this increasing threat to the Jews, there might have been one other response. When there was a great age of Jewish emigration from Eastern Europe, very few of them went to Palestine but they overwhelmingly went to the West, and in particular, to the United States.

Of course, that could have continued except it did not because after the Great War, the United States turned inwards in a new mood of reaction and nativism, frankly, and Congress passed flagrantly racist laws which made it almost impossible for Jews any longer to enter the country in large numbers. And so they were, as they discovered, trapped with nowhere to live and nowhere to go.

Marty Kaplan: In a moment, I want to draw Andy and Ann into the conversation, but before we do that first, let me just ask, are there any threads in that response that you wanted to pick up on?

Bernard Wasserstein: I don’t argue that what was happening in Europe in the 1930s was inevitable. I simply point out that it was happening.

What was happening by way of acculturation to Polish society among Jews in Poland shared many characteristics with what was happening by way of acculturation of Jews to American society in the same period.

In many ways, that is a common story – the disappearance of Yiddish, the decline of orthodoxy in religion – these things



were happening across the Jewish world.

I was delighted to hear the reference to my old friend, Chaim Bermant, who was born in Latvia and one of the great survivors in Jewish journalism and a bridge figure between the old and the new world, sub-Jewish life. He was really the heartbeat of *The Jewish Chronicle*, one of the few really independent Jewish newspapers in the world. When he died a few years ago, there has been no successor to the role that he played in that newspaper.

He had the capacity to evoke the lost Jewish world before the war, which he remembered from his childhood in Latvia. He's a good example of one of the many vanishing types that I talk about in this book. It might be of interest to this particular group: the Jewish journalist who writes primarily for a Jewish audience, primarily in a newspaper published by and for Jews.

Geoffrey Wheatcroft: I was not in any sense attributing to you any sense of inevitability.

Bernard Wasserstein: No, but I'm glad you raised that question because I wouldn't want it to be thought that.

Geoffrey Wheatcroft: It's almost too terrible to contemplate. But even in 1939, the physical destruction of Europe was not ordained. I mean we can never know.

Marty Kaplan: In your presentation, you spoke often about "the misconceptions," "the received versions," "the natural tendency," "It is often maintained that, "most of what passes for writing on Jewish history."

It strikes me that in many ways your book is an indictment of a conventional wisdom. So my question is ,where did that misperception come from? These tendencies don't fall from

the sky. What is it that required you to set something so wrong so right?

Bernard Wasserstein: Zionism and sentimentality. I speak as a Zionist, but Zionism has infected the writing of modern Jewish history. In David Vital's history, he is a Zionist and he allows his Zionism to overcome his writing of history. He does argue that everything was moving from 1745, where he begins with the threatened expulsion of the Jews from Prague by Maria Theresa, to 1939, where he ends. Everything was proceeding down a line where life in the Diaspora had to become impossible. That is a Zionist reading of Jewish history. Zionist ideology's negation of the Diaspora reaches its culmination in the holocaust. Life in the Diaspora was absolutely impossible, and therefore, the only solution was Zionism.

That is one thing, and the other thing I fear is sentimentality. *Fiddler on the Roof*, chicken soup versions of Jewish history, lovable characters in the shtetl and so forth. As many writers have pointed out, life in the shtetl was miserable, which is why Jews were desperately trying to escape from it.

I'm trying to overcome these two forces, though I'm not saying they affect all Jewish writing or all writing on Jewish history. Many historians in Israel in recent years who write about the history of Jews outside Israel have sought to overcome the ideology that has been imposed on Jewish history by the so-called Jerusalem school of historians. They are great historians in many ways, but highly ideological historians.

Marty Kaplan: I want to ask whether there is another force at work as well. Today's New York Times's "Beliefs" column by Mark Oppenheimer is about a former president of Yeshiva University who, when notified that there were rabbis who were abusing students at Yeshiva, quietly let them go.

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Bernard Wasserstein

The columnist quotes the editor of Washington Jewish Week, a man named Phil Jacobs, and he says this:

“When I started in 1982,’ said Phil Jacobs, the editor of Washington Jewish Week, ‘there was an 11th commandment — ‘Thou shalt not air thy dirty laundry.’” He learned that commandment in Baltimore, writing about the high percentage of Jews in a treatment program for compulsive gambling. ‘When I started calling people, they said, “You’re not going to put this in the paper, are you?”” So I found out Jews didn’t get AIDS, didn’t get divorced, didn’t abuse their wives or children?... [The former Yeshiva president] may have thought that people shouldn’t hear bad things about Jews. People shouldn’t know, in other words, that Jews are just like everyone else.”

Was there also, in the writing of history, in the sentimentalizing of a squalid life, a cultural aspect that made it taboo to depict it realistically?

Bernard Wasserstein: Well, yes, there was that tendency. What that story illustrates is the disappearance of a great force in Jewish life, which I discuss at some length in the book, namely on the topic of Jewish journalism. In the United States today, there are large numbers of Jewish newspapers. Many of them are not independent. They are actually owned by and run for Jewish federations. Therefore, they are constricted by demands for fundraising, by demands for not offending this or that faction, and so forth, with one or two honorable exceptions, like the *Forward*, the English edition of the still-published-weekly Yiddish paper, the *Jewish Daily Forward*, which at one time had the circulation of a quarter of a million in the United States. With one or two exceptions like that, there is no independent Jewish press

in the United States today, even in a community of five or six million people.

Now, if you compare that with Europe, although circulations were declining and there was a desperate struggle for survival among many of the newspapers, there was a very, very vigorous life of hundreds of Jewish newspapers in Eastern Europe.

When Hannah Arendt went to Europe in 1946, she was sent there by an organization called Jewish Cultural Reconstruction, and one of her jobs was to simply list all the Jewish newspapers and publications that had existed in Europe before the war. It’s a remarkable list, and if you look at Warsaw, for example, there were seven or eight Yiddish daily newspapers published in Warsaw in the 1930s, each representing a different strand of opinion. There were several Polish newspapers published by Jews written mainly for a Jewish audience. Many Polish cities and every small Jewish town in Poland had its own Yiddish newspaper, very often two of them.

I discuss, in fact, the bitter circulation wars in one small town, Baranovichi, in what is today in Belarus. There was a pulsating life of journalistic output in Poland and, incidentally, in Germany and indeed in almost every country in which Jews were settled. It was declining. We can see that in the circulation figures, but it still existed and that was one thing that was snuffed out by the war.

In Europe today, the great majority of Jewish newspapers like *The Jewish Echo*, which was an independent Jewish newspaper, was eventually taken over by the community and then collapsed as the community has more or less collapsed now in numbers and in other ways.

Jewish journalism fed into journalism as a whole because many of the great liberal newspapers of Europe were large-



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ly written by and owned by and, to a large extent, read by Jews.

Marty Kaplan: I'll just say as a footnote: the second-largest circulation Jewish newspaper in the US, which I write for as a columnist, *The Jewish Journal* of Los Angeles, cut its ties with the Jewish Federation of Los Angeles in order to accomplish what you're talking about.

I want to draw Andy and Ann in and I want to do it via quoting from Geoffrey's book. He writes about Hollywood and the American press and their reaction to what was happening in Germany, noting that Irving Thalberg went to Germany in 1934 and returned confident that Hitler and Hitlerism will pass, that the Jews will still be there. Louis B. Mayer did not go to Germany himself but asked his friend William Randolph Hearst to talk to Hitler and was reassured when Hearst told him that Hitler's motives were decent.

"This grotesque exchange was an example, albeit an extreme one, of the mood of deliberate oblivion which gripped many American Jews in the 1930s, from Walter Lippmann with his nervousity about condemning national socialists, or condemning them more strongly than Jewish parvenus, to the febrile hedonism of Hollywood."

So turning to the depiction of what was happening in the '30s in Germany: that's the focus of *Hitlerland*. Andy, you're a journalist writing history, and you have to deal with the problem of hindsight. How did that affect your depiction of whether the journalists of the period got it right or got it wrong?

Andrew Nagorski: That also gets to the question that Geoffrey raised about inevitability.

Too often both when people read historians and journalists,

whether or not we intend it this way, people read a depiction of a historical period and say, "Well, clearly, it was inevitable that A led to B led to C" – most obvious in Hitler's rise to power.

My experience as a journalist certainly taught me, having reported on the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and other places before 1989, that there is no inevitability. There are all sorts of factors that happened, personal factors, forces at work. When you're there in the midst of those kinds of events and trying to figure them out as a journalist, anybody who tells you, "I got everything exactly right," is likely heavily editing their own history because we all get things wrong. We all have made wrong calls, and sometimes even with epic events it seems you've got to stretch your imagination to imagine that things could go so far in a different direction.

And so with that as a premise, I became really fascinated by this question about what did American journalists, diplomats, visitors – some of whom were Jewish, by the way – think about that whole period in Germany when it was happening. And as much as possible, I tried to write *Hitlerland* from that perspective, relying on correspondence, the reports at the time, diaries, memoirs, whatever I could get. In some cases, I would compare what they'd write later about what they thought at the time with what they actually did. You always wanted to triangulate.

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about what they thought at the time with what they actually did. You always wanted to triangulate.

Marty Kaplan: Someone who struck me as really fascinating to read about: Dorothy Thompson.

Andrew Nagorski: Dorothy Thompson was the most famous American female foreign correspondent of her era, a very smart journalist. Her most famous and huge mistake was having an interview with Hitler in November 1931. She sets up this interview and writes afterwards, “I thought I was going in to meet the future dictator of Germany. In less than 50 seconds, I realized I was not. Such was the startling insignificance of this man.”

Now, two things to be said about that: One was that later on she revised her views very radically and was one of the early American correspondents kicked out of Germany.

Two, as a journalist who sometimes writes histories, some of the most revealing and interesting stories are the people who got it wrong and why. We admire people like William Shirer, or Edgar Mowrer of the *Chicago Daily News*, who was one of the early correspondents who really got it right. But why they got it wrong says almost as much about why so much of the world got it wrong, including, in some cases, German Jews. It’s because meeting Hitler face to face, there was a sense: This man is too bizarre. He talks to you as if he’s talking to a rally. His eyes don’t make contact. He has these funny mannerisms. He’s “not manly enough,” whatever that means. He’s seen as effeminate, and somehow that being a sign that the real German politicians are going to outmaneuver him.

Dorothy Thompson makes that big mistake but then rebounds from it and provides really early reporting as soon as Hitler comes to power.

Marty Kaplan: Something she writes in the preface of her 1932 book, *I Saw Hitler*: “The times in which we live move too fast for the considered historian to record them for us. They move too quickly to permit the writing of long books about momentary phrase. Ours is the age of the reporter.”

Andrew Nagorski: Every reporter feels that way, right? Yes, that’s fine, but the danger is, of course, you do make some big blunder like that. She wasn’t the only one who made those kinds of blunders. But that’s one of the most famous.

Marty Kaplan: Talk about H.R. Knickerbocker.

Andrew Nagorski: H.R. Knickerbocker was another very interesting correspondent in the ‘20s. He was in the Soviet Union, and then he comes to Germany and actually succeeds Dorothy Thompson as the permanent correspondent for a couple of papers that no longer exist, the *Philadelphia Public Ledger* and the *New York Evening Post*.

He was very smart and very productive. He really sees what’s happening early on. In 1933, just as Hitler is taking power, he write about the anti-Semitic propaganda and he notes that one Nazi booklet talks about bloody Jews, lying Jews, swindling Jews, rotting Jews, art Jews, money Jews. He writes, “The fact that such a publication can appear is the best proof of the good judgment of the refugees abroad.” So he already knew, Yes, this is the message, you better take this seriously.

But on the other hand, in 1934 he goes to Danzig and a referendum takes place where the Nazis in this so-called free city take power. He writes that everyone was thinking that Danzig may be the beginning of the next war. He said, “The Nazis have provided so many positive steps with the Polish population to show their goodwill now, including even to



Polish Jews, that it's quite clear if there is a new conflict, it will never start in Danzig.”

Marty Kaplan: One more journalist I want to ask you about, and then I want to draw Ann in, and then have a general conversation. Karl von Wiegand, the Hearst correspondent, was called the undisputed dean of American foreign correspondents and one of the great reporters of our time. You described in 1939 what he wrote in a two-part, two-month piece for *Cosmopolitan*.

Marty Kaplan: One more, and then I want to draw Ann in and then have a general conversation. Karl von Wiegand, the Hearst correspondent, was called the undisputed dean of American foreign correspondents and one of the great reporters of our time. You described in 1939 what he wrote in a two-part, a two-month-long piece for *Cosmopolitan*.

Andrew Nagorski: By way of background, Karl von Wiegand, was German born and his parents came over when he was a young boy and he settled in the United States. This kid ran away from the family farm in Iowa at age 14 and has this very romantic life where he works for Buffalo Bill for a bit and then goes to West Coast. He becomes a wire service reporter, is sent to Germany in World War I because he was German, and then he becomes the first American correspondent to interview Hitler, and the first one to write about Hitler in 1922, before he really surfaced for most people. He has some very perceptive observations about him, and he at that point thinks, “Well, maybe he'll try to become dictator of Bavaria,” which was a pretty bold prediction at that point.

Here's somebody who really seemed to understand Hitler, but in this two-part series in 1939, after he's interviewed Hitler again, he says, “Hitler has scored all these victories without going to war... So he's not going to risk all this by launching a war.” This is the spring of 1939.

I went into this project thinking as people observe more and more, they will understand more and more. Sometimes people understood right from the beginning, were amazingly prescient. Edgar Mowrer from the *Chicago Daily News* was warning Jews and actually telling them in 1931 and 1932, Get out of Germany, get out now, and even giving them maps to the border. Then there were others who would seem to understand some things and then would regress, like von Wiegand did.

Marty Kaplan: Ann, the website that you curated for the propaganda exhibit at the Holocaust Museum has a fascinating series of quotes and citations to Associated Press wire stories and United Press stories covering what was happening in Europe. As displayed on the website, they're meant to trigger a conversation about what Germans were trying to accomplish through the use of the American press. Can you talk about that?

Ann Millin: They were very successful in doing so. If you go to the website, you'll see little clips from stories that the propaganda ministry planted in the AP service and then actually got into American newspapers, and some of them are quite outrageous.

Marty Kaplan: I'll read one example. “According to a report received by the AP in 1940, the Germans have been experimenting with a newly bred type of omnivorous grasshopper that devours crops of all kinds, especially grain crops. These grasshoppers, it was said, could be transported in airplanes by the millions and released over British farms in an effort to starve out the British Isles.”

Ann Millin: Then the website asks you if this is true or is it not. You can manipulate the text, and certain parts of the text will light up and tell you.

In 1940, the government began to realize the extent to which propaganda was being successfully planted and to work with newspapers to vet the stories that they were getting.

To come back to what Bernard was saying about forces that have skewed the depiction: I agree with him completely on sentimentalism and Zionism, but I think there's a third force. Working on a museum with one of the two largest holocaust archives in the world, I'm very aware of this. The evidence available to historians after 1989 and what has been found in the Soviet and Eastern European archives has made us completely revise our understanding of the holocaust. The contents are extraordinary and still largely unexplored.

There are two sources that were used by historians. One, of course, the records generated by the Nazis themselves, and then the other, the sources generated by the Jews that described their own experience and record their own agency. There were the letters, the diaries – the communal records, which survive, for the most part, in fragments; for most communities, they were either willfully destroyed or destroyed as a consequence of war, unlike the Nazi archives, which were captured wholesale.

My father was in the Corps of Engineers and one of the things that Corps of Engineers had to do, given that mandate, was to capture documents. In large part it was because in 1942 the Allies declared that they would hold war crimes trials, and so this was collecting evidence.

The records of one of the major Jewish organizations in Germany, headed by Leo Baeck, were held in a building in Central Berlin that took a direct hit, and they survive only in fragment. A scholar in Jerusalem at the Hebrew University figured out a way to reconstruct them. He figured that there had to have been communications with other smaller

municipal Jewish communities around the country, and the likelihood was that copies of the records had survived here and there. And for 20 years, he went around both East and West Germany and was able to find and reconstruct them and has since then published a good portion of what must have been the much larger records.

For many years, we haven't had that kind of communal record where we could trace and really see the Jews speaking for themselves. We were dependent upon the Nazi record that was collected for the war crimes trials.

Holocaust denial begins almost immediately after the war, and it's the concern of the Allies to keep saying in the trials again and again, "This is what the Nazis did, and we have the evidence." And so holocaust scholars, by and large, focus on this evidence. Far fewer focus on the fragmentary Jewish evidence.

One extraordinary Jewish collection that was just discovered in 2000 and only became available at the museum were the wartime records of the Jewish community of Vienna, the largest Jewish community in Austria. This brilliant community becomes almost entirely destroyed but successfully survives in exile through immigration. And I've been working for the last two years with the immigration records comprised of over two million documents.

Marty Kaplan: So, Ann, does your sense of what that community was like, and others in Europe in the 1930s, square with the depiction of them in Professor Wasserstein's book?

Ann Millin: Absolutely, and I highly recommend the book. I really appreciate the sober way in which he has gone about telling the story, the non-sentimentality and the lucid and economical way he summarizes.

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One particular strength is his treatment of Soviet Jewry. I found it especially helpful because it's not my area of expertise, and it's a vast area. I think the only thing I missed was the Soviet Jews who did not fall under Nazi occupation but served in the Soviet army.

Marty Kaplan: Professor Wasserstein, I have to assume that your book is controversial, either with people who are writing teleological history – Zionist orthodoxy – or with people who have a sentimental point of view. Could you tell us what has been the reaction? Has it been controversial?

Bernard Wasserstein: No, surprisingly not. In general, the reviews have been fairly generous. The only negative reviews came of the Polish edition from the right wing of the Polish political spectrum which regarded my depiction of Poland as too negative in relation to the Jews.

There haven't yet been reviews in Israel, and I'll be interested there in reviews that come from there.

The views in Britain, America and Holland, where it's also been in the Dutch edition, have been uncontroversial and not arguing with the central thesis....

Audience member: I want to get back to the title of the panel. I'd like you to tell me who of the journalists got it right first, and what did they get right about Hitler's rise to power.

Andrew Nagorski: From my point of view, two journalists – there are others – who stand out and got it right:

Edgar Mowrer of the *Chicago Daily News*, who came to Germany in the mid-1920s and stayed until Hitler took power and then was driven out of the country in September of '33. His track record was certainly far and above everybody else's.

And William Shirer, who comes in 1934, is very early in perceiving that this is illusion, and that we're not going to be able to avoid a conflict because of what's on the rise here.

With Mowrer, what he got right was Hitler's rise to power – that he was going to get power, and just how dangerous he would be. With Shirer, who was there when Hitler was in power, it was the war question primarily, because there were people still accepting at face value some of Hitler's pronouncements that he doesn't want war.

Marty Kaplan: Geoffrey, did you want to nominate any saints or sinners in this category?

Geoffrey Wheatcroft: Someone who in much of his life did not get it right was Randolph Churchill, Winston's son, who sent a telegram of congratulation to Hitler after the 1932 summer election. Randolph later said that he had made a mistake.

I would also like to nominate Karl von Wiegand, who was very close to being a Nazi himself and who very early on was writing, in effect, pro-Nazi support for the extreme right in Germany for the Hearst press in the 1920s.

I happen to have looked at his Second World War diary when he was living under Japanese occupation with his British mistress. This shows quite clearly that he sympathized with the Nazis and that from the 1920s onwards, his writing was geared towards promoting the chances of the extreme right in Germany....

Marty Kaplan: I hope you all believe that you got it right by coming here to hear from Bernard Wasserstein and our panel. Please join me in thanking them.