

mysterious, shift of thinking. Holmes consulted with scholars such as Ernst Freund, Zechariah Chafee and Harold Laski. After a chance meeting on a train, Holmes and federal Judge Learned Hand began a fruitful correspondence. Hand thoughtfully criticized Holmes's decisions in the early free speech cases. Holmes heard him out.

Holmes's giant intellect led him in other directions as well—reading Locke, perusing Civil War history, even sitting with a book of Goya's paintings. He was not persuaded by one single argument for more tolerance of speech, but his dedication to inquiry “made Holmes more sensitive to the importance of experimentation and to the need to treat dissenters mercifully. . . .”

When the opinion was issued on November 10, 1919, Holmes wrote in dissent that since “time has upset many fighting faiths. . . the ultimate good desired is better reached by free trade in ideas. . . .” After thoroughly tracing the origins of

these thoughts, Polenberg fails to examine adequately their meaning or future impact. But his sensitive treatment of the human casualties behind these legal battles makes *Fighting Faiths* not only good history but high constitutional drama.

—Jonathan Rosenblum

Born Guilty: Children of Nazi Families. Peter Sichrovsky. *Basic Books, \$17.95.* In Woody Allen's *Hannah and Her Sisters*, a depressed artist complains that historians studying the Holocaust waste their time dwelling on the question, “How could it possibly happen?” “Given what people are,” the artist says, historians should ask, “Why doesn't it happen more often?”

This question looms throughout *Born Guilty*, a collection of interviews with 14 Austrians and Germans whose fathers were accused of Nazi war crimes. Peter Sichrovsky, an Austrian journalist, found that

almost every child believed the same horrific events could reoccur. That Sichrovsky is a Jew seems to have induced in his subjects a confessional tone. Several of the men and women said they had never before discussed their fathers' deeds with anyone—including their parents. One son has recurring nightmares of being gassed to death. His resentment is so strong that on the night after his father's funeral he urinates on his grave. A woman discusses how fascism ruled her home, with her father doling out ritual beatings and naming her “Sybille” so that her initials would be “S.S.” Another man, the son of an S.S. doctor, now belongs to a rightwing political group in Germany. “Would I have acted the same way? I think so,” the man says. “People can't live without symbols and leaders.”

The most powerful chapter is the transcript of a telephone interview between Sichrovsky and the son of a Treblinka guard:

“What did he tell you?”

“He wasn't in the gas chambers.”

“Where was he?”

“In the office.”

“And that's where he guarded the Jews?”

“Don't be so aggressive.”

“Are you surprised?”

“What do I have to do with it?”

“Not much, except that maybe your father killed my grandmother.”

The conversation takes an unexpected turn midway, when the Nazi's son accuses Sichrovsky of playing games with guilt. Sichrovsky is “desperate, like a dog who barks and nobody hears him,” the son says. But at the end of the conversation, having taken turns playing victor and victim, accuser and accused, the two men reach a weird but cathartic understanding and wish each other luck in life.

As odd as it sounds, there is integrity in this conversation. After all, this moment of truth is what Sichrovsky is trying to achieve for all of Germany. By forcing the children to acknowledge the sins of their fathers, Sichrovsky hopes they will never repeat them.

—Michael Willrich

How many undeserved radar tickets were issued last year?

- a) 1,012,317
- b) 649,119
- c) 0
- d) No one knows



Unfortunately, the correct answer is d) *No one knows*. Over 10,000,000 tickets were issued last year. By some estimates, up to 30 percent of them were incorrect.

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I.F. Stone, A Portrait. Andrew Patner. *Pantheon*, \$15.95. This book starts out as a big disappointment because it looks like it's going to be a biography of I.F. Stone. The title isn't enough to warn you that about all you've got here are some tape-recorded conversations with Izzy. "People will call damn near anything a book," grumps I, making ready to slash this Patner pup to ribbons. But as one reads along, the charm of Stone's conversation steals into the heart. I need to confess up front that I.F. Stone is one of my greatest heroes. So if you want objectivity, call the Associated Press.

While many journalists and leftists profess to admire Stone, very few of us are willing to heed his injunctions about remaining an outsider. Stone on the Washington press corps: "You can sit on your rear end in the Press Club and write from press releases. You can be a pet and a sucker for the Establishment. . . . But you *cannot get intimate* with officials and maintain your independence. No matter whether they are good guys or bad guys." Many of us agree in principle but still yearn for recognition and acceptance. Stone was never in much danger of sitting around the Press Club. They threw him out in 1941 for bringing a black judge to lunch there. "They took me back in 1981, 40 years after they let me out," Stone says. "The town was filled with such cowards then."

In a lifetime of asking questions, easily the one Stone has asked most is, "Have you read. . . ?" Stone reads widely in French, Hebrew, German, Greek, Latin, Yiddish, and, apparently, some Japanese. At random from the Patner book, "Have you read. . . Ernst Cassirer's *The Apology of Socrates* (It is beautiful! He's a great artist.); *Memoirs of a Revolutionary* by Victor Serge (He's one of the greatest moral figures of the age.); *Elf Jahren in Sovietische Gefangniss* (A terrific book, it's an expose—boy!)"

To Stone the tragedy is not just that young people are bone-ignorant and dangerous but that *they're going to miss out on all this*

fabulous stuff. Stone's reading has made him a better, not to mention more readable, journalist. As the country became embroiled in Vietnam—an involvement that stemmed in large part from the ignorance of the American government—Stone was able to read French sources on Indochina. He used Jean Lacouture, Bernard Fall, and others as background for his own reporting years before campus "teach-ins" made the names familiar here. He once described a dream book on the State Department as "a combination of Pearson and Allen of the old 'Washington Merry-Go-Round' for the inside dope; Marx for class forces; Weber for institutional forces; Henry James for social nuances and subtleties."

Politically, Stone is an independent, pragmatic leftist. In the 1930s he was part of Popular Front politics and is still proud of it. He dislikes ideologues and is above all a reporter who argues from evidence, not from theory. His work on the Rosenberg case has been cited by, among others, Ronald

Radosh, a darling of the Right. Stone has never minded pissing off the Left.

The man's joys are not all intellectual—he loves ballroom dancing, ships, the ocean, sunrise, sunset, and Lord knows what all else. He loved being a movie star when Jerry Bruck's 1974 documentary, *I.F. Stone's Weekly*, was the hit of Cannes. On finally quitting the *Weekly* to write longer pieces and books, Stone said, "I feel as though I've been practicing my scales all these years and now I'm going to get to play my music!"

The beauty of what Stone did by himself all those years was that he was free. As he wrote when he finally closed the *Weekly*, "To give a little comfort to the oppressed, to write the truth exactly as I saw it, to make no compromises other than those imposed by my own inadequacies, to be free to follow no master other than my own idealized image of what a true newspaperman should be, and still be able to make a living for my family—what more could a man ask?"

—Molly Ivins

What manner of man, Franklin Delano Roosevelt?

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