



Inside the Concentration Camps: Eyewitness Accounts of Life in Hitler's Death Camps

By Thomas R. Whissen

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This book is a translation of an oral history of the concentration camp experience recorded immediately after World War II as told by men and women who endured it and lived to tell about it. Their vivid, firsthand accounts heighten the reality of this experience in ways no third-person narrative can capture. Even when they are at a loss for words, their struggle to find language to express the unspeakable is, in itself, mute testimony to the ordeal etched forever on their memories. The testimonies are arranged to reflect the chronology of camp experience (from deportation to liberation), the living conditions of camp life (from malnutrition to forced labor), and the various methods of abuse and extermination (from castration to gassing and cremation). The chronology gives the accounts a narrative flow and even creates a certain suspense, especially as liberation nears and hopes rise.

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

Aroneanu, a Romanian who drew up the tables of atrocities for the Nuremburg trials, compiled these accounts told by men and women survivors of concentration camps immediately after World War II. Translated by Whissen (Wright State Univ.), this oral history is organized chronologically by camp experience from deportation to liberation. Topics include internment, camp regulations, life in the camps (e.g., labor, sanitary conditions), medical experiences, execution, and the number of dead. The book also includes a list of camps, command posts, and prisons that were used as places of incarceration. The reader will gain from this compilation a vivid and horrifying sense of what life was like in a concentration camp. Recommended for World War II collections. Mary F. Salony, West Virginia Northern Community Coll. Lib., Wheeling
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From [Booklist](#)

Aroneanu, a Romanian, was assigned the task of drawing up the first lists of Nazi atrocities in 1945 for use at the Nuremberg war crime trials. This book is the result of his research. The 100 eyewitness testimonies by concentration camp survivors are intermixed, arranged by subject matter to reflect the chronology of the camps from deportations to liberation. The survivors were not only Jews but also Gypsies, Catholics, Communists, and Jehovah's Witnesses; attorneys, doctors, teachers, students, soldiers, a bakery clerk, and a mechanic. They speak of unbelievable horror; the book also contains statements from 25 official reports from such death camps as Auschwitz-Birkenau, Buchenwald, Dachau, Mauthausen, and Ravensbruck. No other work documents these crimes against humanity as powerfully and vividly as this one. *George Cohen*

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