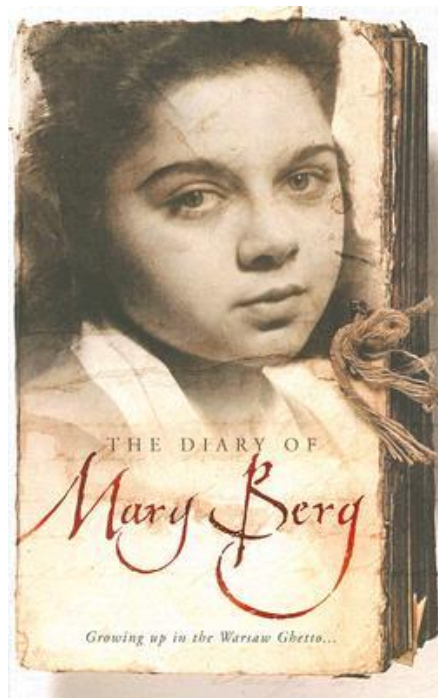




The Diary of Mary Berg: Growing up in the Warsaw Ghetto

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- Inspiring and fascinating tale of the strength of human spirit during one of humanity's darkest hours; • Reminiscent of both The Diary of Anne Frank, A Woman in Berlin and Suite Francaise; • Beautifully packaged in an attractive hardback, gift format for the Christmas market and containing original photographs and maps; • A unique insight from one of the few survivors of the Warsaw Ghetto, offering the only contemporary eye-witness account.

After 60 years of silence, 'The Diary of Mary Berg' is poised at last to gain the appreciation and widespread attention that it so richly deserves, and is certain to take it's place alongside 'The Diary of Anne Frank' as one of the most significant memoirs of the twentieth century. From love to tragedy, seamlessly combining the everyday concerns of a growing teenager with a unique commentary on life in one of the darkest contexts of history. This is a work remarkable for its authenticity, detail, and poignancy. But it is not only as a factual report on the life and death of a people that 'The Diary of Mary Berg' ranks with the most noteworthy documents of the Second World War.

This is the personal story of a life-loving girl's encounter with unparalleled human suffering, a uniquely illuminating insight into one of the darkest chapters of history. Mary Berg was imprisoned in the ghetto from 1940 to 1943. Unlike so many others, she survived the war, having been rescued in a prisoner-of-war exchange due to her mother's dual Polish-American nationality.

Berg's diary was published in 1945 when she was still only 19, in an attempt to alert the world to the Nazi atrocities in Poland, when it was described as "one of the most heartbreaking documents yet to come out of the war" by the /New Yorker/.

After the war, Berg remained in America in quiet anonymity.

The Diary of Mary Berg: Growing up in the Warsaw Ghetto Details

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From Reader Review The Diary of Mary Berg: Growing up in the Warsaw Ghetto for online ebook

Karen Cremean says

Several things affected me: The chronicle of events as they were happening was heinous. I could NOT wrap myself around the day to day trauma and the residents' efforts to continue a normal life, a truly VALIANT effort to be normal and to continually embrace their faith. This book disappeared in the published sense, in favor of Anne Frank's "The Diary a Young Girl". Each showed the horrific side of the war, but this one...THIS one made you look at the ugliness, cruelty and hope of it all and weep for the victims and survivors.

Marisa Fernandes says

Já li vários livros sobre o Holocausto. Já li vários diários escritos por quem viveu o Holocausto, mas nenhum é igual ao outro. Há sempre algo de novo nos livros e este não é excepção!

Para começar, o país a que pertencem (isto é, onde nasceram e cresceram), as condições sócio-económicas da própria família, a educação e a faixa etária de quem escreve acabam por influenciar e distinguir os diários uns dos outros. De igual modo, o facto de se tratar de um homem ou de uma mulher acabará também por condicionar o seu futuro como judeus.

No que respeita a "O Diário de Mary Berg", a sua autora começa a escrever com quinze anos, a 10 de Outubro de 1939, já iniciadas as primeiras perseguições efectivas aos judeus, verificando-se igualmente a presença alemã na Polónia e começada a Segunda Guerra Mundial. A autora escreve a última entrada do seu diário a 5 de Março de 1944, a caminho dos EUA (a mãe era de nacionalidade americana), com cerca de 19 anos.

Ao conseguir salvar-se, muitos são os conhecidos, os amigos e os familiares que deixa, sem outro remédio, para trás. Mary escreve para que o mundo saiba, para que o mundo conheça o que aconteceu às inúmeras vidas que pereceram por uma questão de credo e raça, deixando-nos, com frequência, descrições detalhadas e minuciosas do que se passava nas ruas do gueto... Por vezes, do nada, mas, outras vezes, vindo ao encontro do clima de medo que se vivia..!

*

"(...) diz a todos os que ainda vivem que nunca os esquecerei. Farei tudo o que puder para salvar os que ainda podem ser salvos e para vingar os que foram tão amargamente humilhados nos seus últimos momentos. E os que foram reduzidos a cinza, vê-los-ei sempre vivos. (...) Sê paciente, Rutka, tem coragem, aguenta. Mais um pouco de paciência e todos nós seremos livres!" (Berg, 2015, pp.326 e 327).

Rita says

WRB July 2008

First published in 1944 !

"A teenager's account of life in the Warsaw Ghetto 1940 to 1944"

One reader says:

Well written. Found it quite fascinating since she was originally from Lodz which is where my in-laws were from. They survived the Lodz ghetto, primarily because they were young and healthy and able to work. They suffered a great loss of their entire families and I felt compelled to read Mary Berg's account of the experience to pay homage to them. Mary was far better off than most, including my relatives but she does state that and felt guilty because of it though there was little more that she could do to help others than the fundraising and aid she did give.

Pamela says

This is it - the diary that Anne Frank was not able to finish. A masterpiece by a young woman who made it out of the Warsaw Ghetto (owing to a loose familial connection to the US) but witnessed many of its horrors nonetheless and kept a diary to record them. The writing is stunning for a girl of this age. A true heart-breaker. Five stars.

Gemma says

A tough read. Mary Berg writes exceptionally well about her experience of growing up under the yoke of the Nazis. As usual with anything Holocaust related there are many moments that leave one utterly bewildered at the cruelty human beings are capable of. I can't imagine how it must feel to wake up every day knowing you might be shot for no reason or that it might be your turn to be herded off to the gas chambers.

Tim says

An incredibly moving and well written account of life in the Warsaw Ghetto. Reading this I realised that to call any survivor of that experience lucky is a complete misnomer. How can anyone feel lucky who has had to endure the murder of virtually all her friends and many members of her own family? Mary Berg survived the Warsaw Ghetto by virtue of the fact that her mother had American citizenship. She was fifteen when she entered the ghetto. This is a harrowing but brilliantly detailed account of what life was like there.

Marissa says

Amazing! It's important to realize that this is not a novel, but the actual diary of a young girl. At first, I thought this would be pretty comparable to Ann Frank's diary, but it was completely different. Different circumstances, different country, different people. Mary was not in hiding, but living in the Warsaw ghetto. She gives a horrifying recollection of her time in the ghetto. At several parts in the book, I literally gasped out loud. I could not believe the unimaginable circumstances described through her entries. It's hard to believe something like this happened in our lifetime. How the Jews were so strong willed despite everything they were being put through is beyond me. Such a will to live and fight, and not give up. There was a tug at my heart strings throughout the entire book, especially for the children and all the starving people. I highly recommend this book for anyone with interest in the Holocaust. It shines a new light on the Warsaw Ghetto.

Lisa Vegan says

I can't believe that I'd never heard of this book until recently. The first English language edition of it was published before the war ended, so early that facts and figures known at the time hadn't caught up to the real statistics.

I have read many Holocaust books, including quite a few that included the Warsaw Ghetto and its uprising, but this account felt unique to me.

The author (real name Miram Wattenberg) wrote it from ages 15-19, and when she found freedom she then she went back and added, revised, etc. so the final result is a combination diary and autobiographical work, and I think it works perfectly this way.

It's very well written. It's an excellent book.

The immediacy of the account makes it both fascinating and difficult to read, and make it an important addition to the Holocaust genre. The reader is not spared the vividly described and detailed accounting of what exactly happened to Jews in the Ghetto under Nazi rule.

I relied heavily on the map of the ghetto, frequently referring to it. I very much appreciated all the included photos and drawings. I wish there had been even more of them. The photos were great and I'm glad that they survived.

The notes in the back were extremely and unusually helpful in this book since in part they are used to reveal mistakes made and misunderstandings that Mary had, things she included in her diary entries, so in my opinion they're crucial to read. Mary's diary proper was not altered, not even to correct for errors, so the notes serve this purpose, and also the purpose of giving more information than Mary did/than what she knew at the time. I didn't find the index particularly helpful but I'm glad that it was included. One of the things she got/wrote wrong, as explained in the notes, was the details and date of the deportation of Korczak's orphanage. Given that this an always in danger teenage girl right in the midst of chaotic events, it's impressive how much she got right. Even after she was in safety in the United States, it's a remarkable how much was gotten correctly, especially since it was published before the end of the war; Hitler was still alive at the time of publication.

I just happened to be reading this book over Holocaust Remembrance Day and it seemed fitting to do so.

When I read about starving people I always want to eat, more than I need, and this book described their hunger and their foods with such intense detail, and the book did make me want to overeat. The starvation of the people was described so vividly and so painfully.

Survivor's guilt is mentioned throughout, since from start to finish Mary was aware of the privileges she had that many others in the ghetto did not have, including her friends and many extended family members; the good fortune that Mary & her sister & her parents enjoyed was due to the fact that her mother was a United States citizen; it gave them some measure of protection. As an intelligent and sensitive girl, Mary dealt with mixed feelings about that.

One thing that always impresses me about people under dire circumstances, and was true here, is how people continued to learn and to study and to go on with living, even when they knew that their lives might be taken at any time.

I grew to desperately care for so many people Mary mentions, even including some she did not look on

favorably. As with some other Holocaust accounts, I once again marveled at how Catholic nuns often did so much to aide the persecuted Jews, particularly the children.

I almost gave it 4 stars vs. 5. The ending seemed rushed because there were fewer entries as time went on, and also some of the last passages seemed to be rewritten with publication in mind and had a different feel from rest of the account. Also, I was disappointed to not get more details of many of the people. In some cases this was not yet known or not safe to say. I guess I wish that Miriam Wattenberg had written an additional book of life after war, but it would have to have been a different kind of book. From this running account, I learned many new things about the Warsaw Ghetto and its liquidation I hadn't already learned reading other books, seeing films, or reading other pieces. This book gripped my attention, and is a vital addition to the Holocaust genre and I'm so grateful that I finally learned of it and read it.

4-1/2 stars

Dolceluna says

Questo libro trasuda sangue. E' quello delle centinaia di migliaia di ebrei uccisi nello smantellamento del più grande ghetto d'Europa, il ghetto di Varsavia. Mary Berg, quindicenne allo scoppio della guerra, ne riesce a sopravvivere grazie a un trattamento privilegiato dovuto alla nazionalità americana della madre, ma vive comunque, sino alla liberazione e alla partenza per l'America, la miserabile vita quotidiana del ghetto e la descrive, con uno stile secco ma particolareggiato, attento ai dettagli storici, in un diario, crudo, amaro, struggente. Un'Anna Frank polacca dunque? Non proprio. Certamente entrambe hanno avuto la sventura di vivere sulla loro pelle adolescente le tragedie di quegli anni ed entrambe ne hanno lasciato una testimonianza in prima persona, questa della Berg forse meno nota ma non per questo meno importante. Se però quello della Frank era un diario più intimo, circoscritto alla sfera familiare e portavoce delle sue vicissitudini quotidiane in un ambiente nascosto e limitato, questo della Berg ha una dimensione più collettiva e storica, analizza con lucidità gli avvenimenti che hanno segnato la vita del ghetto, riporta con precisione e fermezza condizioni, fatti, situazioni che hanno colpito la gente di quel posto in quegli anni, dai rastrellamenti agli ordini delle SS, dalle coraggiose organizzazioni sociali e artistiche sorte fra i giovani, sino alla formazione dei gruppi di resistenza, passando per gli arresti, le deportazioni e le fucilazioni dei bambini: insomma, lo spazio dedicato alla descrizione di aspetti personali della vita familiare è ridotto, il vero protagonista è il popolo schiacciato del ghetto di Varsavia. Ne risulta una visione d'insieme più mirata e concentrata, densa e fortemente realistica (tanto che in alcuni tratti, soprattutto nella prima parte, si ha l'impressione di avere fra le mani un saggio e non un diario). Ma non per questo la scrittura è priva di umanità e partecipazione, specialmente nei passi di chiusura, macchiati di tristezza ma aperti a una speranza sul futuro.

Barbara says

("nee" Miriam Wattenberg)

I have long known of the inhumane treatment of Jewish people during the Holocaust. Yet I frequently have read numerous accounts, both novels and non-fiction of this horrific period. I have completed this book feeling deeply depressed and tearful. Mary Berg adeptly succeeded in capturing the inhumanity, the terror and the total waste during that time- almost better than any I have read.

When Mary Berg (Miriam Wattenberg) was barely 15, in December, 1939, she and her family were moved from their town of Lodz, Poland and imprisoned in the Warsaw Ghetto. It was there she faithfully penned her

eye- witness account, considered some of the most influential to emerge from the ghetto.

Lodz had been a shtetl, a peaceful community, of both Jews and Gentiles, who lived and functioned mostly compatibly side-by-side, in almost equal numbers. The Jewish people had culture, professions and notable buildings. Following the war, not one Jewish person remained. While certainly the Polish population at large suffered during the war, it is well known that Anti-Semitism was rife in this country.

The Warsaw Ghetto, a walled Jewish quarter, was set up in 1939 to isolate, humiliate and torture the people. The walls were at least 9 feet tall and densely crowded many thousands of people there. They were victims of starvation, killings, disease and total desecration. The area remained until 1943, when the well-known uprising occurred. For many days, it involved many outnumbered, poorly armed, yet brave Jewish people who fought against their Nazi captors. When this ghetto was completely destroyed very few of these determined individuals survived.*

There is so much to read in this carefully detailed diary, but these chronicles are best read throughout this book rather than in my review. Notes, bibliography and an interesting introduction complete this edition.

Berg's diaries somehow managed to survive the many roundups, the moves and the years until she was allowed to be transported to America in March, 1944, when she was 19. Mary and her family were surprisingly released for transport because of her mother's US citizenship. Her narrative seems well beyond that age, but it definitely is not surprising considering all that she had seen and experienced during the preceding years. Her writings were cleverly coded and written in minute script in several small manuscripts which enabled her to smuggle them out. In February, 1945, prior to the ending of the war, she agreed to have an English language edition published. She apparently was driven by a need to bear witness and inform the world of what had happened in the Warsaw ghetto. I believe that her success in voicing these facts was evident and heart rending.

Many well known diarists emerged from this heart-rending period and certainly they deserve acknowledgement. Familiar to most people, is The Diary of a Young Girl, a journal of Ann Frank, a younger girl whose circumstances differed from Mary Berg's. Another is, Shanghai Diary. I suspect that most would agree, considering the variance of their experiences, Mary was able to divulge greater insight and a remarkable historical record.

*For more details:

Warsaw - ushmm.org

www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?Modu...

Linda Lipko says

The copy I obtained was published in 1945 and retrieved from storage from the dusty shelves of my local library.

Despite international acclaim, for many years efforts to re-publish the book never came to fruition, in 2007 it was finally re-printed.

This book was Mary Berg's attempt to open the eyes of America and the world to the brutality and barbaric horrific practices of the Nazi's upon Polish Jews.

Hers was the first accounting of the reality of the Warsaw Ghetto. She and her family were in the ghetto from its inception. She was 15 when they were taken.. This book clearly, accurately chronicles the systematic attempt to eliminate the helpless Jews, herded like cattle, walled inside where their bodies were broken, but the spirit survived.

Despite all odds, Mary's family eventually arrived in the United States, where Mary carried 12 small note books written in her shorthanded code which chronicled what she witnessed in the Warsaw ghetto and the daily brutality.

Mary's testimony encompasses the time period from 1939 - 1944, when Warsaw fell into the hands of the Nazis through her Mary's safe arrival on the shores of America.

Because her mother was an American citizen they survived. While in the ghetto they were moved many times. Later, as unrest grew in the ghetto, they were moved into a prison where, from a window, she and her family witnessed the deportation of 300,000 Jews from the ghetto to certain death.

This is not an easy read, but I highly recommend it.

Judit says

Not an easy book to read. But definitely a good one. It's a diary but very well written. Honest but not sentimental. Highly recommended.

Maja says

It's easy to compare this book with the diary of Anne Frank - at least, that's the case before you read them both and find out how different they actually are. Sure they are both diaries written by young, jewish girls but that's as far as the similarities go. In my opinion Miriam saw far worse things than Anne did. And still Miriam was the one to survive. Her account of the life in the Warsaw Ghetto and the prison of Pawiak is far from bright. It is dark, horrorfilled and heart wrenching. It's filled with Miriam's cry for justice, for help and for survival.

Harriet says

Well written. Found it quite fascinating since she was originally from Lodz which is where my in-laws were from. They survived the Lodz getto, primarily because they were young and healthy and able to work. They suffered a great loss of their entire families and I felt compelled to read Mary Berg's account of the experience to pay homage to them. Mary was far better off than most, including my relatives but she does state that and felt guilty because of it though there was little more that she could do to help others than the fundraising and aide she did give.

Maria João says

Como é possível... é a única coisa que consigo dizer depois de ler este livro. Para dizer a verdade não só demorei mais algum tempo do que estava à espera como tive de deixar o livro "assentar" antes de fazer um comentário.

Acho que por mais livros que leia acerca do assunto o Holocausto nunca deixará de me impressionar o que é bom, por um lado, mas por outro, minha nossa.

Acho que não vale a pena me estar a alongar na história que todos conhecemos tão bem, basta apenas dizer que temos que admirar quem todos aqueles que passaram por esta época negra, os que sobreviveram e nos contam a sua história e aqueles que infelizmente pereceram. Obrigada.

Quanto a este livro não gostei tanto como outros do género, mas deve-se dar valor de qualquer das formas.
