

The Nation Behind the Diary: Anne Frank and the Holocaust of the Dutch Jews

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SINCE ITS FIRST APPEARANCE IN 1947, *The Diary of Anne Frank* has been translated into sixty-five different languages, including Welsh, Esperanto, and Faroese.¹ Millions and perhaps even billions of readers, scattered throughout the globe and now spanning multiple generations, are familiar with the life and work of this young Jewish writer. Over the past sixty-plus years, numerous films and stage productions—including, controversially, a Spanish Anne Frank musical that opened in Madrid in early 2008—have brought the diary to ever-larger audiences. Nor does the global Anne Frank phenomenon show any signs of abating. In 2010, well over a million people visited the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, which both showcases the living quarters of the famed “Secret Annex” and provides interactive, multi-media exhibits dedicated to the life and times of Anne Frank, the Holocaust, and contemporary instances of racism, discrimination, and hate crimes.² A graphic biography of Anne Frank, authorized by the Anne Frank House and penned by two Americans, has appeared in numerous counties, with other translations and national editions to follow.³

Even the fate of the purported “Anne Frank Tree” constitutes international news. Immortalized in the diary, but in 2007 deemed diseased and unstable, the massive chestnut tree was spared destruction when a coalition of Amsterdam city officials, local organizations, and the

“Support Anne Frank Tree” foundation negotiated a compromise solution. For over two years, “Anne’s tree” was encased in an iron support system, intended to prevent the tree falling onto either the Annex or surrounding homes, but a particularly gusty day in late August 2010 brought down the rotted tree, support structure and all. This has not been the end of the tree’s journey, however, since the owner of the tree—which stood on private property, not the grounds of the Anne Frank House—has decided to donate part of its trunk to Jewish museums around the globe. Further, chestnuts gathered from the tree had already been used to generate scores of saplings, one of which was planned to replace the unhealthy original tree. Other saplings were to be sent around the globe, planted on the grounds of schools bearing Anne Frank’s name as well as select museums and public locations, which, in the United States, include the garden of the White House, the World Trade Center site in New York, and Little Rock Central High School in Arkansas.⁴ At some point in the yet-to-be-determined future, the Children’s Museum of Indianapolis, located sixty miles from my home in West Lafayette, Indiana, will also receive one such three-foot tall sapling.⁵ Until it arrives, however, visitors to the Children’s Museum can visit its acclaimed “Power of Children” gallery, a permanent exhibit profiling three children—among them Anne Frank—who “faced profound trials and emerged as heroes of the 20th century.”⁶

With these examples, I do not mean to imply some type of international obsession with Anne Frank, as some have long claimed, nor do I seek to minimize the efforts of those involved with the tree preservation efforts. Rather, I cite them as evidence that, to date, Anne Frank remains the most recognizable victim of persecution, oppression, and genocide, a morbid gold standard by which survivors and victims alike continue to be measured. Women and children especially must reside in the larger-than-life shadow cast by the life and diary of Anne Frank. Comparisons—whether self-evident or of a more spurious type—abound. Etty Hillesum, another Dutch diarist and Holocaust victim who perished in Auschwitz in November 1943, has been termed the “adult Anne Frank.” Immaculée Ilabagiza serves as the Anne Frank of the Rwandan Genocide of 1994 and Zlata Filipović that of the Yugoslavian civil war of the 1990s.⁷ And, yet, Anne Frank’s diary also functions independently of its specific Holocaust-era context. Her work held up as a timeless coming-of-age story, Anne Frank represents every young adult struggling to find her own voice. She fights with her parents and sister, confronts her ever-changing body, and is wracked by self-doubt, an apparently attractive formula for a particular demographic of readers. Or, as bluntly stated by one Dutch historian, “as long as there are twelve-year old girls with growing breasts, there will be readers of the diary.”⁸ Adopting a far less flippant approach, other scholars have

examined Anne Frank as a writer, a woman, a resister, even as a utopian thinker and active consumer of literature.⁹ Francine Prose's recent work, *Anne Frank: The Book, The Life, The Afterlife* merits particular attention. Prose, an accomplished fiction and non-fiction writer and a keen observer of the writing process, convincingly argues that Frank's diary "should be awarded its place among the great memoirs and spiritual confessions, as well as among the most significant records of the era in which she lived."¹⁰ Accordingly, the diary functions as both a seminal Holocaust text and a canonical piece of twentieth-century literature.

Over the years, critics have denounced those who would universalize and contemporize the diary beyond recognition by replacing an account penned by a murdered Jewish girl with an uplifting tale of heroism and hope in a time of great privation. Still others have argued that the wartime situation of the Frank family was too far removed from the horrors—the gas chambers, the death pits, the overcrowded ghettos—inflicted upon European Jews for the diary to serve as a representative Holocaust document or an experiential text.¹¹ Such criticisms imply that the Holocaust was implemented and experienced as a monolithic event, with all European Jews, whether in the far western reaches of France or the forests of Byelorussia, subjected to the same injustices and tortures. In reality, the pace, scope, and methods employed by the Nazis demonstrated tremendous regional variation typically overlooked by those who would examine the diary for what it cannot tell us. Rarely do these critics address the fact that the author never intended her text to be emblematic of any shared wartime experience. Rarely still do critics—or for that matter, those who champion the diary's status as a Holocaust text—examine the diary in its specific national context. Not surprisingly, then, while Anne Frank continues to serve as the most recognizable face of the Holocaust, hers is a generic European Holocaust, largely devoid of those particular circumstances that shaped her life, work, and ultimate fate.¹² With this essay, I aim to refocus attention on these historical particularities. I maintain that both the creation and contents of the diary should be read for what they do provide: a window into the Holocaust, as it was both implemented and experienced in the German-occupied Netherlands during the years of 1940-1945. Although I remain wary of the descriptor "typical" or "usual"—for no typical Holocaust victim exists, try as we might to enforce our categories upon these historical actors—I also contend that, when examined in its national setting, Anne Frank's situation hardly appears as anomalous as some have maintained. Put simply, I contend that before we move "beyond Anne Frank," as the title of one recent work implores us to do, we must first return to the national setting in which the diarist was persecuted, protected, and, ultimately, betrayed.¹³

Thirteen-year old Anne Frank began her now-famous diary on June 12, 1942, two years into the German occupation.¹⁴ On May 10, 1940, German forces had invaded the Netherlands, and five days later, the Dutch army capitulated. By month's end, Hitler had installed in the Netherlands a civilian-led government under the leadership of Austrian Nazi Arthur Seyss-Inquart, who was to oversee an array of new officials and agencies imported from Nazi Germany and Austria. Accorded a relatively privileged position within the Nazi New Order, the Dutch were to be won over with promises, concessions, and, only if and when necessary, overt force. As such, the persecution of the country's Jewish population did not proceed with the same public shows of violence inflicted upon Polish Jews and other Slavic *Untermenschen*. Rather, for the next two years, scores of restrictive laws chipped away at the rights and privileges enjoyed by Dutch Jews.¹⁵ Little by little, they were deprived of their livelihoods, their possessions, and their membership in the national community. By the time Anne Frank penned her first diary entry in the summer of 1942, the identification and isolation of Jews living in the occupied Netherlands was nearly complete.

At the beginning of the occupation, the Jewish population of the Netherlands—which was concentrated in Amsterdam and other northern cities, such as Rotterdam and The Hague—numbered over 140,000, out of a total population of approximately nine million. Included in this total figure are the 23,000 men, women, and children who, in the course of the 1930s, had arrived in the Netherlands as refugees from Nazi Germany and Austria. The Frank family was among them. In early 1933, shortly after Hitler became Chancellor of Germany, Anne's father, Otto Frank, left Frankfurt, Germany, and moved to the Netherlands, where he established two companies specializing in the production of spices, pectin, and other foodstuffs. By the end of that year, his wife, Edith, and their two young girls—seven-year old Margot and four-year old Anne—had joined him. The family settled in a newly developed area of southern Amsterdam called the "River District," which became home to a large community of middle-class and upper-middle-class Jewish refugees from Germany and Austria. The city's Liberal synagogue was located in this area, as were a host of stores, schools, and parks. If they so wished, refugees in this neighborhood could live relatively self-contained lives, speaking German with one another and traveling in the same circles as their fellow Jewish refugees from cities such as Berlin, Frankfurt, or Vienna. Still, this River District area was no Jewish ghetto but, rather, a solidly middle- and upper-middle-class neighborhood populated by Jews and non-Jews alike, with native-born Dutch living alongside refugees from Nazi Germany.¹⁶

By all indications, Anne Frank had little difficulty adjusting to this new environment. She earned high grades in school, and as Dutch-language

readers of the diary can attest, she mastered her adopted tongue. At the same time, she remained keenly aware of her German background, even if she later described the Germans as an uncivilized, brutal people.¹⁷ Her sister, Margot, also quickly acculturated to Dutch society. Unlike her younger sister, who dreamed of becoming a famous writer or a Hollywood actor, Margot belonged to a local Zionist youth group and aspired to become a midwife in Palestine. Of the four members of the family, only mother Edith Frank seemed to experience considerable difficulty adapting to life in her adopted country. Having arrived in the Netherlands at age thirty-three, Edith rarely ventured outside her comfort zone of fellow émigrés, many of whom appeared either unwilling or unable to assimilate into Dutch society and culture. In their defense, Edith Frank and other refugees had ample reason to feel out of place. Certain prominent members of the more established Jewish communities worked to assist these refugees as they arrived from Nazi Germany and Austria in the 1930s, but, on the whole, native-born Dutch Jews kept their distance, as they feared that this sudden influx of refugees would foster anti-Semitism in the Netherlands. Nor did the behavior of these newly arrived Germans and Austrians help the situation, either: widely perceived as arrogant, loud, and condescending, the refugees were accused of failing to exhibit the model behavior expected of a group desperately needing hospitality.¹⁸ Although not known for overt and endemic anti-Semitism, the Netherlands was not entirely absent such sentiment either, and, now, faced with a refugee crisis as the country tried to recover from the Great Depression, Dutch politicians and other public figures began to speak of a “Jewish problem.” To these ends, in 1939, the Dutch government established the Westerbork camp complex, located in the country’s easternmost province and intended to serve as a holding center for both illegal and legal Jewish refugees. Three years later, the German occupiers would refashion Westerbork into a Jewish transit camp, a midway point for those Jews en route to the concentration and death camps in Germany and Poland. Of course, those Dutch authorities responsible for the original creation of Westerbork could not have envisioned the purposes to which it would be put. Still, the point remains that if pre-war Dutch society was not anti-Semitic to its core, then refugees such as the Franks were hardly welcomed with open arms, either.

After the arrival of German forces in May 1940, the situation of these refugees continued to deteriorate, as did the position of all Jews in the German-occupied Netherlands, regardless of their status as citizens or mere residents. In 1940 alone, hundreds of Jews in the Netherlands committed suicide.¹⁹ Others tried to flee the country, with varying degrees of success. The vast majority of Dutch Jews in the Netherlands, however, lacked the financial resources, necessary permits and paperwork, or the impetus

to undertake this voyage. Like their fellow co-religionists elsewhere throughout German-occupied Europe, most Dutch Jews simply settled into life under the new regime and consoled themselves with the knowledge that the first anti-Jewish laws instituted during the summer of 1940 appeared relatively inconsequential. On July 1, Jews were prohibited to serve in the nation's Air Raid Protective Service, but this hardly seemed to matter now that the country had been invaded and occupied. In late July, German authorities prohibited kosher slaughter, but, since large segments of the country's Jewish population had little need for kosher meat, this decree, too, could be dismissed as insignificant. But over the course of the next few months, *Reichskommissar* Arthur Seyss-Inquart dramatically expanded the scope and pace of these anti-Jewish efforts. Circulated in October 1940, the so-called "Aryan Declaration" required all civil servants in the Netherlands to attest to their non-Jewish status; one month later, all Jewish civil servants, including university faculty members, were released from their positions, although German authorities alleged that these dismissals were merely "temporary." The "Decree Concerning the Registration of Companies," issued by Seyss-Inquart on October 22, 1940, required that all Jewish-owned businesses and firms plus all companies with Jewish partners register with the occupation government. Five months later, a newly formed Bureau of Economic Investigation (*Wirtschaftsprüfstelle*) began to appoint Germans and Dutch Nazis to serve as "administrators" for these Jewish-owned businesses.²⁰ In the Netherlands, as was the case throughout German-occupied Europe, the social isolation and economic impoverishment of the Jews preceded their extermination. Seen in retrospect, however, the most ominous of these new German directives was the January 10, 1941 decree requiring that all Jews register with their local government authorities or population registry. Identified in this fashion, Jews in the Netherlands were thus marked for further discriminatory measures, including detainment, deportation, and, ultimately, death. Importantly, too, in February 1941, the German authorities mandated the creation of a Jewish Council to serve as the intermediary between the nation's occupiers and its Jewish community. Beginning in April 1941, all new anti-Jewish laws—and the punishments to be assessed for violation of these laws—would appear solely in *Het Joodsche Weekblad*, the weekly paper published by the main Jewish Council offices in Amsterdam. Absent a specific reason to read this Jewish weekly paper, the country's non-Jewish population could remain ignorant of these decrees until their effects manifested themselves in plain sight, a situation that, in turn, only reinforced the singular treatment and isolation meted out to the Dutch Jews.²¹

Like his co-religionists, Otto Frank negotiated this dizzying array of new restrictions to the best of his abilities and resources. Since relocating

to the Netherlands in 1933, Otto Frank had directed a number of related enterprises producing spices, jam-making supplies, and other household products. In early 1941, anticipating the forced “Aryanization” of Jewish businesses and property as already implemented in Nazi Germany over the course of past eight years, Otto arranged to transfer formal ownership to his Christian colleagues. For all intents and purposes, however, Otto would retain executive authority over his business enterprises, which allowed him to draw upon a regular source of income. This access to funding would prove absolutely essential for a family in hiding, which continued to require the necessities of daily life but at a higher wartime premium.²² These were astute, forward-looking moves, and most Jewish business owners and shareholders in Netherlands—even those German and Austrian Jews who, like Otto, had some prior experience with the Nazis’ anti-Jewish efforts—were not as fortunate.²³

At the same time, Otto Frank continued to seek the safe passage of his family out of Europe. In 1938, he had applied for visas to the United States, but for American purposes, the Franks were considered German Jews, albeit residents in the then-unoccupied Netherlands. With the immigration quota for Germany already exceeded, the Franks would continue to languish on the waiting list for the next three years. In April 1941, Otto reactivated his quest for a visa, prompted to do so, apparently by the blackmail efforts of a local Dutch Nazi. Having intercepted a letter reporting anti-German utterances made by Otto Frank, this Dutch Nazi approached Otto and demanded money.²⁴ Otto obliged his blackmailer, but he also appealed to his circle of friends and family members in the United States for assistance in leaving Nazi-occupied Europe. Documents recently unearthed at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in New York reveal that, between April 30, 1941 and December 11, 1941, Otto frantically searched for financial and other forms of support—advice, affidavits, personal intervention with State Department officials—from these contacts, including his college friend Nathan Straus Jr. of American department store fame. These efforts would come to naught. By the summer of 1941, the State Department had tightened visa conditions and entry requirements, and the German authorities had closed American consulates in their occupied territories. Personal intervention from even the wealthy and well-positioned Straus could not have assured the entire Frank family safe passage from occupied Europe.²⁵

With such options exhausted, the Franks now pursued an entirely different course of action: they would try to survive the occupation together, in hiding. At some point late 1941 or early 1942, Otto and Edith Frank made the decision to go underground.²⁶ During the first half of 1942, they began to convert the annex of Otto’s office building into a living space

large enough to accommodate not only the Frank family of four, but also Hermann van Pels, the business' resident spice expert and a close family friend of the Franks; his wife, Auguste; and their teenage son, Peter. Like the Franks, the van Pels had fled Nazi Germany in the 1930s. Having made the fateful decision to hide together, the two families stocked the hiding place with food, furniture, bedclothes, and other necessities, careful not to arouse suspicion amongst warehouse workers downstairs, neighbors, and visitors to the company. Assisting them was a small loyal core of trusted employees who would provide critical support and sustenance to the annex's residents over the course of the next two-plus years, thereby earning the title of "the helpers." Both families were due to arrive in this "Secret Annex" in late July 1942, although neither of the Frank daughters was apprised of these preparations for a life in hiding. Apparently, the Franks wished to shield their children from the worst of the anti-Jewish persecution then underway but also minimize the risk that friends, neighbors, and classmates would learn of these plans. Furthermore, Anne and Margot Frank had enough to worry about. With the beginning of the fall 1941 school year, Jewish children in the Netherlands were removed from their regular schools and forced to attend special Jewish schools containing only Jewish students and teachers. Anne had to leave her beloved Montessori school, located near her home, and travel across town to the Jewish Lyceum. She and her friends could frequent only Jewish-owned cafes and places of entertainment, since Jews were prohibited from cinemas, public parks and zoos, swimming pools, and museums, to cite but a few examples. In early May of 1942, the German authorities introduced the yellow Star of David, which was to be worn by all Jewish men, women, and children. As part of a total travel ban instituted the following month, Jews were now forbidden to use public transportation. And, because her bicycle had been stolen around Easter of that year, Anne was forced to walk an hour and a half, each way, to school. In any case, this theft soon ceased to matter because shortly thereafter, German authorities announced that Jews would no longer be allowed to ride or own bicycles.

Unbeknownst to the Franks and, indeed, nearly all Dutch Jews save for select members of the Jewish Council, deportations from the Netherlands would commence later in this summer of 1942. Beginning in January of this year, Dutch Jews from designated provincial areas had been forced to relocate to Amsterdam, where they were to be sheltered by members of the local Jewish community; "stateless Jews"—i.e., those refugee Jews without Dutch nationality—from these same provinces were sent to the newly expanded Westerbork camp in the east of the country. In late June, the chief German administrator of the "Central Agency for Jewish Emigration" in Amsterdam informed the leaders of the Jewish Council that

large-scale deportations from the Netherlands would begin within weeks and that the Jewish Council would be responsible for compiling the first list of Jews selected for “labor service” in Germany. During the month of July, thousands of Amsterdam Jews received detailed notification letters ordering them to report to designated locations such as Amsterdam’s Central Station, their bags carefully packed with those items clearly specified in their call-up letters. Such was the beginning of the massive deportations that would continue throughout this year and the next.²⁷ Included on the first list of 4,000 Jews ordered to report for deportation was then-sixteen-year-old Margot Frank, who received her call-up notice on July 4. At this point, the Franks and van Pels decided to put their plans into effect, albeit a few weeks earlier than expected: the next morning, all seven members of the two families went into hiding at the annex carefully prepared above Otto’s business at 463 Prinsengracht, in the very center Amsterdam.²⁸

Not all of these developments appear in Anne Frank’s diary, however, and understandably so, for Anne began her diary only in June 1942, a full two years into the German occupation of the Netherlands. By this point, the Dutch Jews had been identified and marked, stripped of nearly all property and assets, their livelihoods and freedom of movement severely restricted. Seen in retrospect, we know that deportation and extermination would soon follow, but neither Anne nor other contemporary observers could write about round-ups and deportations yet to begin. Secondly, and despite her rapid maturation within the walls of the secret annex, Anne Frank was a child during the first two years of the occupation, and she experienced the anti-Jewish regulations as a child. By virtue of her age and position in society, Anne simply did not have the access to observe, understand, and report upon the workings of the Jewish Council, as did, for instance, Etty Hillesum, fifteen years her senior. This is not to say that the young diarist remained entirely unaware of the persecutory efforts directed against the Dutch Jews, but, rather, she wrote about those circumstances directly affecting her life: the travel restrictions, the nightly curfews, the fact that all Jewish students needed to enroll in special Jewish schools as of the fall of 1941.²⁹ As a result, her diary reveals but a small segment of the larger catastrophe we know as the Holocaust. But this perspective is hardly unique to the diary, since countless diaries, memoirs, and ego-documents provide but partial views into the persecution of European Jews. If we discount the diary, we must discount these works, too.

Another criticism of the diary centers upon the atypical wartime situation of the Frank family. Whereas most Jews sought shelter as individuals, the Franks hid as a unit, and, perhaps even more surprisingly, remained together until their arrest in August 1944. And, indeed, most of those who lived underground in the Netherlands did so alone. Hiding places

were typically small and improvised, large amounts of food difficult to procure, and official documentation—necessary for ration cards and other items—constantly in short supply. As a result, few people were willing to take on siblings and couples, let alone entire nuclear families. Perhaps the Frank family ran a greater risk by hiding together, that is, if the odds of detection increased exponentially with each additional person. Such was the claim of famed child psychologist and concentration camp survivor Bruno Bettelheim, who, in 1960, criticized the Franks' decision to hide as a family unit: if only they would have “faced the facts,” they would have gone into hiding as individuals, and they would have stood a better chance of surviving the war.³⁰ Fifty years of research later, however, we simply cannot say with certainty that the Franks would have fared any better had they gone into hiding separately. In the Netherlands, individuals in hiding were betrayed, detected, and arrested quite frequently, as were groups large and small.³¹ Further, and regardless of whether the Franks sought refuge as individuals or as a unit, their status as “*onderduikers*”—literally, “those who dive under”—was far more typical than might be assumed by those unfamiliar with the Netherlands, as Bettelheim admitted himself to be. The most recent and reliable figures cite a range of 20,000 to 30,000 Dutch Jews in hiding during the wartime years, with approximately 16,000 to 17,000 surviving the war.³² These numbers alone indicate that life in hiding, although hardly a guarantee of survival, constituted an integral wartime experience for Jews in the occupied Netherlands. “*Onderduiken*,” in fact, was a national phenomenon: during the course of the occupation, hundreds of thousands of non-Jewish men and women—resisters, political enemies, labor drafter evaders, to name but the largest groups—“dove under” in an effort to evade their would-be captors.³³

As “*onderduikers*,” Anne Frank and her fellow Annex inhabitants were physically isolated from developments transpiring outside their windows, but the little they saw and learned gave them ample reason to be concerned. In November 1942, Anne described the scenes of brutality ensuing in the streets outside, as relayed by Dr. Pfeffer, the dentist who had recently become the eighth member of the group. Pfeffer reported that every evening, green and grey army trucks patrolled the streets, and Germans went looking for Jews, concentrating on those houses which, according to their records, stood to net them a “good haul” of Jews. If found, entire families were taken away on the spot. From her hiding place on the Prinsengracht, Anne also witnessed the round-ups in action, writing in the same diary entry, “In the evenings when it’s dark, I often see long lines of good, innocent people, accompanied by crying children, walking on and on, in [the] charge of a couple of these chaps, bullied and knocked about until they almost drop. No one is spared—old people, babies, expectant

mothers, the sick—each and all join in the march of death.” Confronted with these scenes, Anne realized that she was fortunate to be in hiding, with a warm bed, as “[her] dearest friends have been knocked down or have fallen into a gutter somewhere out in the cold night.”³⁴

Those in hiding had little way of knowing what followed arrests and forced marches to the train station. But few contemporary observers in the occupied Netherlands would have had reason to observe those horrors we associate with the Holocaust, since the German authorities in the Netherlands outsourced the extermination process to foreign soil. Public violence would not win over the Dutch to the Nazi New Order but, on the contrary, could stimulate protest and acts of resistance, which the Germans wished to avoid. Instead, German authorities shipped the country’s Jews to transit camps such as Westerbork, where they spent days, weeks, or months before being deported east to their deaths in places such as Auschwitz and Sobibor. From both the Annex’s “helpers” and the illegal radio in the downstairs office, the group in hiding learned of the conditions that prevailed in Westerbork. On October 9, 1942, Anne reported that those in the transit camp received nothing to eat, water was available only once day, and toilets and sinks were in short supply. Since everyone slept together in the same bunks, “frightful immorality” was commonplace, and, as a result, many women and girls were now expecting babies. Anne questioned: “If it is as bad as this in Holland whatever will it be like in the distant and barbarous regions they are being sent to? We assume that most of them are murdered. The English radio speaks of their being gassed. Perhaps that is quickest way to die.” The editors of the Critical Edition of the diary have contextualized these statements, noting that, in June 1942, the BBC had begun to report news of these gassings. On June 9, for instance, the BBC Home Service announced that “Jews were regularly being killed by machinegun fire, hand grenade—and even poisoned by gas.”³⁵

But all of this happened outside the Netherlands, in the distant and dreaded “East.” Before they arrived in Westerbork or other transit camps, the Dutch Jews were not subjected to starvation rations or epidemic disease as seen in the Warsaw Ghetto, for instance. Local collaborators did not club to death Jewish men, women, and children, as was the case in Lithuania, for instance, nor did members of the *Einsatzgruppen* round up and shoot Dutch Jews, as they did in the Soviet territories of Eastern Europe. The end result, of course, was the same, no matter where and how it occurred. And before they, too, were killed, Dutch Jews were forced to exist in a constant state of worry, fear, and denial. From the diary of Anne Frank emerges this palpable anxiety, although one can argue that, in comparison to the tens of thousands of their fellow citizens who had already met their deaths in these camps, the Franks and all those in hid-

ing were rather fortunate. All Dutch Jews were subjected to a deliberate yet incremental process of destruction, initiated and enforced by German officials and agencies that seemed to delight in changing the rules of the game and speaking in euphemisms. This was, according to Dutch historian and Holocaust survivor Jacob Presser, a sadistic game of “cat and mouse,” waged upon victims willing to believe that each new restrictive measure would be the last.³⁶ In the spring of 1942, for instance, the German authorities directed the Jewish Council of the Netherlands to issue “exemption numbers” to certain people or groups. Those who possessed these coveted numbers—workers in the all-important diamond industry; members of the Portuguese Jewish community; those in mixed marriages; the leaders and family members of the Jewish Council—were thus assured that they would be spared deportation. Yet, as the deportations continued, one group after another was stripped of its immunity and its members made to acknowledge that they, too, would be sent east to an unknown fate.

“*Onderduikers*” lived in a similar state of suspended animation, aware that detection and thus deportation could occur at a moment’s notice. Life underground presented particular logistical obstacles, too, which only further compounded this generalized fear and anxiety. Over the course of twenty-five months, the group at the Secret Annex experienced numerous bombardments and air raids; a handful of nighttime robberies directed against Otto Frank’s business; and, of course, the daily tensions born by the inability to move around during business hours, lest the group be detected by those employees not privy to the secret that eight people were in hiding above their heads. These *onderduikers* maintained little control over their fate, since sheer coincidence, what we might term “dumb luck” were we not referring to matters of life and death, could determine survival. For instance, if the residents of the Secret Annex had been arrested in the summer of 1943, they likely would have been sent to Sobibor, an extermination center located in eastern Poland. Most Dutch Jews—including all eight residents of the Annex—were deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau via the Westerbork transit camp. Of the 60,330 Dutch Jews sent to Auschwitz, approximately 4,000 would survive—a tragically small percentage of survivors, but thousands of survivors nonetheless. But during the four-month period of March to July 1943, all trains minus one departed Westerbork for the extermination center of Sobibor in eastern Poland. At Sobibor, 34,313 Dutch Jews would be killed upon arrival, with less than twenty—most of whom spent only a few hours here before being sent somewhere else—surviving their deportation to this camp.³⁷ Had the Frank family been arrested and deported during the summer of 1943, they would have likely been killed immediately in Sobibor. Neither the extraordinarily well-prepared Frank family nor any other of the Nazis’

Jewish victims could control this deportation schedule, and, by extension, their odds of surviving.

Again, none of this would have been known to the diarist and her family at the time. Only after the residents of the Secret Annex had been arrested and sent to Westerbork would they have heard the names “Auschwitz” and “Sobibor” with some regularity, and since Anne did not record her experiences in Westerbork, we do not know what, if anything, she later learned about these places. Most likely, she would have heard the same vague rumors and snippets of information noted by those who did write while interned in Westerbork. Philip Mechanicus, who lived in the Dutch transit camp for an unusually long period of seventeen months, referred to the “Polish hell” of Auschwitz, but, if this well-connected journalist knew anything of the gas chambers and crematoria of the infamous Auschwitz, he revealed none of it in his written account.³⁸ As first an employee of the Amsterdam Jewish Council and then as a detainee herself, Etty Hillesum spent over a year in Westerbork. In lengthy letters to her large circle of Dutch friends outside the camp, she meticulously documented, amongst other facets of life in this transit camp, the weekly Tuesday morning transports to the east. The extraordinarily astute Hillesum knew that nothing positive awaited the deportees upon their arrival in the camps, but, like many others at time, assumed that Auschwitz was a work camp of sorts, similar to Westerbork. For instance, in August 1943, Hillesum wrote that “a hundred thousand Dutch members of our race are toiling away under an unknown sky or lie rotting in some unknown soil. We know nothing of their fate.”³⁹ Therefore, if Anne Frank was ignorant of what was transpiring in these distant locations, she was hardly alone, because even those more intimately connected to the detainment and transport process lacked such knowledge.

Yet, whereas the diaries of Hillesum and Mechanicus are widely considered acceptable Holocaust literature, Anne Frank’s work seems subject to a different and more rigid standard. According to Lawrence Langer, her diary is but a childish version of the more “adult fare” he recommends. In other words, one must seek out more explicit testimonies and stories as evidence of an authentic Holocaust experience.⁴⁰ Raising similar concerns about authenticity, critics have taken more aim at the various stage and cinematic interpretations than with the text of the diary itself. With ample evidence, American writers Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett have been accused of stripping Anne of her Jewish identity and position as Holocaust victim. In their screenplay, Anne appears as a normal (and perhaps American) teenager, her adolescent penchant for the melodramatic matched only by her relentlessly optimistic outlook on life. Her persecution as a Jew stands in the background as a tangential concern, for Goodrich and

Hackett present a universal tale of hope and human perseverance. Rather than confront her death in Bergen-Belsen, theatergoers and viewers are left with Anne's now well-tread statement that "in spite of everything, I still believe that people are really good at heart."⁴¹ Responding to the sanitized, universalizing portrait of the diarist resulting from these evident distortions, writer Cynthia Ozick famously imagined "a still more salvational outcome:" the diary burned, lost to "a world that made of it all things."⁴² Better, then, to have no diary at all than a diary stripped of all historical context and specificity.

Often neglected by those who rightfully focus on post-war adaptations and misinterpretations is the fact that diarist herself completed extensive revisions, and with an eye towards eventual publication. The diary may have come into existence as a collection of spontaneous observations and reflections, but it did not end as such. On March 8, 1944, the group of eight hiding in the Secret Annex gathered around their illegal radio to hear a speech by Gerrit Bolkestein, the Dutch Education Minister (in exile), who issued the following appeal to the occupied Netherlands: "History cannot be written on the basis of official decisions and documents alone. If our descendants are to understand fully what we as a nation have had to endure and overcome during these years, then what we really need are ordinary documents." Further, he explained, "not until we succeed in bringing together vast quantities of this simple, everyday material will the picture of our struggle for freedom be painted in its full depth and glory."⁴³ Indeed, thousands of Dutch citizens responded to Minister Bolkestein's call to document their wartime experiences.⁴⁴ After this speech, Anne began to revise her diary in anticipation of a broader audience. She condensed or omitted discussions she now deemed too immature, uninteresting, or imprudent, and she expanded upon other entries and topics. Over the course of the next five months, she created an entirely new version of her diary, complete with pseudonyms for all members of the group in hiding and their Dutch helpers.

While editing her original text during the spring and summer of 1944, Anne continued to document and reflect upon her experiences in hiding. Her writings from this time reflect a savvy understanding of the tempest raging outside the doors of the annex, but they also contain a steady dose of optimistic prognoses for the future. Bemoaning what she saw to be man's innate "urge to destroy, an urge to kill, to murder and rage,"⁴⁵ she also raised the possibility that the war might trigger lasting change. On April 11, 1944, she proclaimed that just as God had allowed the Jews to suffer so terribly until this point, so too would God raise them up again. She continued: "If we bear all this suffering and if there are still Jews left, when it is over, then Jews, instead of being doomed, will be held up as

an example. Who knows, if it might even be our religion from which the world and all peoples learn good, and for that reason and that reason only do we have to suffer now.”⁴⁶ Or, as she would write on July 15, 1944, in the most famous but also least contextualized quote from the diary:

It’s really a wonder that I haven’t dropped all my ideals, because they seem so absurd and impossible to carry out. Yet I keep them, because in spite of everything I still believe that people are really good at heart. I simply can’t build my up my hopes on a foundation consisting of confusion, misery, and death. I see the world gradually being turned into a wilderness, I hear the ever approaching thunder, which will destroy us too, I can feel the sufferings of millions and yet, if I look up into the heavens, I think that it will all come right, that this cruelty too will end, and that peace and tranquility will return again.⁴⁷

Typically cited as evidence of either the triumph of the human spirit—whatever this means—or, perhaps more perversely, the victory of good over evil, this passage points to a more sophisticated understanding of present circumstances. Anne could not believe that confusion, misery, and death constituted normal conditions, but neither did she express an unbridled, naïve optimism. Importantly, too, the diarist noted these tensions at a pivotal moment in the war: two months prior, Allied forces had landed in Normandy, and a German defeat now appeared certain, if not imminent. Anne’s well-cited reflections on the nature of humanity reveal a decidedly post-war orientation, at least according to the interpretation offered by Barbara Chiarello: no longer questioning her survival, the diarist could now “prepare actively to re-enter post-Nazi Holland.”⁴⁸

Obviously, these preparations would remain purely theoretical, since Anne Frank did not live to experience this post-war world. On the morning of August 4, 1944, an Austrian *SS* man by the name of Karl Silberbauer arrived at Otto Frank’s business office. Accompanied by a number of Dutch agents and acting on an anonymous tip phoned in to the Amsterdam headquarters of the German *Sicherheitsdienst* (SD), Silberbauer arrested the eight Jews in hiding, as well as two of their helpers from Otto’s business. Days later, the eight Jewish residents of the Annex were sent to the Westerbork transit camp. On September 3, 1944, they were sent to Auschwitz on the last train leaving for this destination. Of the eight, only Otto Frank survived the war. He was liberated at Auschwitz by the Russians on January 27, 1945. A few weeks later, and only shortly before the British arrival, Anne and Margot Frank would both die of typhus in Bergen-Belsen. During the course of the war, approximately 107,000 Dutch Jews had been deported to camps in Germany and Poland; Otto Frank was one of 5,000 who returned to the Netherlands. In total, about 73% of the country’s Jewish community of 1940 was killed during the war.⁴⁹

Little doubt remains that the residents of the Secret Annex were betrayed, as were thousands of other Jewish men, women, and children in the Netherlands who sought to evade their would-be captors. To date, we do not know who placed the fateful phone call leading to the arrest and deportation of all eight residents-in-hiding. At various points since war's end, numerous government and private investigations, theories, and personal hunches have focused upon suspected individuals, such as the head warehouse worker W. G. van Maaren, who possessed both opportunity to suspect the presence of Jewish "*onderduikers*" and motivation to alert the German authorities. In her 1998 biography of Anne Frank, Austrian journalist Melissa Müller pointed to the building's cleaning lady, Lena van Bladeren Hartog, as the potential informant. According to Müller, Hartog feared that she and her husband, who, for a time, also worked for Otto Frank's company, would be punished if someone detected the presence of Jews. Carol Anne Lee, author of another 1998 biography of Anne Frank and a subsequent one of Otto Frank, has advanced a more complicated theory. In March 1941, Otto expressed his doubts about Germany's ultimate chances of victory to one of his company's contractors; this contractor, in turn, reported Otto's remarks to the local Dutch Nazi Party office and requested that this office relay this information to the SS. A Dutch Nazi named Anton Ahlers intercepted this accusatory letter, which he then used to extract money from Otto Frank. In the course of these interactions, Ahlers determined that Otto's company was engaged in business dealings with the German Army (*Wehrmacht*), and he used this knowledge to exact further monetary payments from Otto Frank, even as his family lived an underground existence. Lee claims that Ahlers knew the precise location of the hiding address and, for various reasons, betrayed its residents in August 1944.⁵⁰

In response to this spate of new theories, the Netherlands Institute for War Documentation (NIOD), which issued the Dutch-language Critical Edition of the diary in 1986, reopened its previous investigations into the betrayal. In 2003, the Institute verified some of Lee's claims. Apparently, Otto Frank was blackmailed by the Dutch Nazi Anton Ahlers, and his company did sell to the *Wehrmacht*. And, as noted earlier, these blackmail efforts prompted Otto to resume his quest for American visas; the recently discovered YIVO documents demonstrate as much. Still, so concluded the authors of the 2003 NIOD report, none of these suspected individuals can be positively identified as the betrayer, and it appears equally likely that another person—unnamed, and perhaps never to be known—had alerted the German authorities to the group of Jews in hiding. Chance, too, may have "played a much greater role than has been assumed to date." The NIOD has pledged to investigate any new betrayal theories that come to

light, but, as these researchers acknowledge, we may never be able to “complete this part of the Anne Frank story.”⁵¹

A definitive answer may also put to rest certain long-standing assumptions, especially endemic outside the Netherlands, concerning Dutch behavior during the Nazi occupation of 1940-1945. This sustained focus on the betrayal, I argue, has contributed in large part to what has been termed the “Anne Frank myth” or “Dutch myth” proclaiming that the wartime Netherlands was a nation of collaborators or resisters: either the Dutch denounced Jews and sympathized with the Nazis, or else valiantly resisted the Nazis at every turn. Anne Frank’s anonymous betrayer is held up as the quintessential collaborator, content to send others to their deaths for personal profit, self-interest, or ideological affinity with the Nazis, whereas Miep Gies and the Annex’s other “helpers” represent the unselfish and humane rescuer prototype.⁵² But these ideas, if enduringly popular in the English-speaking world, carry less weight in the Netherlands. Indeed, for the first few decades after the war, Dutch observers and scholars slotted their fellow citizens’ wartime comportment into one of two opposing master narratives, just as the “Anne Frank myth” would have it. In recent years, however, this stark dichotomy has been replaced by a more nuanced approach, the result of historian Hans Blom’s 1983 call to abandon these traditional moralistic interpretations of wartime behavior, replacing this black- and-white worldview with one tinged gray instead.⁵³ In the past two decades, Dutch, British, and German scholars have answered this appeal with studies demonstrating that the vast majority of the Dutch population neither actively resisted nor collaborated with their German occupiers. Those who traveled solely within “black” or “white” worlds, such as the nefarious blackmailer Anton Ahlers or the altruistic Miep Gies, constituted the exceptions to the rule, since most Dutch citizens simply tried to survive the war by inhabiting a broad “grey” zone of attitudes and behavior.⁵⁴

I argue that a more sustained focus upon the national circumstances in which the young diarist lived and penned her famous work can also counterbalance this enduring myth by providing nuance and local context. The diary stands not as a “typical” Holocaust text, but, rather, a window into the persecution, survival attempts, and murder of the Dutch Jews. As such, the experiences of those eight members of the Secret Annex do not necessarily typify but rather resemble those of countless others in the occupied Netherlands. As part of a large community of Jewish refugees from Germany and Austria, they were amongst the first to be called up for the massive deportations. Like hundreds of thousands of Dutch men, women, and children, both Jewish and Gentile, they chose to live underground in the hopes of survival. As they attempted to evade their persecutors, they were both assisted and betrayed by Dutch men

and women, until they, too, were caught in the Nazi net. All but one of this group of eight would die in the dreaded “East,” which points to the following somber conclusion. With her death—and regardless of her unique situation in hiding, or her proximity to the horrors then transpiring outside the walls of the Secret Annex—Anne Frank shared the fate of over a hundred thousand Jews deported from her adopted country. In this respect, she aptly represents the Holocaust of the Dutch Jews.

Notes

1. A current list of translations and their respective titles has been prepared by the Anne Frank House and is available on its Anne Frank Guide website: <<http://www.annefrankguide.net/en-GB/content/TranslationsENG.doc>>.

2. Visitor numbers (1960-2010), as cited by the Anne Frank House, Amsterdam: <<http://www.annefrankhuis.info/en/Metanavigation/Press/Visitor-numbers>>.

3. In the United States, this book has appeared as Sid Jacobson and Ernie Colón, *Anne Frank: The Anne Frank House Authorized Graphic Biography* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2010).

4. Both the *New York Times* and the Dutch daily newspaper *Het Parool* provided extensive coverage of these negotiations as they occurred throughout 2007 and into 2008. *Het Parool* also published detailed “post mortems” of the tree after its collapse: for instance, “Feitenoverzicht Anne Frankboom,” *Het Parool*, 23 August 2010. See, too, “The Anne Frank Tree,” prepared by the Anne Frank House and accessible at <<http://www.annefrank.org/en/Worldwide/Anne-Frank-Tree/>>; “Zaailing Anne Frankboom in tuin Witte Huis,” *Het Parool*, 16 October 2010; and “For Anne Frank’s Tree, 11 New Places to Bloom,” *New York Times*, 19 October 2010.

5. As of August 2010, the Children’s Museum did not have a precise arrival date for this sapling. Interestingly, too, on the day after the tree fell, the Museum issued a press release describing it as “the horse chestnut tree that still stands outside that secret annex”: press releases issued by The Children’s Museum of Indianapolis, dated 27 November 2009 and 24 August 2010, publicly available at <http://www.childrensmuseum.org/pressrelease/press_2009_12_02.htm> and <http://www.childrensmuseum.org/themuseum/powerofchildren/html/press_2010-08-24.htm>.

6. Anne Frank is featured in this permanent exhibit alongside two Americans, Ruby Bridges and Ryan White. In 1960, six-year-old Ruby Bridges was one of the first African-American students integrated into the previously segregated New Orleans Public School system; at thirteen years old, Ryan White contracted HIV/AIDS and was barred from attending school in his Indiana hometown. For more on this “Power of Children” gallery, see <<http://www.childrensmuseum.org/themuseum/powerofchildren/html/index.html>>.

7. Immaculée Ilibagiza, *Left to Tell: Discovering God amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (Carlsbad, CA: Hay House, Inc., 2006) and “Rwanda’s Anne Frank,” *The Epoch Times*, 9 August 2007, <<http://www.theepochtimes.com/news/7-8-9/58566.html>>; Zlata Filipović, *Zlata’s Diary: A Child’s Life in Sarajevo* (New York: Viking, 1994), and Hen-

riëtte Lakmaker, “Anne Frank in Bosnia?! Children Perform in the Play ‘Dreams of Anne Frank,’” *Anne Frank Magazine* (1999), 38-41, with Filipović appearing on page 40.

8. Johannes Houwink ten Cate, “De superstar van de Shoah-business,” *Historisch Nieuwsblad* 7, no. 5 (5 November 1998), 54-55, with this statement appearing on page 55.

9. See, for example, Rachel Feldhay Brenner, “Writing Herself against History: Anne Frank’s Self-Portrait as a Young Artist,” in *Anne Frank: Reflections on Her Life and Legacy*, ed. Hyman Aaron Enzer and Sandra Solotaroff-Enzer (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 86-93; Sylvia P. Iskander, “Anne Frank’s Reading: A Retrospective,” in *ibid.*, 100-109; Bertheke Waaldijk, “Reading Anne Frank as a Woman,” in *ibid.*, 110-120; and Barbara Chiarello, “The Utopian Space of a Nightmare: *The Diary of Anne Frank*,” *Utopian Studies* 5 no. 1 (1994): 128-140. Comparative studies include Rachel Feldhay Brenner, *Writing As Resistance: Four Women Confronting the Holocaust: Edith Stein, Simone Weil, Anne Frank, Etty Hillesum* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997) and Denise de Costa, *Anne Frank and Etty Hillesum: Inscribing Spirituality and Sexuality*, trans. Mischa F. C. Hoyinck and Robert E. Chesal (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1998).

10. Francine Prose, *Anne Frank: The Book, the Life, the Afterlife* (New York: Harper, 2009), with this commentary appearing on page 9.

11. Lawrence L. Langer, *Using and Abusing the Holocaust* (Bloomington, IN: University of Indiana Press, 2006), 16-29 (chapter entitled “Anne Frank Revisited”), and Langer, “The Uses—and Misuses—of a Young Girl’s Diary: ‘If Anne Frank Could Return from among the Murdered, She Would Be Appalled,’” in *Anne Frank: Reflections on Her Life and Legacy*, ed. Hyman Aaron Enzer and Sandra Solotaroff-Enzer (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 203-205; Sem Dresden, *Persecution, Extermination, Literature*, trans. Hewy S. Schlogt (Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1995); and, most famously, Cynthia Ozick, “Who Owns Anne Frank?” *The New Yorker*, 6 October 1997, 76-87. See, too, Timothy Snyder’s recent piece examining the disproportionately prominent position of Auschwitz, which, in his view, has warped our understanding of the Holocaust. It has placed undue emphasis upon concentration camps and the fates of Western European Jews to the detriment of the experiences shared by millions of Polish and Soviet Jews: death by bullets, in open fields and pits, or in the lesser-known extermination centers of Sobibor, Treblinka, and Belzec, years before the murder of the Western European Jews commenced. Within this context, Snyder rejects the Diary as an emblematic Holocaust text, noting that “*The Diary of Anne Frank* concerns assimilated European Jewish communities, the Dutch and German, whose tragedy, though horrible, was a very small part of the Holocaust”: “Holocaust: The Ignored Reality,” *New York Review of Books*, 16 July 2009, 14-16, with these comments about the diary appearing on page 14.

12. Teachers’ guides seem especially prone to such universalizing tendencies. For instance, Hedda Rossner Kopf’s *Understanding Anne Frank’s The Diary of a Young Girl: A Student Casebook to Issues, Sources, and Historical Documents* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1997) narrates the history of the Frank family, presumably for the benefit of secondary school teachers teaching the diary to students with little-to-no knowledge of either the Netherlands or Nazi Germany. Still, the chapter entitled “The Jews in Holland” constitutes a mere 7 of 260 pages and relies solely upon two-decades-old English language studies. One of these—Ernst Schnabel’s *Anne Frank: A Portrait in Courage* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1958)—can no longer be considered a reliable historical text, as it has long been supplanted by a spate of new biographies, such as Willy Lindwer’s *The Last Seven Months of Anne Frank* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1991). Intended for the same audience as Kopf’s, Alex Grobman and Joel Fishman’s *Anne Frank in Historical*

Perspective: A Teaching Guide for Secondary Schools (Los Angeles, CA: Martyrs Memorial and Museum of the Holocaust of the Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles in cooperation with Ore-Ida Foods, 1995) employs a more critical approach to the same subject matter. Here, Dutch, American, and Israeli scholars explore such topics as “Anne Frank’s Place in Postwar Culture,” citing extensively from English-, Dutch-, and German-language secondary sources. Still, the impact of this work remains limited by its appearance in booklet form and, consequently, its low circulation numbers. A mere 19 American and 2 Dutch libraries own copies of this historical guide, whereas a total of 583 American and international libraries hold Kopf’s generalized account.

13. Diane L. Wolf, *Beyond Anne Frank: Hidden Children and Post-war Families in Holland* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007), 7-8.

14. In this article, all diary citations are taken from the revised English-language Critical Edition published in 2003, two years after the appearance of the revised Dutch-language Critical Edition: *The Diary of Anne Frank: The Revised Critical Edition*, prepared by the Netherlands Institute for War Documentation, ed. David Barnouw and Gerrold van der Stroom, trans. Arnold J. Pomerans, B. M. Mooyart-Doubleday, and Susan Massotty (New York: Doubleday, 2003). Unless otherwise noted, all quotations cited in this article appear in the “c” (original published) version of the diary, although my analysis draws upon all three versions: Anne’s original text (“a”); the text she revised in 1944 (“b”); and the first published version (“c”). Although certainly important in its own right, post-war developments surrounding the diary—its first publication and reception, the various stage and film adaptations over the years, the recent discovery of five “missing” pages and their incorporation into this new revised Critical Edition—lie outside the scope of my focus here and do not affect my core historical arguments. Other scholars have also explored these developments in detail. Among them are Francine Prose, *Anne Frank: The Book, The Life, The Afterlife* (New York: Harper, 2009); Judith Thurman, “Not Even a Nice Girl,” originally published in *The New Yorker*, 18 December 1999 and reprinted in Thurman, *Cleopatra’s Nose: 39 Varieties of Desire* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007), 93-103; Ian Buruma, “The Afterlife of Anne Frank,” *New York Review of Books*, 19 February 1998, 4-8; Judith E. Doneson, “The American History of Anne Frank’s Diary,” in *Anne Frank: Reflections on Her Life and Legacy*, ed. Hyman Aaron Enzer and Sandra Solotaroff-Enzer (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 123-138; Alvin H. Rosenfeld, “Popularization and Memory: The Case of Anne Frank,” in *Lessons and Legacies: The Meaning of the Holocaust in a Changing World*, ed. Peter Hayes (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1991), 243-278. See, too, the explanatory chapters accompanying the Critical Edition of the diary: Gerrold van der Stroom, “The Diaries, *Het Achterhuis*, and the Translations,” and David Barnouw, “The Play,” in Anne Frank et al., *The Diary of Anne Frank: The Critical Edition*, 59-77 and 78-83, respectively.

15. For the purposes of this piece, I consider “Dutch Jews” all those Jews living in the Netherlands and subjected to the Nazis’ discriminatory laws, regardless of whether these Jews possessed Dutch citizenship. The Franks never became naturalized Dutch citizens but referring to them as “German Jews” creates unnecessary confusion.

16. Detailed discussions of Jewish life in the Netherlands as it appeared on the eve of war in 1940 can be found in Bob Moore, *Victims and Survivors: The Nazi Persecution of the Jews in the Netherlands* (London, U.K.: Arnold, 1997), 19-41; and J. C. H. Blom and J. J. Cahen, “Jewish Netherlanders, Netherlands Jews, and Jews in the Netherlands, 1870-1940,” in *The History of the Jews in the Netherlands*, ed. J. C. H. Blom, R. G. Fuks-Mansfeld, and Ivo Schöffer (Oxford, U.K.: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2002), 230-295. For Amsterdam in particular, see Philo Bregstein, Salvador Bloemgarten, and Johanna Katherina Barends, *Remembering Jewish Amsterdam*, trans. Wanda Boeke (New

York: Holmes & Meier, 2004), xii-xxii.

17. *The Diary of Anne Frank: The Revised Critical Edition*, entry dated November 17, 1942: 330-334.

18. For these developments and ensuing tensions, see Bob Moore, *Victims and Survivors*, 28-36, as well as his more expansive *Refugees from Nazi Germany in the Netherlands, 1933-1940* (Dordrecht, Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1986). Debórah Dwork and Robert Jan van Pelt's most recent work, *Flight from the Reich: Refugee Jews, 1933-1946* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2009), also examines the plight of these Jewish refugees in the Netherlands, albeit in a comparative context.

19. Wout Ultee, Frank van Tubergen, and Ruud Luijkx, "The Unwholesome Theme of Suicide: Forgotten Statistics of Attempted Suicides in Amsterdam and Jewish Suicides in the Netherlands for 1936-1943," in *Dutch Jews As Perceived By Themselves and By Others: Proceedings of the Eighth International Symposium on the History of the Jews in the Netherlands*, ed. Chaya Brasz and Yosef Kaplan (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2001), 325-353, with Jewish suicide rates during this first year of occupation discussed on pages 337-340.

20. Gerald Aalders, *Nazi Looting: The Plunder of Dutch Jewry during the Second World War*, trans. Arnold Pomerans and Erica Pomerans (Oxford, U.K.: Berg, 2004), 104-109, 114-119; Aalders, "Organized Looting: The Nazi Seizure of Jewish Property in the Netherlands," in *Networks of Nazi Persecution: Bureaucracy, Business, and the Organization of the Holocaust*, ed. Gerald Feldman and Wolfgang Seibel (New York: Berghahn Books, 2005), 168-188, pages 174-181 especially. Although concentrating on one segment of Jewish society, Jos Scheren's study nonetheless sheds light on the "Aryanization" process as implemented and experienced in the nation's capital city: "Aryanization, Market Vendors, and Peddlers in Amsterdam," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 14, no. 3 (Winter 2000), 415-429.

21. For these and other measures instituted during 1940-1942, including Jewish responses thereto, see Bob Moore, *Victims and Survivors*, 50-73; 79-90; 261-267 ("Chronology of the Persecution of the Jews in the Netherlands"); and J. Presser, *Ashes in the Wind: The Destruction of Dutch Jewry*, trans. Arnold Pomerans (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1988), 12-94.

22. For these transfer agreements, see, for instance, Carol Ann Lee, *The Hidden Life of Otto Frank* (London, U.K.: Viking, 2002), 56; Prose, *ibid.*, 46.

23. Works examining the theft of Jewish-owned property and assets in German-occupied Europe include Martin Dean, Constantin Goschler, and Philipp Ther, eds., *Robbery & Restitution: The Conflict Over Jewish Property in Europe* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007); Martin Dean, *Robbing the Jews: The Confiscation of Jewish Property in the Holocaust, 1933-1945* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

24. For further details concerning the blackmail situation, see Carol Ann Lee, *The Hidden Life of Otto Frank*, 59-66 especially. Lee also claims that Tonny Ahlers, this Dutch Nazi who extracted money from Otto Frank in 1941, betrayed the eight Jews hiding in the Secret Annex three years later. A subsequent investigation completed by researchers at the Netherlands Institute for War Documentation (NIOD) confirmed that Ahlers obtained payment from Otto Frank during and even after the war. However, these researchers could not confirm Lee's betrayal thesis, and for the reasons they detailed in their report: "Who Betrayed Anne Frank?" NIOD, Amsterdam, 25 April 2003, <<http://www.niod.nl/documents/publicaties/WhobetrayedAnneFrank.doc>>, 11, 25-29, 32-33.

25. "Letters Show How Anne Frank's Father Tried to Lead Family to U.S.," *New York Times*, 26 January 2007; "In Old Files, Fading Hopes of Anne Frank's Family," *New York Times*, 15 February 2007; Press Release, "Newly Discovered File Documents Efforts

of Anne Frank's Father to Escape from Nazi-occupied Europe," available at <<http://www.yivo.org/pdf/Otto-Frank-Release.pdf>>; David Engel, "Background to the Situation of Jews in the Netherlands under Nazi Occupation and of the Family of Otto Frank," available at <<http://www.yivo.institute.org/pdf/DavidEngel-OttoFrank-WhitePaper.pdf>>; "Timeline of Key Events Relative to YIVO's Otto Frank File," available at <<http://www.yivo.org/pdf/Timeline.pdf>>.

26. Most works on the subject—including the account penned by Miep Gies, one of the Annex's "helpers"—note that these preparations for a life in hiding began in earnest in the spring of 1942: for example, Miep Gies and Alison Leslie Gold, *Anne Frank Remembered: The Story of the Woman Who Helped to Hide the Frank Family* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987); Francine Prose, *Anne Frank: The Book, the Life, the Afterlife*, 45-49; and Carol Ann Lee, *Roses from the Earth: The Biography of Anne Frank* (London, U.K.: Viking, 1999), 86-87. However, Lee's subsequent biography of Otto Frank dates this decision to April 1941, when Dutch Nazi Tonny Ahlers initiated his blackmail campaign against Otto: *The Hidden Life of Otto Frank*, 66. If Lee is correct about this timing, this would mean that Otto decided to go into hiding while he continued to seek opportunities for emigration. This was obviously not an impossible scenario, but Lee's discussion of Otto's decision-making process must be seen in light of her overarching focus upon Ahlers as both blackmailer extraordinaire and Anne Frank's betrayer.

27. For this series of developments, see Bob Moore, *ibid.*, 88-95, and J. Presser, *Ashes in the Wind: The Destruction of Dutch Jewry*, 111-114. The original call-up notice, sent from the Central Agency for Jewish Emigration, is reprinted in the Joods Historisch Museum of Amsterdam's *Documents of the Persecution of the Dutch Jewry 1940-1945*, Second Edition of 1979 (Amsterdam, Netherlands: Polak and Van Genneep, 1979), 85-87, with a complete English-language translation appearing on pages 98-99.

28. Later that year, the group in hiding expanded to eight with the arrival of Fritz Pfeffer, a local dentist, who, like the others, had also fled Nazi Germany.

29. *The Diary of Anne Frank: The Revised Critical Edition*, entry dated June 20, 1942: 200-205.

30. In his defense, Bettelheim admitted his criticisms were based solely upon the diary and its subsequent film and stage versions; he admitted that he could not comment "on what actually happened to the Frank family" other than what is contained in these sources. Still, his lack of information did not temper his evident frustration with the Franks' decisions. At the very least, Bettelheim insisted, they should have armed themselves. This way, they could have killed at least one or two of the Germans who came to arrest them in August 1944. After all, their fates "wouldn't have been very different, because they all died anyway except for Anne's father. But they could have sold their lives dearly instead of walking to their deaths": Bruno Bettelheim, "The Ignored Lesson of Anne Frank," originally appearing in *Harper's Magazine*, Vol. 221 (November 1960), 45-50 and reproduced in his *Surviving and Other Essays* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979), 246-257. His commentary to this effect appears on pages 45-46 of the original version.

31. English-language analyses of the many logistical, psychological, and economic obstacles confronted by those who went into hiding appear in Moore, *Victims and Survivors*, 146-160; and Jozeph Michman and Bert Jan Flim, "Historical Introduction," in *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous Among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews During the Holocaust. The Netherlands*, ed. Israel Gutman et al. (Jerusalem, Israel: Yad Vashem, 2004), xviii-xxxix, pages xx- xxxix especially. The experiences of Jewish children in hiding have also received sustained scholarly attention. See, for instance, Diane L. Wolf, *Beyond Anne Frank: Hidden Children and Post-war Families in Holland* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007); Debórah Dwork, *Children with a Star: Jewish Youth in Nazi Europe* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991), pages 31-109 especially;

Bert Jan Flim, *Omdat hun hart sprak: geschiedenis van de georganiseerde hulp aan joodse kinderen in Nederland, 1942-1945*, second ed. (Kampen, Netherlands: Kok, 1996); and the unfortunately much-abridged English-language version, Bert Jan Flim and Jozien J. Driessen-Van het Reve, *Saving the Children: History of the Organized Effort to Rescue Jewish Children in the Netherlands, 1942-1945*, trans. Jeannette K. Ringold (Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, 2005).

32. Unpublished but publicly available statistical summary prepared for the Netherlands Institute for War Documentation by Jeroen Kemperman, "Cijfers Duitse bezetting," page 4; Jozeph Michman and Bert Jan Flim, "Historical Introduction," in *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous Among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews During the Holocaust. The Netherlands*, ed. Israel Gutman et al., Appendix: xxxviii-xxxix.

33. Bob Moore, *ibid.*, 146-147 provides estimates for the number of Jews who went in hiding; those Jews who survived; and the total number of those in hiding (300,000), both Jewish and non-Jewish. Dick van Galen Last, "The Netherlands," in *Resistance in Western Europe*, ed. Bob Moore (Oxford, U.K.: Berg, 2000), 214, cites the figure of 350,000 in hiding.

34. *The Diary of Anne Frank: The Revised Critical Edition*, entries dated November 19 and 20, 1942: 335-338.

35. *The Diary of Anne Frank: The Revised Critical Edition*, entry dated October 9, 1942: 292-294, with this editorial explanation appearing on page 293.

36. See Presser, *Ashes in the Wind: The Destruction of Dutch Jewry*, 31, 165, 216, and 320; as well as Moore, *Victims and Survivors*, 5-6, for a critical discussion of Presser's approach.

37. "Cijfers Duitse bezetting," 2-3.

38. Philip Mechanicus, *Waiting for Death: A Diary*, trans. Irene R. Gibbons (London, U.K.: Calder and Boyars, 1968), with one such reference to Poland appearing on page 44.

39. Etty Hillesum, letter dated August 24, 1943, in *Etty: The Letters and Diaries of Etty Hillesum 1941-1943, Complete and Unabridged*, ed. Klaas A. D. Smelik, trans. Arnold J. Pomerans (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002), 654.

40. In place of the Diary, "a narrative of adolescence only peripherally concerned with the Holocaust," Langer recommends the short stories of Ida Fink and Carl Friedman's *Nightfather*. These works, he notes, "are not suffused with terror and dread, nor do they drown us in unbearable chronicles of atrocity": *Using and Abusing the Holocaust*, 27-28. Here, not only does Langer dismiss the diary as juvenile and irrelevant, but he significantly downplays the horror inherent in Ida Fink's work. *A Scrap of Time and Other Stories*, set in Nazi-occupied and post-war Poland, presents one horrific tale after another, whether whole villages slaughtered by the mobile killing units of the *Einatzgruppen* or parents forced to watch their children die. Contrary to Langer, I would certainly describe these stories as "suffused with terror and dread," and I would argue that, taken together, they are extremely painful if not unbearable to read.

41. For further discussion of these various adaptations and criticisms, see Prose's *Anne Frank: The Book, the Life, the Afterlife*, 177-238, as well as those works cited in footnote 13.

42. Cynthia Ozick, "Who Owns Anne Frank?" *The New Yorker*, 6 October 1997, 76-87.

43. An English-language excerpt from this broadcast appeal appears on page 59 of Gerold van der Stroom's "The Diaries, *Het Achterhuis* and the Translations," in *The Diary of Anne Frank: The Revised Critical Edition*, 59-77, which details Anne's writing and editing process; the post-war preparation of various typescripts by Otto Frank and

other editors; and problems of translation, particularly those accompanying the German translation rendered by Anneliese Schutz.

44. Today, the Netherlands Institute for War Documentation in Amsterdam holds approximately 1,500 such diaries.

45. *The Diary of Anne Frank: The Revised Critical Edition*, entry dated May 3, 1944: 649-651.

46. *The Diary of Anne Frank: The Revised Critical Edition*, entry dated April 11, 1944: 612-623, page 622 especially.

47. *The Diary of Anne Frank: The Revised Critical Edition*, entry dated July 15, 1944: 711-716. These particular statements appear in the last two paragraphs of this long entry.

48. Barbara Chiarello, "The Utopian Space of a Nightmare: *The Diary of Anne Frank*," 91. For further discussion of these well-cited diary passages, see Prose, *Anne Frank: The Book, the Life, the Afterlife*, 167-170, and Ian Buruma, "The Afterlife of Anne Frank," 5, 8.

49. This figure of 73% appears in Jozeph Michman and Bert Jan Flim, "Historical Introduction," in *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous Among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews During the Holocaust. The Netherlands*, ed. Israel Gutman et al., Appendix: xxxviii. Other studies cite fewer deportees and therefore a smaller death rate. See, for instance, Moore, *Victims and Survivors*, Table A2: 260, and "Cijfers Duitse bezetting," 1-3.

50. Melissa Müller, *Anne Frank: The Biography* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 1998), 226-230; Carol Ann Lee, *The Hidden Life of Otto Frank*, 97-101.

51. David Barnouw and Gerrold van der Stroom, "Who Betrayed Anne Frank?" issued by the NIOD, Amsterdam, April 25, 2003: <<http://www.niod.knaw.nl/documents/publicaties/WhobetrayedAnneFrank.doc>>, pages 32-34.

52. The following articles, although a decade old, evidence the claims that repeatedly surface in English-language media: Dvora Yanow, "The Anne Frank Myth," *Judaism* 49, no. 2 (Spring 2000): 183-188 and Tom Turgend, "As Legend of Anne Frank Grows, So Do Claims of Misperceptions," *Jewish Telegraphic Agency* (JTA), 13 May 2001. More critical examinations of this phenomenon include Elma Verhey, "Anne Frank and the Dutch Myth," in *Anne Frank in Historical Perspective: A Teaching Guide for Secondary Schools*, ed. Alex Grobman and Joel Fishman (Los Angeles, CA: Martyrs Memorial and Museum, 1995), 23-32 and G. Jan Colijn, "Review Essay: *Anne Frank Remembered*," in *Anne Frank: Reflections on Her Life and Legacy*, ed. Hyman Aaron Enzer and Sandra Solotaroff-Enzer (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 173-181.

53. J. C. H. Blom, "In de ban van goed en fout? Wetenschappelijke geschiedschrijving over de bezettingstijd in Nederland," reprinted in *Tussen Goed en Fout: Nieuwe gezichtspunten in de geschiedschrijving 1940-1945*, ed. G. Abma et al. (Franeker, Netherlands: Uitgeverij T. Wever, 1986), 30-52.

54. See, for instance, Gerhard Hirschfeld, "Collaboration and Attentism in the Netherlands 1940-1941," *Journal of Contemporary History* 16 no. 3, The Second World War: Part 2 (July 1981): 467-486; Gerhard Hirschfeld, *Nazi Rule and Dutch Collaboration: The Netherlands under German Occupation 1940-1945* (Berg, Netherlands: Oxford, 1988); Bob Moore, *Victims and Survivors*; Guus Meershoek, *Dienaren van het gezag. De Amsterdamse politie tijdens de bezetting* (Amsterdam, Netherlands: van Gennep, 1999); Bart van der Boom, "*We leven nog*": *de stemming in bezet Nederland* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2003); Peter Romijn, *Burgemeesters in oorlogstijd: Besturen tijdens de Duitse bezetting* (Amsterdam, Netherlands: Balans, 2006); and Monika Diederichs, *Wij geschoren wordt moet stil zitten: De omgang van Nederlandse meisjes met Duitse militairen* (Amsterdam, Netherlands: Boom, 2006).