

## **Annotated Bibliography: *Rebuilt from Broken Glass***

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Bard, Mitchell G. *48 Hours of Kristallnacht*. New York: Guilford, 2010.

Mitchell G. Bard's *48 Hours of Kristallnacht* chronicles the events of Kristallnacht by providing readers with previously unpublished eye-witness testimony, access to key archives, and Bard's incisive analysis. This novel examines events leading up to the pogrom, how *Kristallnacht* transpired, and the events that occurred in its aftermath. Bard takes the reader into the most harrowing and haunting details of *Kristallnacht* by describing in detail the destruction that occurred at Jewish cemeteries, businesses, and synagogues, while also including interviews from Jewish children who saw their life change overnight. By providing readers with a highly personalized account of one of the most infamous events in Germany's history, Bard presents a well researched and highly descriptive study on the events of *Kristallnacht* and contextualizes his findings with Holocaust as a whole.

Behrend, Fred and Hanover, Larry. *Rebuilt from Broken Glass: A German Jewish Life Remade in America*. Indiana: Purdue, 2017.

In Fred Behrend's memoir, he recalls his childhood growing up in Ludenscheid, Germany and having to flee his home country in the wake of *Kristallnacht*. Since Behrend was a little boy when *Kristallnacht* occurred, his memoir offers a vital perspective of *Kristallnacht* through the lens of a young, innocent child who knew nothing of the world's hatred. Behrend's story continues when he and his parents fled Germany and arrived in Cuba, where they stayed for two years following the events of Kristallnacht and Behrend's father's stay in Sachsenhausen concentration camp. The Behrend family adjusted to life in Cuba to only then be called to immigrate to the United States within two years of their arrival in Cuba. Behrend goes into detail surrounding his stay in Cuba, his childhood during the two years of his life in Cuba, and his family's consequent move to New York City. Behrend takes the reader through his childhood, his teenagedom, and his adulthood. He describes growing up in a thriving Jewish community in New York, connecting with Jewish refugees throughout his life, and rebuilding a life for him and his

family that had been taken away from them by the Germans. His memoir is unique because he spends just as much time, if not more, on his life after *Kristallnacht* as he does in the time leading up to it and the day of. Behrend's novel provides readers with the opportunity to witness how refugees of *Kristallnacht* survived in the years after the attack, the horrors that remained with them, and the strength that bloomed within them as a response.

Berne, Carlson Emma. *Ruth and the Night of Broken Glass: A World War II Survival Story (Girls Survive)*. Minnesota: Capstone Press, 2019.

In this middle grade fiction book, Carlson Berne takes readers into the mind of ten year old Ruth Block, a Jewish German living in Frankfurt, Germany with her mother and father. Taking place in the late summer and fall of 1938, Ruth begins to experience the increasing antisemitism that was present in Germany as a result of the Nazi regime. As Ruth's anxieties begin to stir, her school is closed, her father's stationary business is forced to close down, and she begins to experience harassment on the streets from Germans. However, conditions become more severe for Ruth and her family when *Kristallnacht* occurs. During the events of *Kristallnacht*, Ruth's family's apartment is broken into and her father is dragged into the street and arrested along with the rest of her community's Jewish men. The story follows Ruth's family attempting to flee the chaos and danger of *Kristallnacht* as they run towards the uncertain future ahead of them. Carlson Berne's story presents a unique opportunity for young readers to become familiar with the events of *Kristallnacht* and how Jewish Germans were impacted by the statewide pogrom. Despite being fiction, this book also includes nonfiction support material, a glossary, and reader response questions.

Dewitt, Susanne Kalter. *I Was Born in an Old Age Home: A Memoir*. Illinois: Barany Publishing, 2018.

Susanne (Sanne) Kalter Dewitt's memoir narrates her experience growing up in Germany during the Nazi era and the events of *Kristallnacht* that changed the course of her life. Dewitt was born in Munich, Germany in 1934 and belonged to a strong Jewish community in her town. On November 9, 1938, the night of *Kristallnacht*, Dewitt was

arrested with her parents, incarcerated, and deported to Dachau. In her own words, Dewitt describes her escape from the Nazi regime and her experience living as a refugee in various European countries as a young child. Many years after the war, Dewitt settled down in the United States with her husband and children and made a career for herself studying Molecular Biology. Despite the harrowing start to her life, Dewitt's memoir does not only share her experiences living in Nazi Germany as a young Jewish girl. Dewitt shares the personal experiences of her daughter's addiction, her husband's battle with above ground nuclear testing, and her survivor's guilt from her childhood. *I Was Born in an Old Age Home* depicts the experience of a young Susanne Kalter Dewitt who's formative years were spent at the mercy of the Nazi administration and follows her experiences and thoughts into adulthood, demonstrating the ghosts and scars that remain with Holocaust survivors post liberation.

Gilbert, Martin. *Kristallnacht: Prelude to Destruction*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2007.

Martin Gilbert is a British historian who has written many books on topics relating to World War II history and the Holocaust. In his book, *Kristallnacht: Prelude to Destruction*, Gilbert sets out to examine the events of *Kristallnacht* and argues that the events of *Kristallnacht* are a prelude to the horrors of the Holocaust. In this book, Gilbert presents readers with a meticulous and thoroughly researched examination of this infamous day. He discusses the events of *Kristallnacht*, its prelude and aftermath, and then dissects how Jewish Germans were affected by this statewide pogrom. He examines the psychological, economic, and cultural changes in local Jewish communities that came about as a result of *Kristallnacht*, therefore providing readers with personal, first-hand accounts of the events of *Kristallnacht* in addition to historical fact. Gilbert's writing style presents the information of *Kristallnacht* in an accessible, digestible manner without sacrificing the critical historical information.

Karlauf, Thomas. *The Night of Broken Glass: Eyewitness Accounts of Kristallnacht*. Cambridge: Polity, 2021.

In 1939, Harvard sociologist Edward Harstone gathered eyewitness testimonies of *Kristallnacht* from German Jews who had fled Germany after. The accounts gathered by

Harstone had been unfortunately forgotten about until this recent publication from Thomas Karlauf. With modern insight and historical information regarding details of *Kristallnacht* and the tragedies it consisted of, Karlauf's *The Night of Broken Glass* provides readers with a wide array of personal Jewish testimony on their diverse experiences during this night and their experiences following the attack. These condensed memoirs contain personal stories from survivors who experienced loved ones being attacked, businesses being destroyed, and neighbors being thrown in jail, while also witnessing the ordinary Germans who participated in the chaos and joined in on the attack of German Jewry. Karlauf's book provides a wide variety of the Jewish experience on *Kristallnacht*, demonstrating how neither Jewishness in Germany nor the experience of Jews during *Kristallnacht* were a monolith and providing a platform for critical stories to be shared.

Steinberg, Gerald. "Memories of *Kristallnacht*: By a second generation survivor". Last modified 4 November, 2021.

<https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/antisemitism/memories-of-kristallnacht-by-a-second-generation-survivor-683925>.

In this newspaper article, Gerald Steinberg relays the stories and experiences of his two German Jewish parents, Henry and Anne, who both survived *Kristallnacht*. The experiences of Gerald's parents represent a spectrum in how Germans Jews were affected by the events of *Kristallnacht*; his mother did not recall feeling the impact of the statewide pogrom but was not allowed to attend school the next day because Jewish children were no longer able to attend schools with German children. Gerald's father, however, witnessed the rampage directly and recalled in his autobiography witnessing Germans going from synagogue to synagogue burning, looting, and smashing from street to street. Henry Steinberg wrote in his autobiography that after seeing the ordinary Germans engage in the senseless destruction of Jewish property with such a crazed frenzy that the myth that not all Germans were Nazis had been dispelled for him. He described that while witnessing the chaos, all he could think about was getting revenge. Having survived the Holocaust and *Kristallnacht*, both of Gerald's parents put the events of World War II behind them. However, when antisemitic acts occurred in the years

following, Gerald described his father reminding the family about the events of *Kristallnacht*. The events of *Kristallnacht* have largely imprinted on the Steinberg family. Henry Steinberg wanted the younger generation to keep in mind that they should be strong, be proudly Jewish, and fight for what is right.

Steinweis, Alen E. *Kristallnacht 1938*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2009.

In Steinweis's nonfiction book on the events of *Kristallnacht*, he provides readers with the facts about this important event leading up to World War II and the Holocaust and offers his own analysis on how to contextualize this infamous event in relation to the rest of the Holocaust. Steinweis forms his own theory that the events of *Kristallnacht* reflected manipulation of ordinary Germans by the Nazi regime in an attempt to engage the whole country in cathartic mass acts of antisemitic violence. Steinweis uses his own original research such as testimony from the perpetrators and Jewish survivors to bring to light the presence of herd mentality that was utilized by the German government to propagate their antisemitism.

Ross, Steve. *From Broken Glass: My Story of Finding Hope in Hitler's Death Camps to Inspire a New Generation*. New York: Hachette Books, 2018.

Having grown up a Polish Jew in the 1930s, Steve Ross was only eight years old when the Germans invaded his Polish village and forced his family to flee for safety. After spending many days on the run, Ross was deported to several different concentration camps where he spent the next six years of his life. During those six years, Ross was tasked with transporting corpses to crematoriums during his stay at Dachau. Upon liberation of the camps, Ross could no longer remember his age and everyone in his family had been murdered by the Germans except for his brother. His memoir, *From Broken Glass*, goes into details surrounding the darkest chapter in Ross's life. However, Ross's story is not defined by despair because it was at the concentration camps where he witnessed the human propensity to care for others even under the bleakest of circumstances, thus motivating him to become a psychologist to advocate for underprivileged youth in the United States. Ross's mission was to ensure that the underprivileged youth in his community did not have to suffer under the circumstances

that he had during his childhood. Steve Ross's memoir encapsulates the human spirit enduring the unimaginable and then using that experience as motivation to serve and protect his local community, using his unique and harrowing experience to lead the next generation into better conditions.

Ross, Steven J. *New Perspectives on Kristallnacht: After 80 Years, the Nazi Pogrom in Global Comparison (The Jewish Role in American Life: An Annual Review)*. Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2019.

Steven J. Ross is an author of history at the University of Southern California. In this book, Ross provides readers with an assessment of *Kristallnacht* 80 years after the infamous event. Ross forms his own analysis of *Kristallnacht* while also including collaborations from scholars from countries like the United States, Israel, Germany, and the United Kingdom. With the efforts of Ross and his collaborators, they have written a variety of essays about ordinary people's reactions to the pogrom, the experience of witnesses inside of the Nazi German regime as well as diplomats, journalists, and Jewish organizations around the world. With the aim of contextualizing the events of *Kristallnacht* in its historical context, Ross presents readers with his own post-war narrative and global comparison of similar events to *Kristallnacht*.