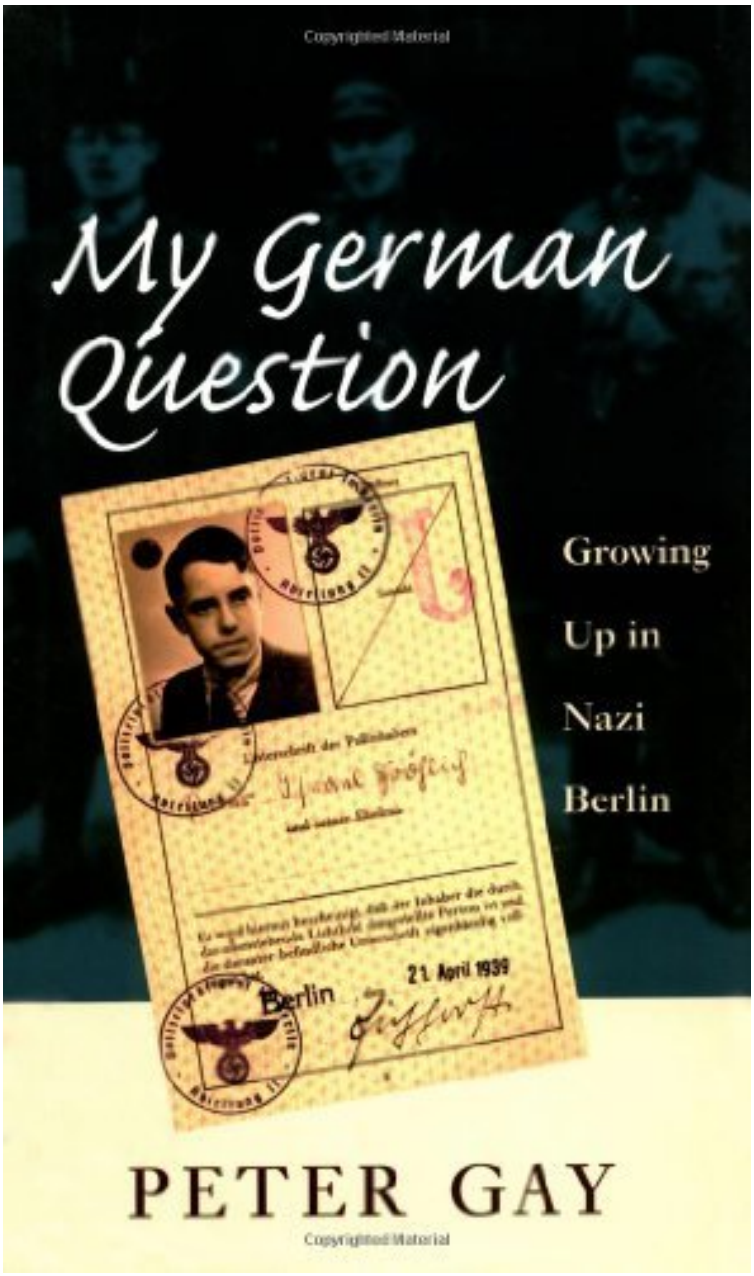
My German Question: Growing Up in Nazi Berlin



Par Professor Peter Gay
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Dtails sur le produit Rang parmi les ventes : #916423 dans eBooksPubli le: 1998-10-07Sorti le: 1998-10-07Format: Ebook Kindle

(Download) My German Question: Growing Up in Nazi Berlin

Par Professor Peter Gay : My German Question: Growing Up in Nazi Berlin before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised My German Question: Growing Up in Nazi Berlin:

Description : Description du produitIn this poignant book, a renowned historian tells of his youth as an assimilated, antireligious Jew in Nazi Germany from 1933 to 1939. Peter Gay describes his family, the life they led, and the reasons they did not emigrate sooner. In so doing he provides a curiously neglected perspective to the history of German Jewry.

Prsentation de l'diteurIn this book, an historian tells of his youth as an assimilated, antireligious Jew in Nazi Germany from 1933-1939 - "the story" says Peter Gay, "of a poisoning and how I dealt with it". Gay describes his family, the life they led, and the reasons they did not emigrate sooner, and he explores his own ambivalent feelings - then and now - toward Germany and the Germans. Gay relates that the early years of the Nazi regime were relatively benign for his family: as a schoolboy at the Goethe Gymnasium he experienced no ridicule or attacks, his father's buiness prospered, and most of the family's non-Jewish friends remained supportive. He devised survival strategies - stamp collecting, watching soccer, and the like - that served as screens to block out the increasingly oppressive world around him. Even before the events of 1938-39, culminating in Kristallnacht, the family was convinced that they must leave the country.Gay describes the bravery and ingenuity of his father in working out this difficult emigration process, the courage of the non-Jewish friends who helped his family during their last bitter months in Germany, and the family's mounting panic as they witnessed the indifference of other countries to their plight and that of others like themselves. Gay's account adds a further perspective to the history of German Jewry..comCultural historian Peter Gay (The Bourgeois Experience: Victoria to Freud, Freud: A Life for Our Time) applies his considerable analytic skills to his memoir of his early years as a Jew in 1930s Berlin. Light-haired, blue-eyed, and culturally assimilated, the Frohlich family, as they were then known, convinced themselves that, despite the growth spurt of the Nazi party, anti-Semitism was on the wane among the German populous. Gay recalls that his daily life was relatively unaffected by the Totalitarian regime. That is until 1933, when, according to law, he became a Jew overnight. Soon the family found their living quarters shrinking and their awareness of their plight growing (though no one could possibly conceive of what would come). Though still a boy, Gay remembers that "one of the greatest moments in my life" came when the German women's relay team dropped their baton at the 1936 Olympics in Berlin. Then came Kristallnacht, which crystallized the family's sublimated fears and precipitated their flight from their home. After a certain suspenseful series of necessary deceits and circuitous travels, the family began their new life in America--12-year-old Peter spoke barely a word of English. Now, decades later, Gay employs his new native tongue to uncover the psychological impulses that fed his parents' decision to stay in Berlin as long as they did and governed his own behavior as a boy. The result is credible answer to the question: How could they have stayed?From Publishers WeeklyGay is best known for his painstakingly researched series on the Enlightenment and, more recently, on The Bourgeois Experience: Victoria to Freud. In this memoir of his early life, particularly of the years between Hitler's chancellorship in 1933 and Gay's eventual escape in 1939, one can almost see the evolution of his obsessive concentration in the intense devotion to stamp collecting and sports that helped him block out the increasing din of Nazi racism. But this is not only a memoir, it's also a fierce reply to those who criticized German-Jewish assimilation and the tardiness of many families in leaving Germany. "We were not so stupid, not so deluded, certainly not so treacherous as we have been judged to be." In responding to these often facile charges, Gay is defending his beloved father, who through persistence and risky subterfuges managed to get his son and consumptive wife out of the country. In one episode, he recalls his father desperately doctoring a family certificate: "I can still see him at work committing this crime: using a straight razor, he gently scratched away at the ink, with St. Louis and May 13 growing paler and paler." This smart, funny, personable and resourceful man never adapted to his new life and died prematurely in 1955. Gay does not apologize for his father or other German-Jews, but rather offers an explanation of the mixed signals and the difficulty of escape. Or if it's an apology, it is, as he says "an unapologetic apology."