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...and yet again – when will the pathological fixation end?

The all pervasive global commentary about matters Holocaust truth is reaching a saturation point that fulfils philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer's three steps through which truth emerges: First it is ridiculed; then it is violently opposed; finally it is accepted as a given where anyone contesting the accepted narrative would be regarded as a fool.

Matters Holocaust truth has been ridiculed and has been violently opposed through legal persecution. For Holocaust Revisionists the truth of the matter has emerged, yet interestingly, now there is a desperate fall-back to Schopenhauer's first step – ridicule – without the final step being taken by the Holocaust believers.

This indicates how entrenched the Holocaust lies/myths/religion have become in the global orthodox version of its narrative. Dr Robert Faurisson warned Revisionists to take care when embarking on this 21st century intellectual adventure by realizing that social, financial and legal persecution of individual Revisionists who refuse to believe in the countless lies told will be severe – and so it has continued for decades. However, as there is now a definite generational change there appears to be a cry even from the Holocaust believer's camp that truth be told about what happened during the World War Two period referred to as 'the Holocaust', without such Holocaust questioners being defamed by the following question-stoppers: HATER, HOLOCAUST DENIER, ANTISEMITE, RACIST, NAZI!

Triple-J Holocaust joke sickening

Dvir Abramovich, August 10, 2012



Auschwitz Concentration Camp, Poland, in 1945. Photo: AP

By now it's clear that nothing is off-limits when it comes to the Holocaust. It seems that there is no aspect or symbol of the darkest chapter in human history that is not subject to perverse abuse and cheap trivialisation. And this dangerous trend is hitting new lows.

Yesterday, on the *Tom and Alex* show on Triple J, a truly appalling and bizarre segment was broadcast in which a "game" was made of linking things to Hitler; the final item in this "game" was a wind farm.



Flowers for the victims of the former Nazi death camp of Auschwitz. Photo: KACPER PEMPEL/REUTERS



A group of children wearing concentration camp uniforms behind barbed wire fencing at Auschwitz. Photo: AP

Why a wind farm you ask? Because it contains fans, which is linked to fan-forced ovens, which in turn connect to the Holocaust and Hitler.

Got it? Fan-forced ovens were the ovens in which the corpses were burned after the victims were led into the gas chambers where they were told they were going to have a shower.

Tom Ballard and Alex Dyson probably thought this was hilarious and would elicit chuckles. I was speechless.

With this beyond distasteful episode, Tom and Alex crossed so many red lines I stopped counting.

In response to an irate listener, Ballard on his Twitter account replied: "Dude, if you don't like the show, just don't listen. It's profoundly easy."

I wonder what makes certain "entertainers" feel that making jokes out of the death and suffering of millions acceptable?

Maybe Tom and Alex can explain to us what is remotely funny about the gassing of millions of men, women and children and the burning of their bodies?

Perhaps if the two visited the death camps of Auschwitz, where 1.5 million people were exterminated, where mothers with their babies clutched to their breasts went into the gas chambers, they could enlighten us about the humour in it.

What right do Tom and Alex have to re-traumatise survivors and trample on their feelings? They, and the producers of the show, should have known that the

horrors of the Holocaust must be approached with respect and sensitivity and that there is nothing funny about Hitler.

Would they have made played the same game if their grandparents, parents, siblings or uncles were executed and their naked corpses incinerated in the ovens?

Triple J may think that any publicity is good publicity and will lure listeners. But yesterday's hurtful and sickening prank showcases a disturbing abdication of responsible judgment and a troubling lack of sensitivity.

Was there not a single person to tell them that this was a terrible idea, that there was no humour to be milked from mass murder, that trivialising genocide for outrageous comic pay-off is inexcusable and will be a kick in the stomach to survivors?

Surely someone at Triple J knew that comedy does not bring with it unlimited licence.

Is this what tax-funded broadcasting has sunk to?

Tom and Alex, please leave the Holocaust, its victims and survivors out of your stupid comedy routines.

Instead, I suggest that you go away and learn about the history of the Holocaust. Visit the Holocaust Museum here in Melbourne. Sit down and listen to the horrifying and heartbreaking stories of the survivors and their families. Maybe you'll then realise that some things aren't funny.

It's time for both of you to grow up. And to apologise.

Dvir Abramovich is director of the Centre for Jewish History and Culture at the University of Melbourne.

Below are apologies issued in relation to the Triple-J piece:

Tom Ballard

I'm very sorry that on my breakfast radio program, I offended and upset a lot of people. That's not what I like doing; I like making people laugh and I like making people happy. I never set out to vindictively offend or belittle anyone or any group with my comedy, that's not what I'm about. I sincerely apologize that's how I came across in this instance.

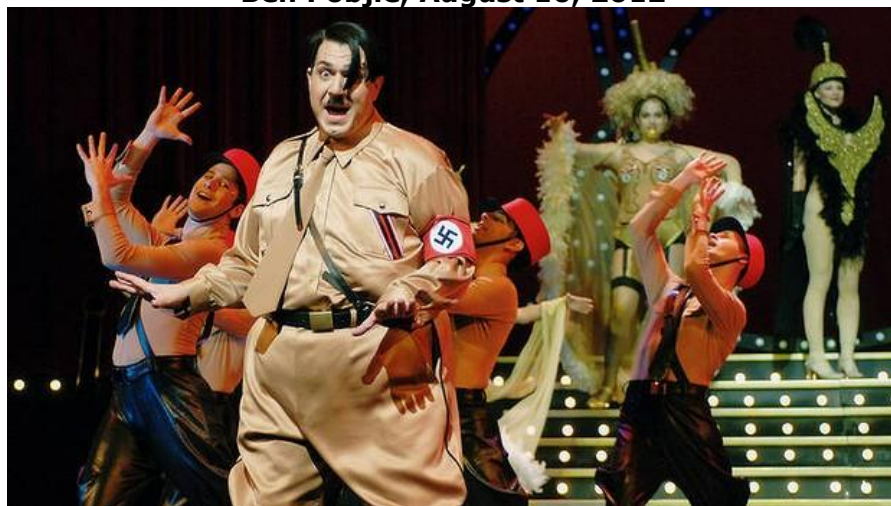
triple j

On Thursday morning's breakfast show, some comments were made by a triple j presenter in relation to Hitler that have received a negative reaction. Further to our post yesterday on facebook, triple j takes all complaints seriously. We recognise the concerns regarding the comments are serious. triple j agrees the comments made were inappropriate. The matter has been followed up with the Breakfast team. triple j regrets the matter and apologises unreservedly for any offence caused.

<http://www.theage.com.au/opinion/society-and-culture/triplej-holocaust-joke-sickening-20120810-23yem.html#ixzz23lcEX2S6>

Defending Holocaust humour, my fool's errand

Ben Pobjie, August 10, 2012



Itzik Cohen as Adolf Hitler dancing with others in "The Producers" in Tel Aviv . Photo: GADI DAGON, AP

One can't help but feel a certain amount of trepidation when embarking on the fool's errand of coming to the defence of jokes about the Holocaust. It's not a position likely to gain you the moral high ground in many people's eyes. But still, after reading Dvir Abramovich's attack on Triple J's Tom and Alex, I felt compelled to at least make a few points in defence of my comedic brethren.

Now Dvir Abramovich, of course, is a man for whom this is a very personal issue, and who, rightfully, devotes himself to fighting against any attempts to diminish or

trivialise the suffering caused by the Nazis. I could, at this point, go on at length about how I myself have no wish to do so, and how I am vehemently opposed to anti-Semitism and fully cognisant of the horrors of the Holocaust and so forth. But it seems that this should really go without saying. The genuinely lunatic fringe aside, I think there's a default assumption in our society that we're all pretty much on the same page when it comes to Nazis: do I need to explicitly state that I'm not pro-Nazi? And if someone out there thought I was,

would my stating otherwise make any difference anyway?

So we're agreed – we all hate the Nazis, and let's move on. But the fact is, Abramovich wasn't attacking Tom and Alex for liking the Nazis, he was attacking them for

making jokes about them. And in fact, he goes further: Abramovich wrote: "Maybe Tom and Alex can explain to us what is remotely funny about the gassing of millions of men, women and children and the burning of their bodies?"



The cast of 'Allo 'Allo

And here we come to the crux of the matter, and where I must take issue with Abramovich's analysis. For he has made use of the common misdirection of the offended: **the claim that someone who makes a joke about a certain subject is, by definition, making a claim that that subject is itself funny.**

It's an easy tactic to fall for, because those who use it are, generally, people standing up for "the right thing", and because on the face of it, it seems obviously true: jokes are funny, a comedian's job is to make jokes about funny things, so clearly, the things a comedian makes jokes about must be funny things.

This is not only a misunderstanding of comedy, it's a misunderstanding which anyone who has actually consumed any comedy in their lives will see through with but a moment's thought. Comedians don't tell us about things that are funny: they take things that aren't funny and try to make them so. As a matter of fact, if the only things we could joke about were things that were already funny, comedy wouldn't even exist – there'd be no point in making jokes if everything we made jokes about was funny to begin with.

It's not difficult to see the truth of this: Abramovich notes that the Holocaust isn't funny, but what subject of the most popular comedy is? Running a hotel isn't funny, but Fawlty Towers was. A paper-goods office isn't funny, but The Office is. A full-grown man caring for his senile mother sure as hell isn't funny, but Mother and Son was known to raise the odd chortle in its time. None of these comedies – or a thousand others that could be named – are about "things that are funny". They are funny

because of the way serious subjects are treated, not because they avoided serious subjects entirely.

So, sure, you can say, but the Holocaust is a special case – it's not just a serious subject, it is THE serious subject. The number one, gold-standard, unchallenged champion of Stuff We Do Not Take Lightly. Even, for example, Blackadder's take on World War One, or Carry On making merry with the French Revolution surely can't compare to mocking such horror? OK, so let's look at the idea of Holocaust comedy. Let's look at, for example, Ernst Lubitsch's To Be Or Not To Be, a movie that poked fun at the Nazis while World War Two was still raging. Let's look at Dad's Army, or Allo Allo, or Hogan's Heroes. In fact, if you want a ban on Nazi humour, you're going to have to crack down on a vast range of comedy, from Mel Brooks to Saturday Night Live to Jerry Seinfeld to Monty Python to The Simpsons to Quentin Tarantino. That's a lot of people for Dvir Abramovich to tell to "grow up". And although the funniness, good taste, and level of offensiveness of all the above will vary, and everyone will have their own opinion on just how worthwhile the humour is, I am entirely confident that nobody involved in the comedy I've mentioned could ever be said to hold a belief that the Holocaust was funny, or insignificant, or not a serious matter.

This is not, I stress, and I stress in the strongest possible terms in the hopes I can make my meaning entirely clear – this is not an attempt to declare comedic open slather, or to say everyone has a free pass to make any joke on any subject without fear of rebuke. Of course not. There are plenty of genuinely offensive

jokes, racist jokes, sexist jokes, homophobic jokes, and just plain nasty jokes. They're all around us, and it would be a fool who claims "I'm joking" is a cure-all for any and all offence taken. Whether Alex and Tom's Hitler bit fell into the category of offensive or hurtful is for each individual to judge, and if you are offended by it, so be it. Some comedy really is beyond the pale, and while I'll stand up against it being censored, I won't claim it's all just good clean fun.

But if you want to condemn a comedian, or comedians, for material that you say is unacceptable, to declare an outrage against human decency, you're going to need an argument more sophisticated and convincing than, **"some things aren't funny"**.

Because most things aren't funny, and joking about them has nothing to do with claiming they are. Real life isn't funny. It's boring, and sad, and frustrating, and so often it makes your heart want to break. That's why we have comedians in the first place – not to point out what's funny, but to make the stuff that's not funny at all a little easier to bear.

And sometimes, let's be honest, it doesn't work. But that doesn't mean we have to stop them from trying.

Ben Pobjie is a writer and freelance contributor.

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<http://www.theage.com.au/opinion/society-and-culture/defending-holocaust-humour-my-fools-errand-20120810-23z3s.html#ixzz23lcRcrTo>

Horror of the Nazis has no place in comedy shows

Dvir Abramovich, March 13, 2012

Seventy years ago, in a villa in the Berlin suburb of Wannsee, in a meeting chaired by Reinhard Heydrich, head of the SS secret police, and attended by Adolf Eichmann along with 15 high-ranking representatives, the mechanisms for the "final solution", the systematic, industrialised genocide of 11 million Jews living in Europe was put into play. Anyone reading the minutes from that gathering, in which gourmet cuisine and fine wine were served, is left breathless by the unimaginable and unbelievable horrors decided there.

Who would have thought that in the 21st century respect for Holocaust memory and for its victims in the entertainment field would be so jettisoned. Hitler is no longer the evil tyrant responsible for the deaths of 11 million people, but an abstraction, a convenient material for comedy, an easy reference for people to make inappropriate comparisons. The trivialisation and merchandising of the Holocaust is everywhere.

There is a new Nazi-chic fad in Thailand, for example. More and more teenagers are wearing T-shirts with cartoonish images of the German dictator. Designs include Hitler as Ronald McDonald, as a pink Teletubby with a swastika as an antennae, and in a panda costume with a Nazi armband. In London's Madame Tussauds, tourists have their pictures taken beside a waxwork of Hitler, many doing Nazi salutes.

And comedian Ricky Gervais, following his hosting of the Golden Globes, posted on his Twitter account photos of himself dressed up as Hitler and wearing a swastika.

Maybe it's just me, but I don't find Hitler and the murder of millions funny.

The creators of the SBS comedy program *Danger 5*, Dario Russo and David Ashby, have recently pushed the envelope of Holocaust commodification and trivialisation. I wonder whether Russo and Ashby thought about the feelings of Holocaust survivors and their children when they came up with their Nazi sci-fi spoof. The twenty-something writing team quote Mel Brooks, who "believes it's everybody's right to portray the Nazis as idiotically as possible ... to make fun of them".

What they should have quoted is Charlie Chaplin's 1964 autobiography in which he says that if he had known of the true horrors of the Nazis, he could not have made *The Great Dictator*.

The first episodes of *Danger 5* mix a lascivious Hitler, a buffoonish Mengele, Nazis, eroticised wrestling, bedroom scenes, cartoonish violence and lots of sex. Television critic Graeme Blundell has written: "I can't get enough of this nutty action/comedy series."

I find it disturbing that Russo and Ashby, and by extension SBS, The South Australian Film Corporation and the Adelaide Film Festival, who financially backed the series, felt it was OK to capitalise on the Shoah for entertainment and cheap laughs. *Danger 5* and other films, musicals and books of its ilk are not just in bad taste, they are morally wrong because they exploit the horrendous killings of the Jews, Gypsies, homosexuals

and other "undesirables", and use them as backdrop for their comic payoff.

Russo and Ashby are not alone. *Iron Sky*, a Finnish-Australian comedy about Nazis living on the dark side of the moon who plan to invade Earth to avenge their loss in World War II, was a hit in this year's Berlin International Film Festival.

We are now reaching a stage where entertainment and commerce have come together to diminish the crimes of the Nazis by using them for money-making entertainment. What frightens me is that distasteful comedies such as *Danger Five* will redefine and shatter the memory of just who the Nazis really were, desensitising audiences and causing cultural and historical amnesia.



Danger 5, the Nazi sci-fi spoof being screened on SBS.

Ask yourselves: is it really appropriate for us to laugh about a man who is responsible for the death of millions and who devastated Europe? Or to reduce the memory of genocide to comic fodder?

For me it is clear that you don't laugh about the suffering, torture and death of so many.

The prevailing view seems to be that as long as it's funny, as long as the audience is getting its money's worth, who cares if Hitler's barbaric actions are reduced to a harmless romp.

So, is anything taboo any more? It is not unreasonable to ask whether future television shows may include episodes that poke fun at Jews being gassed, or their bodies burned at the crematorium, or parents and children shot in the fields by the mobile execution units, or babies' heads being smashed against the wall, or the medical experiments Mengele conducted on his victims. What facet of the Nazis' monumental crimes is beyond laughter and fun?

Vulgar and offensive comedies such as *Danger 5*, whose sole purpose is to wring a chuckle from viewers, pollute society's understanding and sense of the Holocaust. The problem with *Danger 5*, as well as with music cartoons, video clips, exhibitions and stand-up comedians who try to make us laugh about the Holocaust is that they are eviscerating history by taking Hitler and the Nazis out of context, stupidly diluting the evil they spawned and throwing away the past.

Given that more and more people learn their history from popular culture, and given that crass comedies and art about the Holocaust are proliferating, I have real concern that schoolchildren will not know what happened in the Holocaust. At the end, youngsters may not believe that Hitler is guilty of what he did, or believe the Holocaust wasn't so bad after all.

The Holocaust is such a vast tragedy, still affecting lives today, that anyone wanting to approach it must do so with great emotional respect, historical authenticity, humility and caution.

And for the record, I would say the same thing if a comedy about the Cambodian killing fields, Bosnia, Rwanda or Darfur were screened by SBS.

Dr Dvir Abramovich is director of the centre for Jewish history and culture, the University of Melbourne. He is the editor and author of three books.

<http://www.theage.com.au/opinion/society-and-culture/horror-of-the-nazis-has-no-place-in-comedy-shows-20120312-1uu3x.html#ixzz23lcqdaGf>

Facebook should be a force for good, not a forum for hate

Dvir Abramovich, August 2, 2011

A few weeks ago, 21 survivors of the death camps who witnessed the murder of their families by the Nazis wrote to Facebook asking the organisation to [take down](#) pages that promote Holocaust denial.

Last week, Facebook [refused to remove](#) the pages stating: "We think it's important to maintain consistency in our policies, which don't generally prohibit people from making statements about historical events. No matter how ignorant the statement or how awful the event."

Facebook is very wrong in where it has drawn the line and on what side it has chosen to stand.

For some reason, Facebook seems to be impervious to their own [Statement of Rights and Responsibilities](#), which prohibits the posting of hateful material. Of course, they will remove sexual content or pictures of [mothers breastfeeding](#), but do not feel hate speech is worthy of the same treatment.

You decide: do lines, posted on a Holocaust denial pages, that call Jewish people "snakes", "liars", "a

disease", "not really human beings" and "children of Satan", not amount to hate speech?



The internet should not be a forum for people to post hateful material denigrating other cultures and religions.

The agents of this invidious and wilful assault on the truth should not be given a forum on the world's most popular social networking website to preach hate, to gain legitimacy for their sickening canards and to attract new members to their cause. The denial of the Holocaust is employed as a pretext and a springboard to peddle and encourage hatred towards one group — the Jews.

By allowing these pages to stay, Facebook is enabling the flourishing of a type of vicious and bone-chilling Jewish hatred that is a crime in a number of countries and which is part of a long campaign of nasty falsehoods and incitement that have led to the deaths of millions.

In the past few years, Facebook has become incredibly powerful with 750 million users. That's more than the combined populations of the US, Australia, Canada, Britain, New Zealand, France, Russia and Germany to name but a few. With such power, comes great responsibility and accountability. Nothing in life happens in a moral vacuum and Facebook's lack of action will contribute to the social acceptability of anti-Jewish sentiment and racism.

I have no doubt that Holocaust deniers are smiling, emboldened by the knowledge that they can continue to exploit this new technology to demonise Jews, to label survivors as liars and hoaxers, and to keep inflicting grief and suffering on the victims. The Nazis, who provided Germans with free or cheap radios so they could bombard their citizens with their vile ideology,

would have found much to like in the way Facebook has allowed hatred to invade its reputable space.

Perhaps Facebook should listen to US President Barack Obama, who at a Holocaust Day of Remembrance Ceremony in 2009 remarked, "To this day, there are those who insist the Holocaust never happened; who perpetrate every form of intolerance — racism and anti-Semitism, homophobia, xenophobia, sexism, and more — hatred that degrades its victim and diminishes us all." Further, giving a voice to Holocaust deniers is an affront to all those who escaped genocide and tyranny to make new lives for themselves in Australia and around the world.

In one sense, I say to Facebook "Thanks for reminding us" that it is time for everyone to reassess their standards, to look into their heart and to reflect on the principles that guide them. Holocaust denial tests our values and contravenes the moral code Australians have always cherished.

Facebook should be a vehicle that champions social values and human rights and builds a civil society online, rather than be a facilitator for the proliferation of hate.

Instead of shrugging their shoulders and adopting a "just-ignore-them" strategy, Facebook must stop giving access to deniers who trample on the memories of the Holocaust and who stain our children's minds with putrid and pernicious falsification. It must take the moral, honourable and ethical path and never again permit its site to become the disseminator of harmful and hate-filled content of the kind that you would expect to see on the wall of a public toilet.

Otherwise, Facebook will confirm the old dictum that, "All that's necessary for the forces of evil to win in the world is for enough good people to do nothing".

Dr Dvir Abramovich is director of the Centre for Jewish History and Culture at The University of Melbourne.

<http://www.theage.com.au/opinion/politics/facebook-should-be-a-force-for-good-not-a-forum-for-hate-20110802-1i9iz.html#ixzz23lcuzkI7>

Exploiting the Holocaust

Dvir Abramovich, July 1, 2010

It's a no-brainer. A sure-fire way to get publicity for a book, TV series, work of art or film is to exploit the Holocaust. The more gross, crass and vulgar, the higher the rating, sales or box-office receipts.

Tarantino knew it when he directed *Inglorious Basterds*, re-writing history and presenting the Jews as sadistic, cruel Nazi hunters. It gained him an Oscar nomination.

Sam Leach, the Melbourne Artist who entered a portrait of himself as Hitler to the Archibald in 2008, knew it. The Victorian lobby group "Plug the Pipe" knew it. Two years ago, when it wanted to draw attention to its opposition to the north-south pipeline, it produced a

poster featuring images of Hitler and John Brumby (with a crude moustache and fringe drawn on the Premier's face) which read: "Can you spot the differences between these two dictators?"

Roseanne Barr knew it when last year she did a photo-spread titled "That Oven Feeling" for *Heeb* magazine. Dressed as a domesticated version of Hitler, she was shown holding a tray of burnt gingerbread "Jew cookies".

In another picture, wearing an armband with a large swastika, she takes out the "burnt Jew cookies" ready to take a bite. According to the magazine's reporter, Barr

was having fun and nailed "the Fuhrer's facial expressions with twisted glee". He writes that she "got off" dressing like a Nazi.

So, it's no surprise that there is a new book coming out this September that sexualises Anne Frank's relationship with Peter Van Pels, the boy who lived in the same building she was hiding in. This follows a Spanish musical loosely based on her life that opened in Madrid two years ago. *A Song to Life* was described by its director as "a very entertaining musical, with intimate moments and a lot of comedy".

Anne Frank was the Dutch Jewish schoolgirl who wrote her now famous diary while in hiding from the Nazis in a secret annex. She died from typhus at the Bergen Belsen concentration camp just shy of her 16th birthday. Her testimony and unique legacy of a life cut short has become a symbol for the irrepressibility of the human spirit and for universal tolerance.

If reports are right, the book, *Annexed*, by Sharon Dogar, contains graphic, intimate passages between the two as fantasized by Dogar. According to the *Sunday Times*, a lovemaking scene was taken out from the final version of the book. Frank's first cousin, Buddy Elias, who is now 84, said: "Anne was not the child she is in this book. I also do not think that their terrible destiny should be used to invent some fictitious story."

This book is simply another stage in the debasement of Frank's legacy and a way to increase sales. Think: why turn the remarkable story into a salacious, sleazy tale? Why risk belittling her powerful account with raunchy, unnecessary descriptions of desire and sex? Do we really need a sexed up version of the Anne Frank story?

For many kids around the world who face suffering and evil every day, Frank's timeless message has been an inspiration and a source of hope. "In spite of everything," she wrote, "I still believe that people are really good at heart. I simply can't build up my hopes on a foundation consisting of confusion, misery and death."

Last year, I was flabbergasted by a stunt pulled by John Safran in an episode of his TV show *Race Relations*. Safran went for broke in trivializing and cheapening the memory of Anne Frank. Safran claimed that he was

"brain-washed, played like a \$2 chump-machine" by the Jewish community because it has used the Holocaust to make him feel guilty about dating non-Jewish women.

So, in order to "get rid of this bullshit" he managed to convince Katherine Hicks, in his words, a "blonde-haired Aryan" to make out with him in Anne Frank's attic so he can break free of that fear. While visitors walked around the Anne Frank Museum, Safran and Hicks made out.

Had Anne Frank survived the Holocaust, I'm pretty sure she would not have had a chuckle at Safran's tasteless skit. Someone told me that he nearly died laughing watching Safran. Well, I said, millions actually did.

Maybe it's me, but I still don't get how the horrendous death of a young girl and the 1.5 million children killed in the Holocaust can become material for a joke? Perhaps if Safran was shown a picture of the beautiful gentle smile of Anne Frank, who after being captured was stripped naked, disinfected, her head shaved and her arms tattooed he would have understood that his shameful scene was not funny in any context.

The ABC may have figured that any publicity is good publicity and will lure viewers. But it should have realised that there was no humour to be milked from the atrocity, that using genocide for cheap comic payoff is cruel. And before readers jump up and down, my view of things remains the same whether it is the Holocaust, or Cambodia, or Bosnia, or Rwanda, or Darfur, or any other genocide.

Comedy does not bring with it unlimited license. What does it say about our society when the systematic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of 6 million Jews and millions of others are turned into entertainment? Maybe there is nothing off-limits for today's shockless society. Maybe we've reached the point where nobody bothers to question whether a dancing Hitler is offensive. Instead, everyone is having too much fun in getting their money's worth. In the end, will anyone remember who Hitler and the Nazis really were?

<http://www.theage.com.au/opinion/blogs/chutzpah/exploitingtheholocaust20100701zobu.html#ixzz23larw6It>

The Holocaust is no exemption from satire

Alex Fein, December 2, 2009

If Dvir Abramovich's tastes in "clever, edgy humour", do not extend to anything ostensibly insensitive to Jews, may I suggest he avoid anything produced by: Jerry Seinfeld, Larry David, Sarah Silverman, Jon Stewart, Joan Rivers, Jackie Mason and Matt Stone (one of the *South Park* creators).

These are just a fraction of the myriad American Jews utterly unconcerned with Jewish sensitivities.

Exemplified by his [recent denunciation of Family Guy](#), Abramovich has made it a personal crusade in Jewish and non-Jewish media to lambast any cultural product not meeting his rigorous (if ill-defined) standards.

Among others who have offended him have been our own John Safran, Mel Brooks, the Coen brothers, and *Heeb Magazine*.

Of course, I support free speech - including Abramovich's right to miss the point of a lot of the humour he denounces. The situation becomes problematic when, writing as the director of the Centre for Jewish History and Culture at Melbourne University, he takes it upon himself to give the impression that he speaks on behalf of Australian Jews.

While Abramovich has never claimed this explicitly, his strident and adversarial tones, his moral certitude, and his academic position combine to make it appear that his

is an authoritative opinion. Evidence of this attitude is abundant of the misconception of his authority when scrolling through the 120-odd comments following his *Family Guy* piece online.



Avoiding any comedy insensitive to Jews means missing out on some great laughs, like those provided by Jerry Seinfeld. Photo: Bryan OBrien

This causes me particular disquiet because I strongly believe that Abramovich's opinion is thoroughly unrepresentative of our community.

In August, I wrote on my blog, [The Sensible Jew](#), about the disconnect between Abramovich's worldview and that of my peers.

I began with a story of two Jewish girls in their early 20s, both desperately trying to conceal the fact they were drunk. This story took place 11 years ago, and I'll admit to being one of the protagonists. We had arrived at my family home and wanted to avoid disturbing the adults with our inebriated giggling.

So how did we try to compose ourselves before entering? "Stop laughing!" I hissed, "Think about the Holocaust!" We had to wait outside the house for far longer, because this admonition had us both in hysterics.

Any young Jew who heard the story afterwards had the identical reaction.

All four of my grandparents survived the Holocaust. Two were in Auschwitz. I not only heard about the Holocaust at home, but throughout primary and secondary school, in class, and in friends' homes. Horrifying stories and graphic photographs were commonplace.

I only recently stopped having a recurring dream about the need to save my brother (he's in his 20s now, but in my dreams, he's always a little boy) from the gas chambers.

Melbourne Jewry's Holocaust focus is understandable, considering more Holocaust survivors (per capita) live in Melbourne than anywhere outside Israel.

That Abramovich did not grow up in Melbourne may illuminate the stark difference between his worldview and my experience of humour in Jewish Australia.

Abramovich cannot know too many Gen X/Y Melbourne Jews. Bad-taste humour involving Jews and/or the Holocaust is prevalent among us. Many baby boomers also understand that we need to be allowed to laugh.

Indeed, my Holocaust survivor grandmother and her survivor friends were delighted by the musical film version of *The Producers*, which Abramovich slams as a cruel insult to survivors.

They felt empowered by the ridiculing of Hitler, or, as my Nana put it, "It's good to mach khoysik from (take the piss out of) Hitler!"

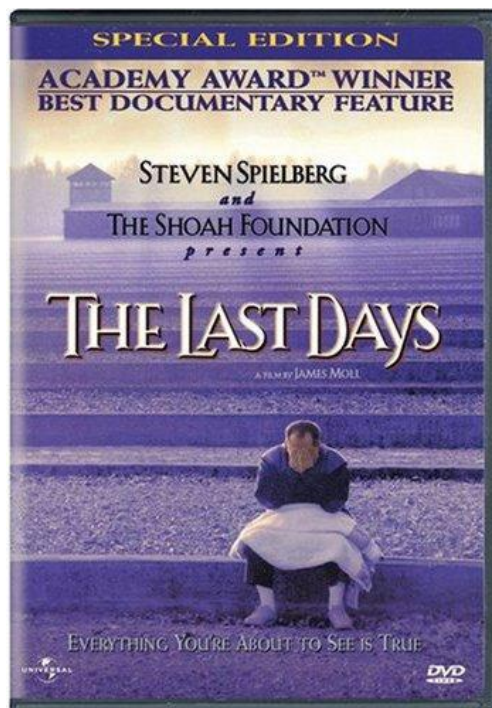
We need to be suspicious of anyone who sets parameters for what can be laughed at. Abramovich intimates that because of Jews' past suffering, they should be exempt from the satire that every other ethnic group experiences.

When his arguments are reduced to their essence – that the uniqueness of the Holocaust makes the Jewish position in popular culture untouchable – they transform the Holocaust into a religious phenomenon. Consequently, all cultural product pertaining to Jews that is not sanctioned by his worldview is deemed heretical.

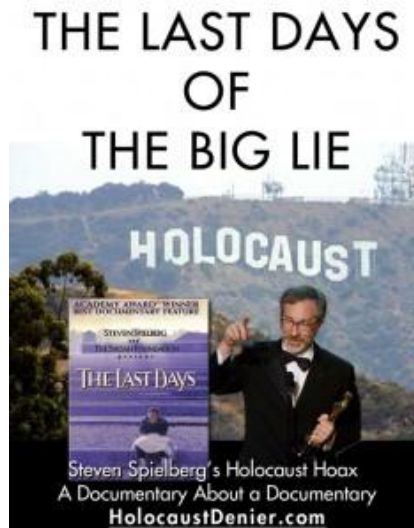
Unfortunately, Abramovich does not realise that the profane exists to be laughed at.

Alex Fein is the creator of The Sensible Jew blog, a site devoted to discussing challenges facing the Australian Jewish community. She draws on her degrees in communications and political science to assist her in investigating innovative approaches to various aspects of communal life.

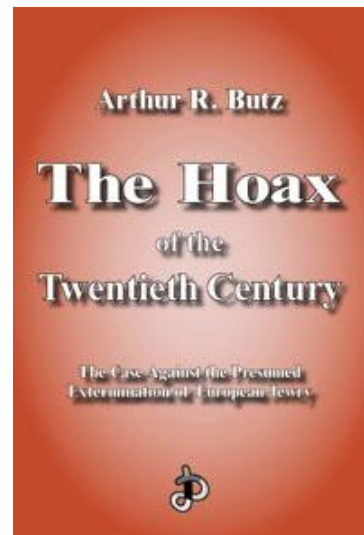
<http://www.theage.com.au/opinion/society-and-culture/the-holocaust-is-no-exemption-from-satire-20091202-k5x9.html#ixzz23lcXaSiR>



Steven Spielberg's Holocaust Hoax



<http://www.holocaustdenier.com/the-last-days-of-the-big-lie/>



<http://barnesreview.org/wp/archives/98>

'Jewish Indiana Jones' sentenced to federal prison term

By [Neil Rubin](#) · October 11, 2012

JTA -- Rabbi Menachem Youlus, once dubbed the "Jewish Indiana Jones" for his remarkable tales of rescuing Holocaust-era Torah scrolls, was sentenced in federal court on Thursday to more than four years in prison for fraud.

Youlus was sentenced to 51 months by Judge Colleen McMahon, of the U.S. District Court of Southern New York. He will surrender himself on Dec. 17.

Youlus had pleaded guilty in Manhattan federal court on Feb. 2 to having defrauded more than 50 victims, misappropriating some of the donations and secretly depositing them into the bank account of his Wheaton, Md. store, called the Jewish Bookstore. Youlus also defrauded his charity, Save A Torah, Inc. and its donors of \$862,000, according to prosecutors.

His dramatic accounts of rescuing Torahs turned out to be contradicted by historical evidence, witness accounts and records showing that he simply passed off used

Torahs sold by local dealers who made no claims as to the scrolls' provenance. The U.S. Attorney's office said that during many of the years in which Youlus claimed to be personally rescuing Torahs overseas, the Baltimore resident had not even traveled internationally.

"This is extremely important because it sends a message that Holocaust deniers and Holocaust memory exploiters are not part of accepted society," Menachem Rosensaft, vice president of the American Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors and Their Descendants, told JTA. **"There is very little if any difference between a Holocaust denier and someone like Youlus who exploits Holocaust memories in order to enrich himself."**

<http://www.jta.org/news/article/2012/10/11/3109061/jewish-indiana-jones-sentenced-to-federal-prison-term>



Exclusive: Germans Seeking Taxes On Holocaust Survivors' Pensions

Stewart Ain, Staff Writer, Friday, August 10, 2012

The German government has sent letters to perhaps hundreds of Holocaust survivors demanding that they pay taxes on their monthly ghetto pensions, The Jewish Week has learned. But State Sen. David Storobin (R-Brooklyn) said that after a constituent came to him July 10 questioning the letter, he contacted the German Consulate in New York and was told it was a mistake. "They said they did not intend to insult her and recognized the fact that this was an error that should not have been made," Storobin said.

He said he had believed it was an isolated incident until he began mentioning it at constituent meetings. "People would get up and say my mom or my aunt got a similar letter," Storobin said, adding he believes some people probably paid the tax demanded.

A spokeswoman for the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany said her office is "aware that such letters were sent and has brought it to the attention of the German government, which administers those pensions." She said at least 40,000 survivors

receive the pensions, which were established in 1997 for survivors who were given food, housing or other compensation during their internment in Nazi ghettos annexed to the Third Reich. Such payment is now considered as a contribution to German Social Security, making survivors eligible for old age pensions provided they meet certain qualifications. The amount of the pension depends on the length of time a person spent in a ghetto.

Storobin said the woman who came to her with the tax letter was from Russia and was unable to read or speak German. He said that when his office translated the letter, they knew immediately there was a mistake.

"By German law pensions are not taxable either here or there," Storobin said. "Taxing a person who is getting reparations is unheard of."

A spokeswoman at the German Embassy in Washington referred questions to Berlin and said she did not know how many tax demand letters had been sent. Storobin said he is telling anyone who has received such letters not to pay the tax demanded and to call his office at 718-743-8610 or Consul Ellen Goelz, the head of the Legal and Consular Section at German Consulate in New York, at 212-610-9735 for further information.

Source URL (retrieved on 08/12/2012 - 03:01):
<http://www.thejewishweek.com/news/breaking-news/exclusive-germans-seeking-taxes-holocaust-survivors-pensions>

DISSENTING VOICES STANDING FIRM!

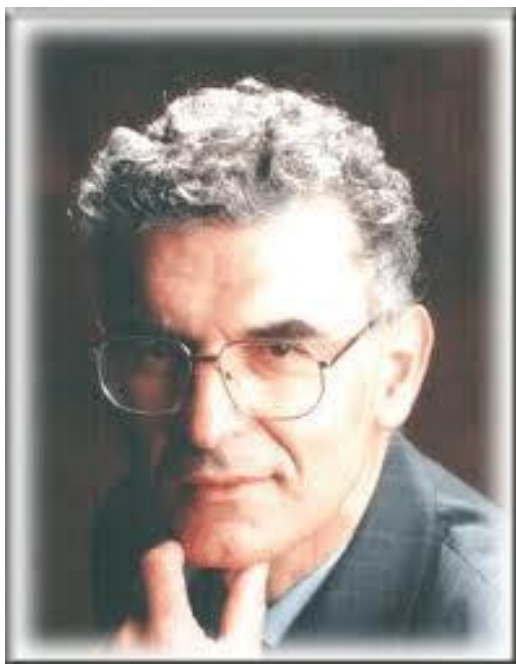
Second communiqué about our answer to MM. Harrison, Myers, Mühlenkamp, Romanov and Terry

By Carlo Mattogno, Thomas Kues and Jürgen Graf
18 August, 2012

On 12 March 2012, we announced that our answer to the paper "Holocaust Denial and Operation Reinhard", which was authored by the five above-mentioned gentlemen, would be ready by August or September, 2012. For cogent reasons, those interested in this debate will have to wait for a few more months before we will be able to publish our answer. While J. Graf finished his contribution to our reply some time ago, C. Mattogno and T. Kues are still working on their chapters. In the case of T. Kues, this is due to the fact that he is

reviewing important material about new archeological investigations at Sobibor.

The comrade who translates C. Mattogno's chapter from Italian into English can only partially cope with this task so that we will have to find a second translator – both J. Graf and T. Kues, who could basically do this job, are overburdened with other work. For all these reasons, it is quite possible that the five gentlemen from "Holocaust Controversies" will have to wait until late autumn before experiencing the pleasure of being utterly humiliated and unmasked for what they are.



C. Mattogno



T. Kues

J. Graf

[View Newsletter 613 for 12 March 2012 communiqué](#)

...now for some national Australian trivia. It comes from the politically correct politicians who use the Holocaust believers' technique of shield-sword attack with whom they disagree on matters without opening themselves to the factuality of the argument. For example, in parliament Australia's Prime Minister accuses the Leader of the Opposition of being a sexist, then when he responds in his distinct harsh way she accuses him of being a misogynist. This is exactly what Holocaust believer do when smearing Holocaust sceptics: pull out the Holocaust denier card, then when challenged by the truth of the factual evidence the believers feel hurt and pull out the antisemite card.

Thus ends the open enquiry that is the hallmark of a vibrant democracy such as still exists in Australia. Imagine of Tony Abbott was to focus on the same-sex issue claiming that therein is found a deep-seated hatred of the opposite sex.

It must also be remembered that Julia Gillard as a student considered marriage to be legal prostitution, just as the homosexual world regarded heterosexuals demeaningly as 'breeders'. The 69-ers are slowly coming full circle with their Weltanschauung-world view and now seek to copy what heterosexuals have been battling to achieve in a system that is working against natural processes.

Tony Abbott is not a misogynist, says Bronwyn Bishop

[LOCAL NEWS](#) 12 OCT 12 @ 04:28PM BY CHARIS CHANG



Mackellar MP Bronwyn Bishop.

TONY Abbott is not a misogynist and the Prime Minister has demeaned every woman in parliament by "pretending to be a victim", says Mackellar MP Bronwyn Bishop.

The Federal Liberal MP's comments come after Julia Gillard accused the Opposition Leader of being sexist and a misogynist in parliament on Wednesday.

Ms Gillard's speech, which saw Mr Abbott "carved to pieces", has become a worldwide internet sensation. But Ms Bishop has described it as "pathetic" and told the Daily that "parliament is not the place for wilting violets". Ms Bishop said she had been subject to inappropriate remarks.

Foreign minister Gareth Evans said to her: "I will quietly, deliberately walk across the chamber and garotte you," during a 1992 Senate debate.

She said Ms Gillard was a hypocrite for playing the gender card and was doing it to divert attention from her failed policies.

Ms Bishop said Mr Abbott was "absolutely not" sexist or misogynist.

She also attacked Ms Gillard in parliament on Thursday: "We did not come here for it to be said that we cannot do the job and have to be treated differently.

Could you imagine Angela Merkel making a speech like that or Maggie Thatcher making a speech like that? Of course not. By pretending to be a victim, the prime minister has demeaned every woman in this parliament."

Ms Bishop also said it was hypocritical of deputy leader Wayne Swan not to speak up when a distasteful joke was made about Mr Abbott and his chief of staff at a function on Wednesday.

Mr Abbott, in Bali for the bombing anniversary, was not available for comment.

<http://manlydaily.whereilive.com.au/news/story/bishop-hits-at-pm/>