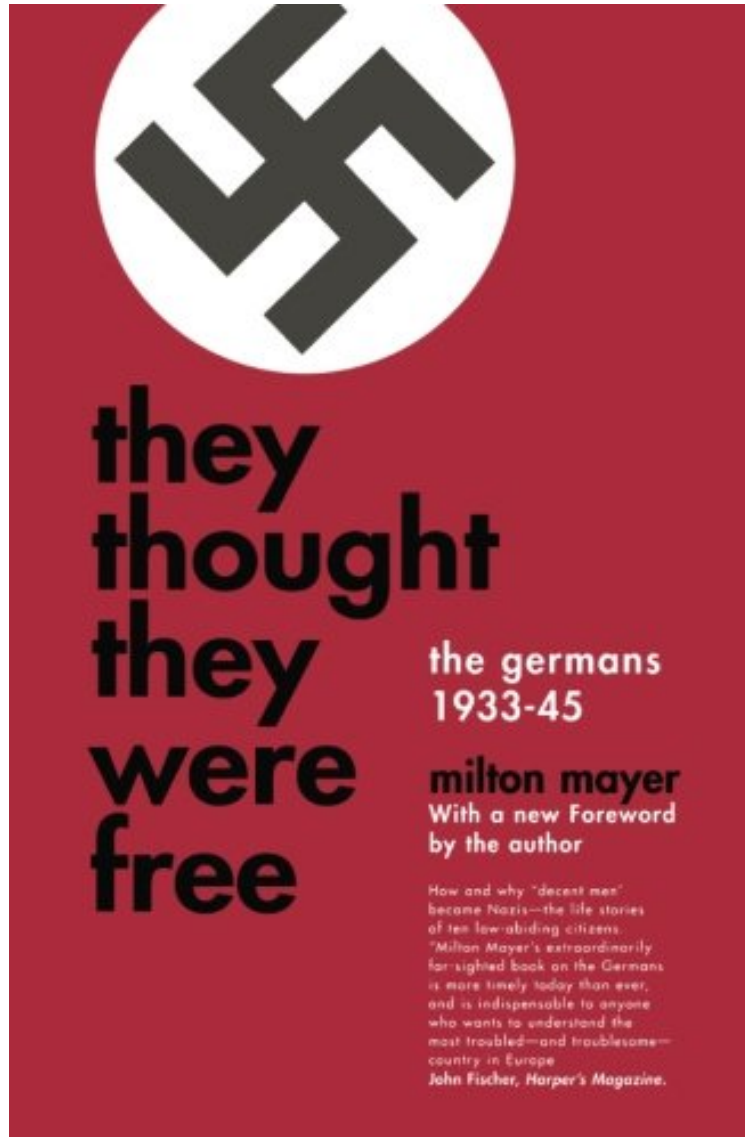


They Thought They Were Free: The Germans, 1933-45

Milton Mayer

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Milton Mayer : They Thought They Were Free: The Germans, 1933-45 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised They Thought They Were Free: The Germans, 1933-45:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Subtly informative..By David Wood This cold war era study, an analysis of attitudes toward Nazism by its recent practitioners, while dated, has a good deal to teach. The German national character of the 1950s was quite different from the modern-day, reunited nation. It's a cautionary tale, as well

as a thought provoking one 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. it is the greatest commitment of all By Vis Comical have read several books on the same subject -antisemitism- and they were all written by Holocaust survivors trying to comprehend the incomprehensible, to explain the inexplicable and to describe the indescribable. I consider this effort a masterpiece because it looks straight into the mind of the common German, that is, the vast majority of Germans. It does not attempt to justify the unjustifiable nor to forgive the unforgivable; it shows how feasible it is to happen everywhere again and again. In one word, it reminds that democracy has little to do with freedom; it is the greatest commitment of all. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Should be a required read! By Rebecca I started with this book at the library, I read a little every day and could not put it down. I ended up purchasing it because I wanted a copy for my own personal library. I am really hoping that my children will be interested enough to read it some day-as it reflects SO much of where we are in the United States today-with politics, beliefs and the direction we seem to be headed. Milton Mayer does an excellent job putting together his interviews with his 10 Nazi friends post WWII to illustrate, how the Nazi's took over Germany, and how every day Germans allowed it to happen-with out them even knowing it. Rich in history, rhetoric and the seriousness needed for the subject.

First published in 1955, *They Thought They Were Free* is an eloquent and provocative examination of the development of fascism in Germany. Mayer's book is a study of ten Germans and their lives from 1933-45, based on interviews he conducted after the war when he lived in Germany. Mayer had a position as a research professor at the University of Frankfurt and lived in a nearby small Hessian town which he disguised with the name "Kronenberg." "These ten men were not men of distinction," Mayer noted, but they had been members of the Nazi Party; Mayer wanted to discover what had made them Nazis. "What happened here was the gradual habituation of the people, little by little, to being governed by surprise; to receiving decisions deliberated in secret; to believing that the situation was so complicated that the government had to act on information which the people could not understand, or so dangerous that, even if the people could not understand it, it could not be released because of national security. And their sense of identification with Hitler, their trust in him, made it easier to widen this gap and reassured those who would otherwise have worried about it."--from Chapter 13, "But Then It Was Too Late"

"Among the many books written on Germany after the collapse of Hitler's Thousand Year Reich, this book by Milton Mayer is one of the most readable and most enlightening."