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*Cartoonists Against the Holocaust.* By Rafael Medoff and Craig Yoe. New York: Clizia, 2015. 213 pp.

At its most robust, political cartooning, with its rich and sometimes contentious history, can make a broad public aware of actions, behaviors, and events deemed newsworthy—and even inspire a response. In American politics, for example, Thomas Nast's *Harper's Weekly* cartoons are known to have had a considerable effect on American culture and politics in the middle-to-late 1800s. Following the widespread use of photography in the late nineteenth century, political cartoons lost some of their stature and force; more recently, the information age, which offers a variety of shorthand political opinion markers, from Tweets to memes, has relegated political cartoons to just one of many popularized forms of curt but potentially forceful commentary. Nonetheless, in the early twenty-first century political cartooning continues to assert itself as a singularly powerful mechanism, a fact evidenced by events such as the 2005 Danish Muhammad cartoons crisis and the 2015 *Charlie Hebdo* massacre.

Rafael Medoff and Craig Yoe's *Cartoonists Against the Holocaust* presents a collection of political cartoons published in both popular and lesser known American newspapers and composed in response to a particular cluster of events: the years leading up to and relating to Hitler's rise to power as well as the Holocaust. As the authors point out in their introduction, the cartoons included (150 in all) were "exceptions" to the overarching silence of the popular American media in relation to these events. These cartoons reflect a small minority of voices willing to speak out in a form that was easily accessible to others, a form that could efficiently reflect the contradictory, absurd, and often grotesque nature of the circumstances on display. Though an index towards the end of the book lists forty-nine cartoonists in all, the same handful of names crops up repeatedly, reflecting just how few people were willing to repeatedly stand up to the forces, both at home and abroad, that were hoping to stifle responses to these atrocities.

The book, which is based on an exhibition created by the David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies, is divided into forty-three chapters organized, in rough chronological order, by themes and incidents. Each chapter includes a brief (generally one-to-two page) contextualization of the issue at hand as well as the occasional historical photograph. This overview is followed by a collection of related political cartoons. So, for example, in a chapter titled "Voyage of the Doomed," readers

briefly learn about the 1939 rejection of the *St. Louis*, a ship carrying almost 1,000 refugees from Nazi Germany, by Cuba and then the United States. The overview includes a photograph of several refugees peeking out of the ship's windows as well as an excerpt from a letter written to First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt by an eleven-year-old girl who pleaded for the passengers' admittance. The five cartoons that follow all directly address the event and were published within days of each other in a variety of outlets such as *New York Post*, *New York Daily Mirror*, *Baltimore Sun*, and the NEA Syndicate. While this particular outcry from cartoonists is hardly representative—most chapters include just one or two cartoons, often published in disparate time periods—the chapter is telling for what it says about the potential of the format. In one image by Fred Packer, the Statue of Liberty tilts her head away from a sailing ship, a large sign hanging from her arm reading, “KEEP OUT.” In another potent image, a ship sails across a globe that is being sliced in half by a hand wielding a sword with the words “HATRED AND INTOLERANCE” stamped on it. In both of these cartoons, the unmistakable point asserts itself with the use of a limited number of words and figures; the message, nevertheless, or perhaps because of these broad strokes, carries. These are images that stay with you, that impress. (In a 2009 *Washington Post* editorial comic created by Art Spiegelman on the 70th anniversary of the *St. Louis* denial, he comments on these cartoons, lamenting the mostly “bland” political cartoons he says he witnesses, in contradistinction, today.) Some other standout political cartoons include three works by Theodor Seuss Geisel, better known to many as Dr. Seuss. In his “Mein Early Kampf,” a young toddler with a short moustache (“Adolf Ikins,” his bedpost reads) throws a bottle of milk at his caretaker. “I reject milk from Holstein cows as Non-Aryan,” the caption reads. The Polish-born illustrator Arthur Szyk has a number of cartoons included throughout the book, which are as beautifully crafted as they are forceful. In “Ghouls of Blackness,” an image that looks like it could be a painting, he depicts a cluster of Nazi leaders towering over a number of skeletons and tombstones with the names of death camps etched on them. Flipping through the book is a lesson in craft as well as history; the most effective cartoons resourcefully utilize space, language, and symbolism to convey easily deciphered messages that carry deep emotional resonances.

Ultimately, *Cartoonists Against the Holocaust* is a book that gives us a sense of how a small but fervid group of individuals tried, against all odds (and, as we know now, generally unsuccessfully), to get the world to see the incredible disaster that was unfolding right before its very eyes. The book does not necessarily focus on the specific effects that these

cartoons had, a topic that would make for a compelling second volume. Instead, *Cartoonists Against the Holocaust* functions as a fascinating starting point for discussions of the place of individual commentary in response to current events and of the mode of cartooning as a means of accessing the world at its most grotesque and exaggerated—what is often the closest we can get to sincerity and truth.

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*A History of Antisemitism in Canada.* By Ira Robinson. Ontario: Wilfred Laurier University Press. xiii + 287 pp.

Until now a comprehensive study of antisemitism in Canada had not been written. Ira Robinson has filled this void with a survey that covers the subject from its beginnings in Christian Europe until the present day. The experiences of Jews in Canada, similar to those in much of the Christian world, mixes a long history of persecution with varying degrees of acceptance at different times in history. Since the end of World War II, significant changes in laws and societal attitudes in Canada have resulted in greater tolerance and legal protections for minorities. Despite the new atmosphere and opportunities, pockets of antisemitic fervor still exist and are mostly seen in attacks on Zionism and Israeli policies towards Arabs in their midst.

Currently, the Canadian population exceeds 35 million; Jews constitute somewhere between 1 and 2 percent of that total. The first Jews arrived in the middle of the eighteenth century. In 1831 they totaled 107 persons in all of Canada. Eighty years later their numbers had increased to only 16,401 or 0.31% of the population. Historian Irving Abella observed, “if there was a golden age of Canadian Jewry, one could make a strong case for the period before Confederation, particularly the 1830s and 1840s” (22). Ninety percent of these Jews came from Great Britain. By the 1890s, most of the new immigrant Jews hailed from the Yiddish-speaking areas of Eastern Europe, especially Russia and Poland. That wave ended by the late 1920s; not until 1948 did new legislation pass allowing the displaced persons who survived World War II to enter Canada. About one quarter of today’s Canadian Jewish population traces its origins to this last group.

Antisemitism in Canada paralleled its development and manifestations in the United States. The mass migration that began in the late nineteenth