

The Liberation of the Concentration Camps, 1945: The Des Moines, Iowa Survivors, by Adele Anolik. North Liberty: Ice Cube Press, 2008. ix, 88 pp. Illustrations. \$11.95 paper.

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This publication is an expansion of the booklet Adele Anolik put together in 1995 for the fiftieth anniversary commemoration of the liberation of the concentration camps in Nazi-controlled Europe. It includes short biographies and photographs of 15 individuals, living as of 1995 in the greater Des Moines area, who were Holocaust survivors and had been liberated from Nazi concentration and extermination camps by Allied Forces in 1945. The book also provides the names of 15 other Des Moines-area Holocaust survivors, then deceased, including their dates of birth and death and the camps in which they had been imprisoned. Finally, the book lists 23 individuals from Des Moines and Ames who escaped Nazi forces by going into hiding, fleeing to other countries, or being saved by rescuers. The life stories of all of these individuals put the lie to the "Holocaust deniers" who seek to rewrite twentieth-century European history.

The unique value of Anolik's book is that she "puts a face" on Holocaust history, which is generally known from abundant other sources. The Holocaust survivors who found their way to Des Moines for a variety of reasons came from the shtetls, ghettos, and cities of Europe and a sociocultural milieu that was forever torn asunder by the Nazis. We see these Holocaust survivors as individuals who struggled to learn English, find employment, settle into their new lives as citizens of Iowa, raise their children, and look forward to their grandchildren, while retaining their Judaic identity. These stories are particularistic in one sense. But the same processes occur today as immigrants and refugees from Latin America, Africa, and Southeast Asia integrate into Iowa's increasingly diverse society while maintaining their native languages, religious beliefs, and cultural practices.

Anolik's book is all the more important and poignant when we realize that 11 of the 15 Holocaust survivors originally profiled have died since 1995.