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Emily Josephine Bourgeois

Trinity University, ebourgeo@trinity.edu

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“And By Drawing, She Will Find It Again,”:
Identity & Memory in Contemporary Third- and Fourth-Generation Holocaust Graphic Memoir
Emily Bourgeois

A departmental senior thesis submitted to the Department of English at
Trinity University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduation
with departmental honors.

April 29, 2020

Dr. Victoria Aarons

Thesis Advisor

Dr. Claudia Stokes

Department Chair



Michael Soto, AVPAA

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“And By Drawing, She Will Find It Again”:

Identity & Memory in Contemporary Third and Fourth-Generation Holocaust Graphic Memoir

After the end of World War II in 1945, Europe was barely recognizable. The process of liberating the concentration camp system forced Allied forces and the larger global community to begin the process of confronting the realities of what had been occurring in Nazi Germany for the previous four years. The Holocaust, often referred to by its Hebrew name the *Shoah*, was the systemic murder of six million Jews at the hands of the German government under the leadership of Adolf Hitler between 1941 and 1945. This mechanical murder relied on the complete dehumanization and legal subjugation of an entire facet of society on an unprecedented scale. An effort to understand these events gave rise to the creation of a new term: genocide. Due to the previously unimaginable nature of the events, survivor accounts gave the world an idea of what was occurring while they were at war. Survivors were compelled to put language to these events and ultimately to describe what the world once thought to be unimaginable. As the dust settled, survivors began writing their memoirs, testimonies to the events of the *Shoah*. These memoirs resulted in important literary contributions by the likes of Eli Wiesel, Primo Levi, Ida Fink, and others for whom telling their stories constituted “an immediate and violent impulse...” and a form of “interior liberation” (Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*, 9). These survivors viewed storytelling as an imperative, cathartic experience. This “internal liberation” results from the release of psychological pain, allowing survivors themselves to begin to work through traumatic memories, memorialize the dead, and teach the living. In the aftermath of the Holocaust, survivors created imaginative leaps of language and narrative time to write their stories and relieve themselves, even a marginal amount, from their burden of memory. Thus, the form of memoir raises the possibility of a cathartic release for survivors, those individuals who felt compelled to create a concrete

testament to the psychologically and physically destructive events of genocide in the hopes that world would never forget what they saw, a burden of memory that they passed to their children.

Just as the imperative to remember passes forward through generations, so, too, does storytelling as a vehicle of remembrance. Second-generation Holocaust survivor authors tell the stories of their parents as-if they are their own because, in many ways, they are their own. The rupture of the *Shoah* becomes as ingrained in the second-generation's self-identity as it was for their parents, only they never lived in a world where mass-genocide on the scale of the Holocaust was unimaginable. Instead they live in what author Aaron Has refers to as the "Shadow of the Holocaust," a world where the past is never too far removed. Second-generation authors—including the likes of Art Spiegelman, Thane Rosenbaum, Martin Lemmelman, and Bernice Eisenstein—use their parents' augmented reality as their origin point. In the beginning, before their own existence, there was destruction. Subsequently, everything after that destruction becomes the second-generation's own personal history. Second-generation authors were born into a post-Holocaust world, one where the events of the Holocaust are ever-present but because they have access to their parents' survivor stories, the past for the second-generation becomes more tangible, leading to a sense of urgency and proximate history. They inherit their parents' memories of both the event and the world before the *Shoah*, though they themselves were not alive to have memories grown from their own experience. Thus, this second-generation of survivors' artistic works bear witness to "the presence of an absence of memory" (Berger, *Children of Job* 2). This feeling of presence of an absence, post memory, distinguishes itself from mere generational memory because it is so closely related to the generationally removed individual's formation of their identity (Hirsch, "Family Pictures: Maus, Mourning, and Post-Memory" 8). While generational memory allows individuals to have an idea of where they come from, post memory

becomes as ingrained in one's identity as one's own personal memories. In other words, post memories are part of an individual's ontology of self. This kind of closely-held yet approximate history yields a body of artistic works that recreates the rupture of the events of the *Shoah* (Hirsch, "The Generation of Postmemory" 3).

Because of this need to integrate the historical past as their own personal past and the imaginative leaps in time and space necessary to accomplish this task, it is not surprising that the second-generation of survivors was the first generation to capitalize on the strengths of the graphic memoir genre. The issues with temporality that the second generation faces often requires the use of both language and image to adequately discuss the experience of post memory. Spiegelman's blending of narrative time in *MAUS II* gave rise to Marianne Hirsch's term postmemory. After being interested in Spiegelman's ability to sandwich his narrative between pieces of the past, mediating linear history and knitting his present with his past, Hirsch felt that a term must be created to describe the specific ways that intergenerational memory affects the second-generation of survivors (Hirsch, "Family Pictures: Maus, Mourning, and Post-Memory"). Because the second-generation's origin story is as much their parents, their memoirs must reconcile the historical past—the Holocaust—with their personal past—an individual's own childhood. The second generation's experimentation with graphic memoir resulted in distinct case studies for the genre's potential to accurately tell the stories of second-generation survivors. Spiegelman's multi-layered narrative, *Maus*, reaches both back and forward in time, creating a structure that collapses the personal and historical pasts to depict the author's own formation of identity. Martin Lemelman also documents the historical past in his graphic memoir, *Mendel's Daughter*, yet he allows the historical past to dominate the narrative. Instead of jumping between the historical past and the literary present as Spiegelman does, the events of the *Shoah* comprise the totality of Lemelman's

memoir. Lemelman forfeits his own past to write about the dominating events of the Shoah because these events matter more for the formation of his sense of identity than the events of his own life. For the second-generation, this obsession with history and documenting their relative's survival results in graphic memoirs that are as much their family's stories as they are their own.

In contemporary graphic memoir, writers of the third- and fourth-generation since the Holocaust seek, possibly more fervently, to document the events of the *Shoah* as time continues to distance us from these events of the past. Thus, we see the beginning of a generation obsessed with recreating the past for themselves, whether through investigation of familial archives or physically returning to the scenes of terror. These writers fulfill their obligation to remember the Holocaust, this testament that defines their own Jewish identity, by reconstructing memory that they do not have access to first-hand. They, as French graphic memoirist Jeremie Dres writes, "are no longer obligated to perpetuate family sorrow--on the contrary, they want to know. To understand. To observe. To listen..." (Dres, *We Will Not See Auschwitz*, v). If second-generation authors grew up in the shadow of the Shoah, "under the watchful eye of the living and the dead," the third-generation grew up with the Shoah as a historical event, something tucked away in photos and whispered asides at family dinners. Of the third generation's sources of memory, Dress says "Some of them...are lucky enough to have known and loved a grandmother. Others must make do with stories, archives, or secondhand memories. In either case, their quest breaks free of death to remember death" (Dres, v). The third-generation finds themselves becoming historians, family archivists, searching for this part of themselves that went missing but they are desperate to find.

Broadly, the aim of this thesis is to trace the relationship between the formation of Jewish-American identity and depictions of Holocaust memory in graphic memoir. Jewish Americans feel compelled to remember the events of the *Shoah* as a core tenant of their Jewish identity. If one is

to be Jewish, then he/she must remember the Holocaust. Thus, as individuals write their memoirs and discuss the formation of their Jewish identity, the Holocaust's legacy remains omnipresent. In contemporary Jewish graphic memoir, the representations of *Shoah* memory depart from the clear path set forward by Art Spiegelman's foundational work, *MAUS*. Tracing depictions of Jewish identity generationally, we see a continued anxiety about the representation of history and, moving into the fourth-generation of survivors, we see a further fragmentation of memory and a resulting fragmentation of personal identity. The stark differences between the third generation and the fourth generation reveal the difference between the archivist tendencies of the third generation and a fourth generation that is coming of age almost a century removed from the events of the *Shoah*. When examining the graphic memoirs of two modern Jewish women seeking understanding of themselves and their places in the community, Amy Kurzweil's *Flying Couch* and Liana Finck's *Passing for Human*, it is apparent that the preoccupations present in all Holocaust memoir—namely the conceit of the “presence of an absence,” complex narrative structure, and an anxiety over one's duty to remember—will continue into the fourth generation but in a slightly more abstracted way. Ultimately, for the purposes of this thesis, I argue that Liana Finck's graphic memoir, *Passing for Human*, depicts a tension intrinsic to fourth-generation Holocaust survivors, the first generation tasked with guarding Holocaust memory with no survivor touchstones to the events of the *Shoah*. Finck's fantastic, abstracted, and self-referential memoir departs from the concrete path set forth in the third-generation graphic memoir *Flying Couch*, and the second-generation *Maus*, ultimately pointing to the ways that the relationship between Holocaust memory and Jewish identity will further evolve into the fourth-generation.

Spiegelman's two-part series, *MAUS I & II*, which tells of his father's imprisonment in Auschwitz as well as Art's own relationship to the Holocaust, launched the sub-genre of the Holocaust graphic memoir into the mainstream. Tablet magazine lauds *MAUS I and II* as "the most powerful works of art produced by any American Jewish writer or artist about the Holocaust" (Tablet, n.pag). The graphic memoir genre enabled Spieglemen to write a complex and nuanced story but in a widely accessible form. *MAUS* skyrocketed the graphic memoir into the mainstream because Spiegleman was able to demonstrate the potentialities of the graphic narrative mode as a long-form medium of storytelling for incredibly nuanced material (Staub, "The Shoah Goes On and On..." 34). Graphic narratives as a whole prove particularly effective for temporally complex narrative structures in which the past and present become intimately linked and portrayed almost simultaneously. Second-generation writers, who speak to the ways past events and memories bleed into present narration, capitalize off of the multi-dynamic narrative form. Scott McCloud writes that, "Comics panels fracture both time and space, offering a jagged, staccato rhythm of unconnected moments" (McCloud, *Understanding Comics* 98,99,67). The panel structure allows artists to collapse the past into the present, proving especially valuable when writing about the intergenerational inheritance of Holocaust trauma. Hillary Chute argues that "comics can express life stories, especially traumatic ones, powerfully because it makes literal the presence of the past by disrupting spatial and temporal conventions to overlay or palimpsest past and present" (Chute, "Comic Form..." 109). Graphic memoir's ability to create this multi-layered sense of time suits the telling of traumatic life stories because of traumatic memory's non-linear interventions in consciousness. This experimental genre allows memoirists to shirk traditional narrative's limits of time and space thus acting as a proxy for the ways the historical past can intervene in the personal past to show their relationship and its influence on an individual's personal identity development.

Art Spiegelman's *MAUS* weaves together three different time periods— the historical past, the present, and the super-present— in a feat that exemplifies Chute's observations of the graphic form. Spiegelman recounts his father Vladek's survival of the Holocaust by writing Vladek's oral history. *MAUS* is a multi-layered narrative in that it tells the story of young Vlad Spiegelman surviving the Holocaust, old Vlad Spiegelman recounting the events, and Art Spiegelman physically writing *MAUS*. What resulted is a graphic novel that seamlessly coordinates movement between time and space. In the span of a single page, Art is able to move from a concentration camp in 1945 to a suburban townhome in New York in the 1980's. Without the constraints of conventional narrative flow in literature, the graphic memoir is able to make these massive leaps with little feeling of disjunction. This seamless transition mirrors the way traumatic memory works, skipping backwards and forwards, without a slow movement from memory to memory. By reading and following the story, readers ultimately experience a kind of proxy for post memory as they move forward and backward in time and space, simultaneously existing in both moments' times and places.

This triple-layered narrative structure enables Art Spiegelman to link his own past with his father's past. *MAUS*' representation of the Holocaust only exists in so far as they are extensions of Spiegelman's life. Instead of detailing the chronological unfolding of his life, beginning with a preface of his father's experience of the Holocaust and then moving forward to his birth, early childhood and so on or solely focusing on the past as the entirety of the memoir—as is the case of Martin Lemelman's *Mendel's Daughter*—Spiegelman instead integrates the past with scenes from the present such that neither the past nor the present intervenes on the other. Rather, in *MAUS*, the past, the present, and a third narrative dimension exist simultaneously. This third dimension, which Spiegelman calls the super-present, allows for a distinction between Spiegelman's voice as he's

writing the novel and his voice while collecting his father's testimony (The complete MAUS CD Rom). Therefore, the narration in Spiegelman's memoir exists in three dimensions: the past which constitutes his father's memories of the Holocaust; the present that is seen in Spiegelman's interactions with his father; and finally the super-present, comprised of the moments of intervention of Art writing the book. This complex narrative structure enabled, for the first time, a potential solution to the crisis of Holocaust literature: the representation of history (Chute, "History and Graphic Representation in MAUS," 341). *MAUS I* opens with a vignette from Art's childhood. After Art breaks his skate on a crack in the sidewalk, his friends skate past him. His father, Vladek, sits in front of the family's suburban garage sawing a piece of wood. "Why do you cry, Artie?" He asks. Art responds that his friends have skated away without him. His father then stops and says "Friends? Your friends? If you lock them together in a room with no food for a week...then you could see what it is, friends!" (Spiegelman, 6). Vladek's response spans three panels, including two smaller ones and one larger panel that consumes the bottom third of the page. As he speaks, the angle zooms out from Vladek's bust, ultimately leaving the final panel as a wide view of the family's suburban home with the father-son duo taking up the bottom-right corner of the panel. Square dialogue boxes indicate a change in voice, a super-present Spiegelman narrating the events of his childhood. This indicates a Spiegelman, as he writes the novel, looking back on and recounting a past memory. Beginning the two-part narrative with this vignette situates post memory as the forefront of the story and Vladek's scolding of Artie's experience by relating the event to the things he witnessed in the camp system epitomizes the entire project of *MAUS*. Art investigates the events of his father's life, which found their way into his otherwise mundane childhood existence not as merely histories but as memories in and of themselves. The image of Artie's suburban, middle-class house, his boyhood friends, and the act of assisting his father with

a household chore contrasts starkly with the events insinuated by his father. Even the most normal moments integrate memories of horror, the likes of which include being starved locked in a room, into Art's psyche. Chapter one is titled "My Father Bleeds History" but this preface comic strip indicates that Vladek's history is Art's as well, just as Vladek's blood runs through his veins.

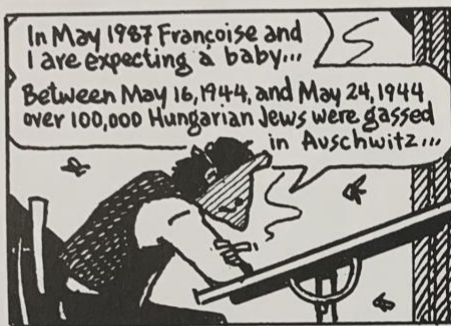


Spiegelman's super present interventions pick up in the second volume, *MAUS II*. We see Spiegelman wearing a mouse mask sitting at his drawing desk, going through a chronology of events "Vladek died of congestive heart failure on August 18, 1982...Vladek started working as a tin man in Auschwitz in the spring of 1944..I started working on this page at the very end of February 1987. In May 1987 Franscoise and I are expecting a baby...Between May 16, 1944 and May 24, 1944 over 100,000 Hungarian Jews were gassed in Auschwitz..." He then turns in his chair, breaking the fourth wall and facing the reader. He says, "In September 1986, after 8 years of work, the first part of *MAUS* was published. It was a critical and commercial success." In the final panel, which comprises half of the page, Art sits, still wearing his mouse mask, slumped in his desk. Underneath him is a pile of emaciated rat corpses and flies buzzing around. "At least fifteen foreign editions are coming out. I've gotten 4 serious offers to turn my book into a TV-special or movie. (I don't wanna.) In May 1968 my mother killed herself. (She left no note). Lately I've been feeling depressed." Then, from another room, a voice echoes "Alright Mr. Spiegelman...we're ready to shoot!" (201). If the opening of volume one serves to mimic the ways the legacy of the Holocaust intervened in Art's childhood, this scene points to the ways post memory intervenes in Spiegelman's super-present consciousness. The image, Art at a desk on the bodies, represents how he views the Holocaust as the foundation of his career. This mass-genocide, which decimated his community and killed his family members, was also the very thing that launched him into international stardom.

While the image conveys the presence of the Holocaust, Spiegelman's narration works through his own personal memories including the death of his father, Vladek's imprisonment in Auschwitz, the suicide of his mother, the birth of his son, and his work on *Maus*. The jumbled

chronology of this narration epitomizes the triple-layered narrative time in the novel. Art, who is literally sitting on the dead bodies of Holocaust victims, is writing his own graphic memoir in the present, discussing events from his own childhood (his mother's suicide) and his father's past (his incarceration in Auschwitz). In no other place is the graphic narrative form's potential for conveying the incredibly complex movement in time apparent than in this span of five panels. Art Spiegelman is able to lay out all of this narrative information and simultaneously craft an immensely powerful visual metaphor. In the aforementioned preface, the Holocaust is merely an illusion in dialogue alone that is then contrasted with images of suburban normalcy. By the middle of the second volume, this allusion becomes an all-consuming image: a pile of bodies, a guilt-ridden man, and a jumbled chronology of events. In this final panel, Art is no longer a mouse, but a man wearing a mouse mask. In an act of inversion, the tied-on mask represents the fervent attempts of a man to hold onto his identity—onto his humanity—as he spirals deeper into depression. What was a symbol of the systemic dehumanization of his community becomes, by chapter two of book two, a mask tied on by string as the human tries fervently to retain not only his identity but his humanity in face of overwhelming success.

Time flies...



By drawing himself as a mouse throughout the memoirs, Art Spiegelman creates a visual metaphor for the ways that Nazi dehumanization and redefinition of Jewish identity informs second-generation Jewish-American self-identification. The Nazi party, which after the Nuremberg Laws radicalized Jewish identification, unilaterally persecuted the Jewish people. Drawing Jewish characters as mice enables Art Spiegelman to literally illustrate the ways that this collective dehumanization and redefinition of identity carries forward into the second-generation. Even after Nazi persecution, Jews retain their mouse form. The super-present Art Spiegelman, in fact, ties a mouse mask onto his human head to retain this identity that he feels slipping away from him. Thus, while Spiegelman's memoir is ultimately about his own life—his own autobiography—it is as much about the life of his survivor father and, more broadly, all persecuted Jews. The interwoven narrative form of *MAUS* serves to not only depict post-memory itself but as another means of showing the relationship between Holocaust memory, the individual, and the Jewish community more broadly. The three channels of narration—past, present, and super-present—ultimately serve to convey the complex psychology of identity formation in the aftermath of the *Shoah*: the individual Jew, as a member of the Jewish community—symbolized by the mouse image itself—which is defined by (and dependent upon) their survival of the Holocaust and the subsequent, ever-looming burden of remembering those events. Art Spiegelman's memoir serves as a synecdoche for second-generation experience, standing in for the otherwise complex burden of Holocaust remembrance and post memory overall.

Searching for Memory: Becoming Jewish in Amy Kurzweil's *Flying Couch*

Discussions of third- and fourth- generation graphic memoir must begin with *Maus*. Because of its ubiquity with the genre, all subsequent works can be seen as either a departure from

or adherence to the legacy of Spiegelman's work. The second-generation grew up with a concrete connection to the Holocaust. They lived, in many ways, with the Holocaust as a constant force in even the banal moments in their lives, a dynamic Spiegelman depicts in the preface of *MAUS I*. This cohabitation of the individual with the *Shoah* results in the post memory phenomenon, as the second-generation confronts themselves in relation to the shadow of their inheritance. The third-generation, the grandchildren of Holocaust survivors, were raised by these individuals. The second-generation acted as a buffer between survivors and the third generation with no opportunity to process their own experiences. The second-generation, crushed by the burden of remembrance granted to them by their parents' generation, took on the memories of the parents so much as their own that they were unable to process their own relationship to the events. Instead, they lived their lives in the shadow of the Holocaust, knowing intimately the potential catastrophic effects of the limits of human violence. This creates the third-generation's paradox. This generation is separated enough from the Holocaust such that they do not constantly live in its shadow like their parents, granting them the false freedom to live independent if they so-choose, but they feel the same obligation to testify to the horrors as their parents and Grandparents. That same separation from events that could be so freeing creates an intense anxiety intrinsic to the third-generation—a yearning to know the truth they feel compelled to testify to. This paradox “arises from the tension between knowing and not knowing, direct and indirect witnessing, in the tenuous transfer of memory and trauma” (Aarons, *Third-Generation Holocaust Representation*, 63). Rather than living with the Holocaust like their parents, the third-generation must actively seek out that knowledge.

The third-generation graphic memoir is thus characterized by a reconstruction of memory. They become historians, using the stories of relatives and community survivors as the basis of their knowledge. In many cases, they return to sites of terror—the physical locations where genocide

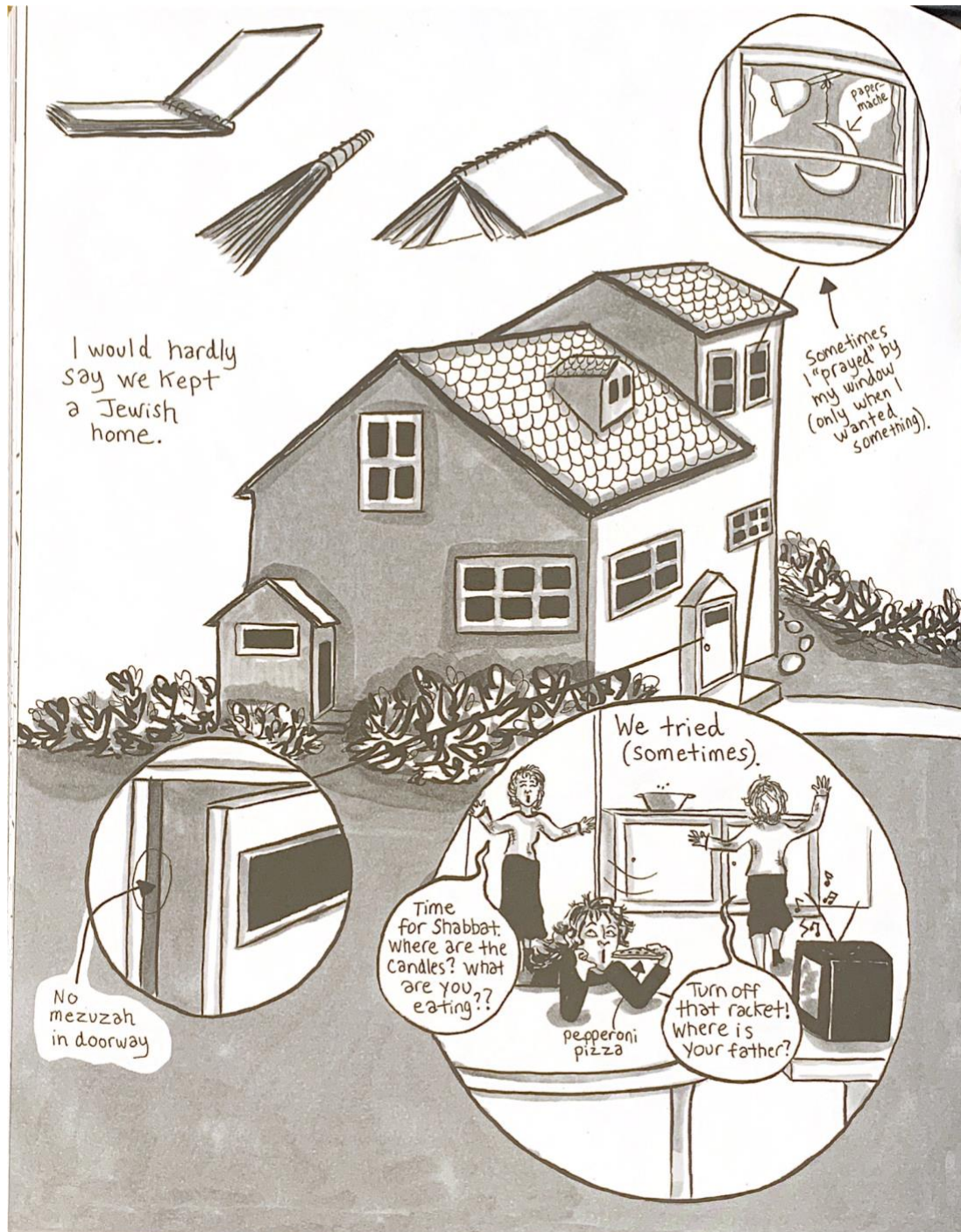
took place—to form their own memories. In one case, French memoirist Jérémie Dress writes about his experience in *We Will Not See Auschwitz*. Dress and his brother travels to Poland after their grandmother passes to learn about his family’s lost history. While he knew that he was Jewish, Dres’ knowledge of his family’s relationship to the Holocaust was limited by what he overheard at family dinners. His experience physically returning to Poland enabled him both to learn more about the history of his family and his own complex relationship to modern Judaism. These memoirs of return often act as a way to fill in the gaps of memory for the third-generation. Acts of return add concrete memories to the detached, abstracted fragments passed down to them by their second-generation parents. In essence, it resolves their anxiety because documentary work and returning to physical places loaded with memory gives them something to testify to. This generation for whom, “their continued testimony constitutes a resistance to encroaching anonymity and obscurity, their language a defense against forgetting,” returns to the sites of terror and pours through family archives to reconstruct stories, giving themselves a way to contribute to the maintenance of Holocaust memory (Aarons, *Third-Generation Holocaust Representation*, 43). Carrying forth this memory, then, resolves the anxiety they feel over this foundational piece of their Jewish identity and ultimately grants them the cathartic release necessary to define their identity for themselves.

Third-generation author Amy Kurzweil’s graphic memoir, *Flying Couch*, tackles the relationship between increasingly distant Holocaust memory and her anxiety surrounding the formation of her own identity. Having grown up in a culturally Jewish home, Kurzweil feels a detachment from her Judaism and attempts to recover it throughout her college career. By writing her graphic memoir and weaving together her own story with that of her Grandmother-- a Holocaust survivor-- Kurzweil comments on the impenetrable bond between the events of the

Shoah and modern Judaism. In many ways, Kurzweil tells the story of her grandmother to write herself into Jewish history, and put language to the feeling of post-postmemory, or her third-generation inheritance of the *Shoah*, ultimately rebuilding the past and finding the connection to her religious and cultural identity she desperately craved while allowing her to form her own unique Jewish identity in the process.

Kurzweil's upbringing in a culturally Jewish family lays the framework for the anxiety she feels about her place in the Jewish community in early adulthood. Early images of her childhood show her lacking a conscious effort of her family to strictly practice Judaism. She writes "I would hardly say we kept a Jewish home...no mezuzah in doorway" (72). The text on that same page overlays an image of her mother attempting to find Shabbat candles as a young Amy sits eating a very non-kosher slice of pepperoni pizza. Keeping the Sabbath kosher and having mezuzahs are outwardly identifiable practices of Judaism. And, while she received a Sunday-school Jewish education and had her Bat-Mitzvah, these things were seen as required motions more-so than a spiritual experience. Because Amy grew up in a culturally Jewish home, when she

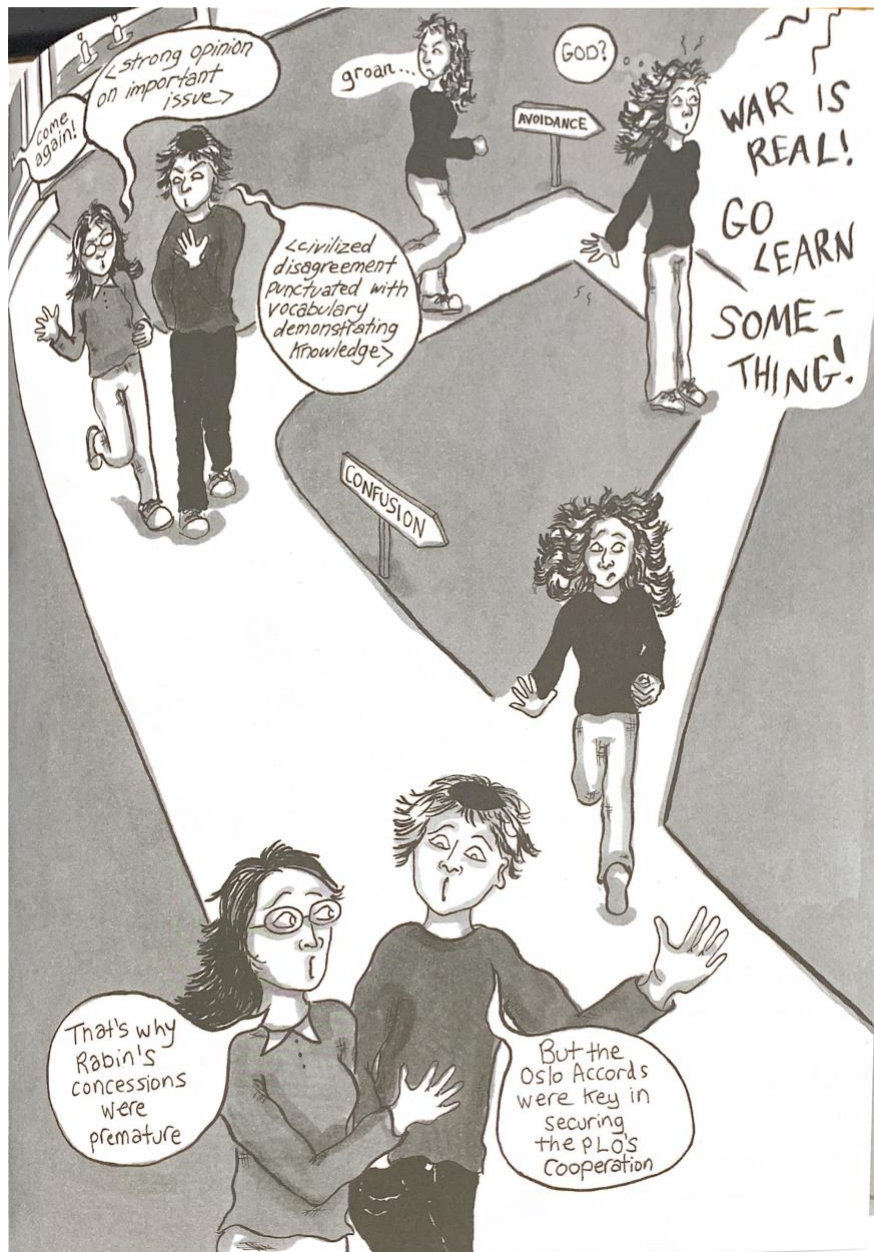
arrived at Stanford and felt the need to choose a Jewish identity, this choice manifested in a deep, over-taking anxiety over what Jewishness meant to her.



Kurzweil uses two different stylistic moves to convey her anxiety over the formation of her Jewish identity: scenes of running and infantilization. Throughout the novel, Kurzweil uses scenes of Amy running to illustrate her anxiety about her Jewish identity. For example, Amy runs from images that represent the depth and perceived insurmountability of Jewish historical and intellectual lineage. After entering college, Amy feels the need to ascribe to a predefined Jewish identity. When she settles upon “Jewish intellectual,” Amy’s dreams are haunted by the spirits of famous Jewish figures. She becomes overwhelmed and says “I just want to draw pictures” and is then visited by the spirits of Will Eisner, Art Spiegelman, and Harvey Parker (115). This full-page illustration of Amy running from the spirits of various Jewish intellectuals represents the psychological process of Amy feeling overwhelmed by Jewish intellectual history. More broadly, Amy, at this moment, faces the reality that in Judaism, there is always a precedent and that she, as a Jewish woman, will always be measured against that precedent. Without a firm basis of individual identity, Amy becomes overwhelmed at this prospect and runs away, instead of confronting it.

When confronted with any contentious topic of modern Jewish life, Amy runs away from conversation. For example, a thread throughout the novel, which represents Amy’s internal conflict with her Jewish identity, is her relationship to the state of Israel. Kurzweil draws Amy running from a conversation about Israeli politics after a University Shabbat dinner. When Amy runs away, she runs directly into a voice from God saying “War is real! Go learn something!” (103). In this scene, Amy’s uncertainty about her stance regarding the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict or perceived lack of education on the matter leads her to run from the conversation. Metaphorically, this move represents Amy running from one of the central issues in modern Judaism-- the state of Israel and the dialogue surrounding it. Again, after being confronted with her own perceived lack of

education, Amy chooses to run. The movement on the page lends a frantic energy to the scene, which reflects the psychological process of panic associated with an anxiety response.



Often, when Amy runs from one scene, she launches herself into her childhood bed for another scene with no transition, where she physically transforms into her childhood-self. When triggered, Amy's anxiety transforms her from adult to child. This transformation has the effect of drawing parallels between her childhood anxiety and her adulthood anxiety. The conceit of this move, though, is that while the monsters under a child's bed are fantasy creatures, the monsters haunting adult Amy are the manifestations over transmitting her grandmother's memory and finding her place in the Jewish community. After confronting figures of Jewish intellectual history, Amy launches herself into her bed. When she awakens, she is a younger version of herself. As she enters her parents' room, she yells "Moooooooooooooooo!!" (117). The elongation of the word mom, stretching horizontally across the page gives the word a whining and childlike-quality, exaggerating the transformation of Amy into a child. Not only is Amy drawn physically as a child but her actions indicate that she is psychologically immature and infantile. As opposed to becoming physically smaller but retaining adult-like qualities, Kurzweil fully transforms physically and intellectually into a small child. This move metaphorically links adult Amy and her anxiety with the image of a child and the imaginary monsters under bed; however, as stated above, the unidentifiable monsters are not the zombies that haunt the dreams of children, but are the physical incarnation of Kurzweil's deep-seeded anxieties due to intergenerational trauma and internal uneasiness haunting her dreams. Kurzweil drawing herself as a child also creates the effect of collapsing time. Kurzweil's collapsing of time makes the proximate past become conflated with the present, just as weaving her grandmother's survivor narrative in with her own proxies the ever-present looming of the Holocaust's legacy.



Amy Kurzweil ultimately finds her Jewish identity and takes control over her anxiety by embracing her grandmother's survival narrative, and the Shoah more broadly, instead of running from it. Her graphic memoir weaves together her story with her grandmother's, allowing the past to bleed into the present, because by telling her grandmother's story, Kurzweil fulfills the third-generation need to rebuild the past as a means to grapple with the effects of post-postmemory. By foregrounding the story of her grandmother surviving the holocaust, Kurzweil proxies the sensation of having an intangible past intrinsically linked to her own sense of identity. Acknowledging this past, which is so closely linked to Kurzweil's Jewish identity, allows for her to put language and image to the presence of an absence, ultimately enabling her to move forward and develop her own unique Jewish identity.

Kurzweil blends voices and stories together, taking imaginative leaps in time and space, to comment on the interconnectedness of the past and the present and the nature of third-generation memory. Her weaving of her own narrative with her grandmother's survival evokes 's project. She utilizes a similar multi-voiced narrative style to depict the interwoven nature of post-post memory. An example of Kurzweil's unique narrative technique is the end of chapter five, when the grandmother was in a refugee camp. She is singing and dancing with other refugees in striped suits (201). Kurzweil draws the refugees with an interesting posture. They are facing upward, with ambiguous facial expressions. Because the Grandmother is smiling, it appears that the other prisoners are singing with their faces turned towards to the sky in comparison; however, the facial expressions are oddly contorted in a way that can be interpreted as screaming. This full-page illustration shows the faultiness of the accuracy of memory. Because Kurzweil illustrates the image as her mother remembers it, which is clouded by her happiness in the moment, the way that

moment is remembered in history is happy regardless of how the prisoners actually felt because this was how the story was documented in the book. In this image, Kurzweil physically illustrates post-post memory. The memory of her grandmother is transmitted to the author, who then filters the memory through her own experiences to draw the image which results in the image of multiple refugees surrounding the grandmother, who is happily singing and staring at the sky. This image immediately launches into chapter 6, a memory from the recent-past of Amy's graduation. As the family walks to the graduation ceremony, Amy's grandmother frequently stops to collect cans (204). Bubbe's frugal behavior throughout the text acts as a source of bonding for the Kurzweil family because they all believe this behavior is odd. However, Bubbe's idiosyncrasies are a manifestation of her past trauma and insecurities. Juxtaposing this scene with the scene immediately proceeding it set in the refugee camp allows readers to implicitly connect Bubbe's behavior with her past trauma. Collapsing time allows for readers to better empathize with the grandmother, while Amy's family experiences the behavior as an inconvenience. This effect reflects Amy's further meditation on her grandmother's actions and past, allowing her to better understand why Bubbe acts the way she does. By better understanding her grandmother's history, Amy can better understand her present actions. She blends together past and present in the narrative, allowing her not only better understand herself, but others.

★ And the music.
The Jews were singing
songs always. Yiddish
music. Even the people
coming from the camps.
Files of women, so
skinny, with no hair
and wearing the striped
suits, messes and messes
of them, so sick, but
always singing, dancing.
That was our pleasure.
To have music and to
be no longer alone.



Kurzweil makes stylistic choices that emphasize the blending of past and present. Her panels have no borders, giving each image a fluid sense of movement. There are no hard transitions from past to present and the narrative voices become layered at times, with little more than a font change to signal the change in voice. This fluidity and blending of time and space proxies the feeling of postmemory. Kurzweil's direct experience and her grandmother's stories become one, just as postmemory bleeds into an individual's experienced memory. Amy cannot tell her story of growing into her Jewish identity without telling her grandmother's story because her grandmother's experience underlies her sense of identity.

Kurzweil's experience drawing her grandmother's story into her graphic memoir fulfilled the underlying third-generation need to "search to uncover and rebuild the past" (Reynolds 25). She rebuilds the past by drawing the history of her family, and her sense of Jewish identity, after much anxiety, comes from her responsibility to keep her Grandmother's story alive. Amy's relationship to Israel represents her anxieties about her position in the world as a modern Jewish woman. This anxiety surrounding Israel is resolved after visiting Yad Vashem, the national holocaust museum. Until that point, her Birthright trip had been a conflicting experience of new adventures and political confusion. When she visits the museum, she understands the importance of the state of Israel as a refuge for the Jewish people-- her people (147). As she walks through each memorial, she constructs her own history and relationship to the Holocaust. Because her grandmother is a holocaust survivor, she retains the post-postmemory of the event, but until that moment, the character of Amy had not been able to come to terms with the importance of that inheritance. By first-hand experiencing Yad Vashem, Amy creates her own personal memory in Israel, allowing herself to accept this legacy and her position as the keeper of her grandmother's memory. Amy only allows herself to quit running from her inheritance when she accepts her

personal relationship to it and her responsibility as the granddaughter of a survivor and Jewish woman to confront this complex legacy.

Amy only regains her unique sense of identity after coming to terms with this inheritance and writing her graphic memoir, or writing herself into history. Writing the graphic narrative gave her agency over her own identity. After acknowledging her relationship to Judaism as contingent upon her relationship to the Holocaust, she writes her own story into her grandmother's. Doing this both reconstructs her grandmother's history and creates space for Amy Kurzweil, both as an author and a character, to edify herself and her identity in the scope of Jewish intellectual thought. In the final scene, she writes "to order the objects of real life, the things I can feel and name, reminds me that my life is my own, and it has not, although at times it might seem otherwise, been pre-written" (283). While she is deeply affected by the women in her life, and while writing her grandmother's story is so intrinsically linked to own Jewish identity, coming to terms with the notion that her inheritance of Jewish cultural and historical past does not define her present Judaism allowed Amy to release her anxiety and accept her position as a Jewish woman in the world. Just as Spiegelman writes "my father bleeds history," Kurzweil comes to the conclusion that history lives in her: "maybe," she writes "it's in the blood" (Kurzweil, *Flying Couch*, 2). In *Flying Couch*, third-generation author Amy Kurzweil writes herself into history by weaving together her grandmother's story of survival and her search for identity to resolve the anxiety she felt about her inheritance of the *Shoah* ultimately allowing herself the freedom to develop a unique Jewish identity that is both informed by and informs her relationship to the cultural and historical past of Judaism. Kurzweil finds her voice not in spite of her third-generation anxiety of representation, but because of it.

Deconstructing Memory: Abstraction and Fragmentation in Liana Finck's *Passing for Human*

As each generation since the Holocaust creates its own body of work, that generation's preoccupations appear in the works as emergent themes. Scholars now have three generations of literature—written by survivors, their children, and their grandchildren—to excavate for themes that hint at the transformation of Holocaust memory as it is passed through generations. In the field of memoir, stories become the mode of transmission between individuals. The first generation of Holocaust survivor writing was defined by an impulse to testify to the events of the Shoah, as author Primo Levi writes, “the need to tell our story to ‘the rest’” which appears as an “immediate and violent impulse” (Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*, 9). Then came their children, the second generation, who wrote their stories to show the world the effects of post memory and to reify the need to preserve their parents' stories indefinitely. The grandchildren of survivors, this third generation, deals with what Victoria Aarons describes as a “an anxious fear of belatedness, of late arrival to an inheritance, of a moral birthright that has bypassed them” (Aarons, *Third Generation Holocaust Representation*, 7). Third generation authors write memoirs to find a history to cling to, which was evidenced in Amy Kurzweil's narrative. Authors of the 21st century, these third- and now fourth- generation writers, must come to terms with the increased distance in historical and temporal time between their lives and the events of the Holocaust. While the second generation grew up with the Holocaust as an ever-present reminder of the extent of human hatred in their homes, the third and fourth generation are coming of age with the presence of a new looming threat—a future with no first-hand Holocaust survivors. The fourth-generation of survivors, left with even fewer tangible ties to the Holocaust than the third-generation, will be tasked with

carrying forward the memory of the *Shoah* and will be forced to resort to even more imaginative uses of language and image than prior generations to once again describe the indescribable.

If fourth-generation author Liana Finck's graphic memoir *Becoming Human* is any indication, the future of the genre will be more abstract in every way imaginable than its predecessors. While Kurzweil and Spiegelman attempt to interweave the past with the present seamlessly, Finck's disjointed narrative style creates stop-gaps—abrupt changes in time and space—between not only past and future but fact and fantasy. Generic obsessions with the accuracy of history are displayed by the author's tendency to scrap entire chapters of her memoir and restart it. Ultimately, Finck's memoir points to a future of the graphic memoir form harnessing the same third-generation anxiety surrounding identity and further abstracts it, interrogating not only what it means to be a Jewish woman but what it means to be human. Amy Kurzweil writes and illustrates her Bubbe's life “in the tradition of curious and dutiful sons and daughters before” her to “immortalize it, fashion it into those stories to be imprinted upon our homes and on our gates, as we lie down and as we rise up...and all that,” to come to terms with her own inheritance (Kurzweil, *Flying Couch*, 51). Invoking the *Shema*, Kurzweil tells the story to fulfill not only her duty to her grandmother, but also a basic tenant of her Jewish identity: to remember. Kurzweil writes her story to find her place in Judaism. Finck does the same, only the aim of her writing is different. While Kurzweil searches for the truth in her solid connection to the Shoah, Finck writes that “she draws because once she lost something. And by drawing-she will find it again” (Finck, *Passing for Human*, 14). Finck's memoir, while absent of the direct familial relationship to the Holocaust that Kurzweil and Spiegelman have, can still be read and interpreted as descending from the same lineage as the Holocaust graphic memoir.

Fink, despite not having a familial link to the Holocaust, still writes from the point of view of a fourth-generation Holocaust survivor and her graphic memoir itself is deeply rooted in her Jewish heritage. Because of the form of dehumanization pioneered by the Nazi party leading up to and during the Holocaust, Jewish identity after the rupture of the *Shoah* is more defined by one's communal survival of the events than ancestry or religion alone. Prior to the events of the Holocaust, Jewish self-identification was a personal relationship between that individual and their community; however, in 1935, the Nazi government defined Judaism for the Jewish people with deadly and lasting consequences. The Nuremberg Laws defined being Jewish as a race and granted German citizenship and classification based on the number of an individual's Jewish parents and grandparents. With the Nuremberg Laws, the Nazi government instated an official, overriding decision for who was considered Jewish. It was a racial category, not based on religious or cultural affinity, language, spiritual connection, or even foods consumed. If an individual had even one Jewish Grandparent, they were considered mixed-race by the Reich. It was because of this racial definition of Judaism that a spectrum of self-identified Jews were victimized by the regime. From that moment forward, it did not matter if an individual personally identified as Jewish if they were in any way connected, by blood or spirit, to the community. In the Nazi binary, one was either Jewish or not, and if they were Jewish they subsequently were not human. This ideological foundation enabled the systematic, mass extermination of six million European Jews, many of whom would not self-identify as Jewish. And while they would not identify as Jews in life, they will forever be classified as Jews in their death. By collapsing the spectrum of Jewish diversity into one category of Jewish individual, the events of the Holocaust are and will for ever be seen as a unilateral attack on all Jewish individuals with the aim of eradicating the Nazi-defined Jewish race. Thus, all individuals self-identifying as Jewish after the Holocaust represent the failure of the

Nazi regime in their mission, granting the community itself the responsibility of remembering their community members who died as a result of this persecution and carrying forward the direct memories of those who survived these atrocities first-hand.

In the 21st century, remembering the Holocaust has been incorporated as a core tenant of American Jewish identity. In 2013, the Pew Research Center published the largest study of the American Jewish community in over a decade. This study, examining their attitudes and habits, unearthed stark trends in the newest generation of Jewish Americans. Millennials, individuals born after 1980, were twenty-five percent less likely to identify as Jews by religion than members of the Greatest Generation.¹ Overall, 62% of Jews surveyed state that being Jewish is mainly a matter of ancestry or culture with 83% of non-religious Jews stating that being Jewish comes from a familial or cultural link to a Jewish community. Just 15% of the net Jewish community (Jews by religion and Jews of no religion) view religion as the major factor in determining Jewish identity. The key aim of the survey was to explore determinants of Jewish identity, leading them to ask pose the question: “What does being Jewish mean in America today?” Three quarters of respondents had the same answer. Being Jewish in America today means remembering the Holocaust. The totality of American Jewry—comprised of Ashkenazim, Sephardim, Mizrahim, and other ethnic branches of Judaism—views remembering the Holocaust as a burden they must carry forward despite many individuals lacking a direct familial tie to those who survived and perished Nazi persecution. The spiritual community of *Am Yisrael*, all of the self-defined Jews who have lived and ever will live, was affected by the events of the Holocaust. This community, based in surviving persecution, leads to the creation of an impenetrable bond between modern Jewish identity and

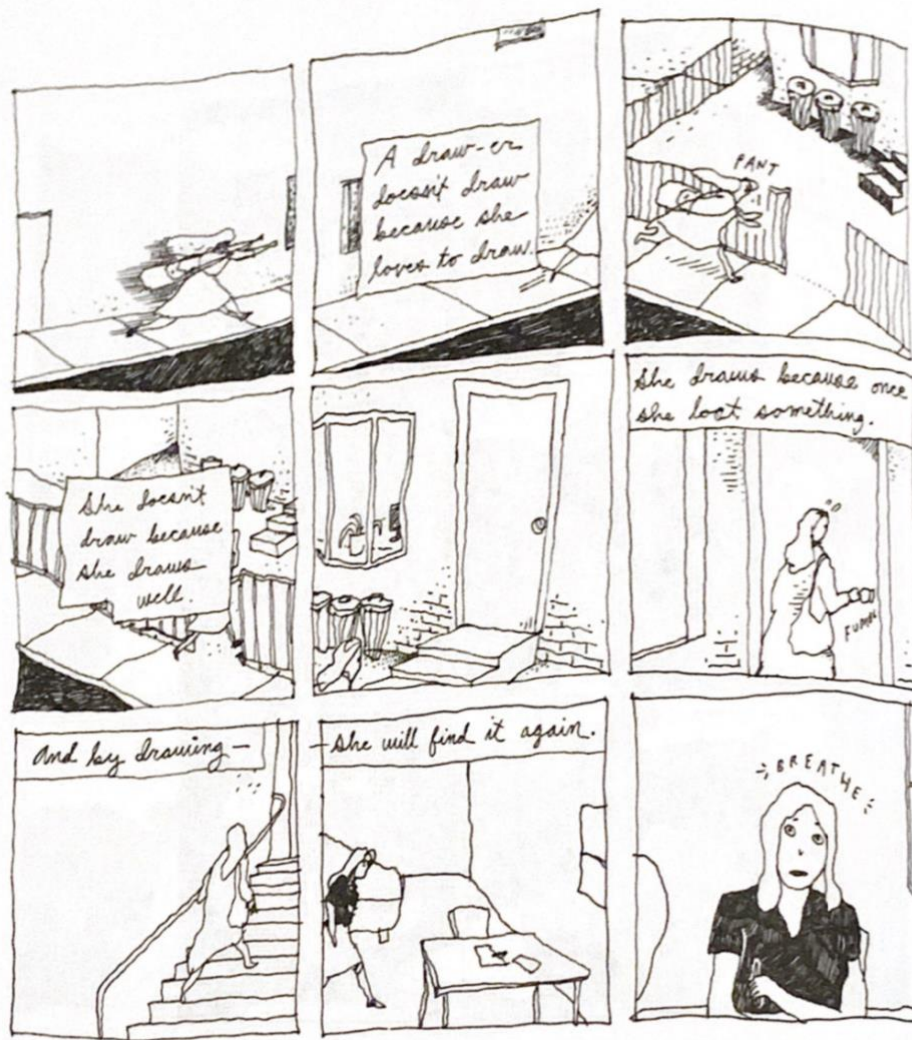
Holocaust memory. They are deeply intertwined and one cannot be examined without considering the other.

Thus, Liana Finck's graphic memoir, *Passing for Human*, which is written by a Jewish-American author born during what is now considered the fourth-generation about her process of identity development, can benefit from an examination of the text as a part of the larger genre of Holocaust graphic memoir. In a time with increasing distance from the events of the Shoah, fewer Jewish authors will have the kind of familial archives necessary to create works like *MAUS* and *Flying Couch*. Instead, they will seek to describe their inheritance through increasingly imaginative forms.

The overwhelming force of the memoir is Finck's anxiety. She is repeatedly visited by tiny mice that she refers to as "the fears that know." These mice talk to her in her ear, casting doubt on everything from her relationship to the structure of her story. After a particularly awkward dating interaction at the beginning of the memoir, Leona feels anxious about her ability to maintain a relationship with this man. Two mice climb onto either of her shoulders and whisper in her ear, "How can you of all people be expected to keep anything? You couldn't even keep your own shadow!" (12). These mice act as a visual representation of her psychological anxiety. Without a firm sense of self, which she seeks out in the process of writing her memoir, Finck continues to be controlled by figments of her own imagination. These threats, like her romantic partner leaving her are irrational ideals but by drawing them into the symbolic rats and giving them a name, Finck is able to allow readers to feel what it would be like to converse directly with the fears that live in her mind. This anxiety acts as a thread throughout the memoir and is a result of feeling a part of her missing. The memoir begins with a page reading "once upon a time, I lost something. Let's call it 'my shadow.'"(3). Then it feeds into the prologue with Leona, the main character based on

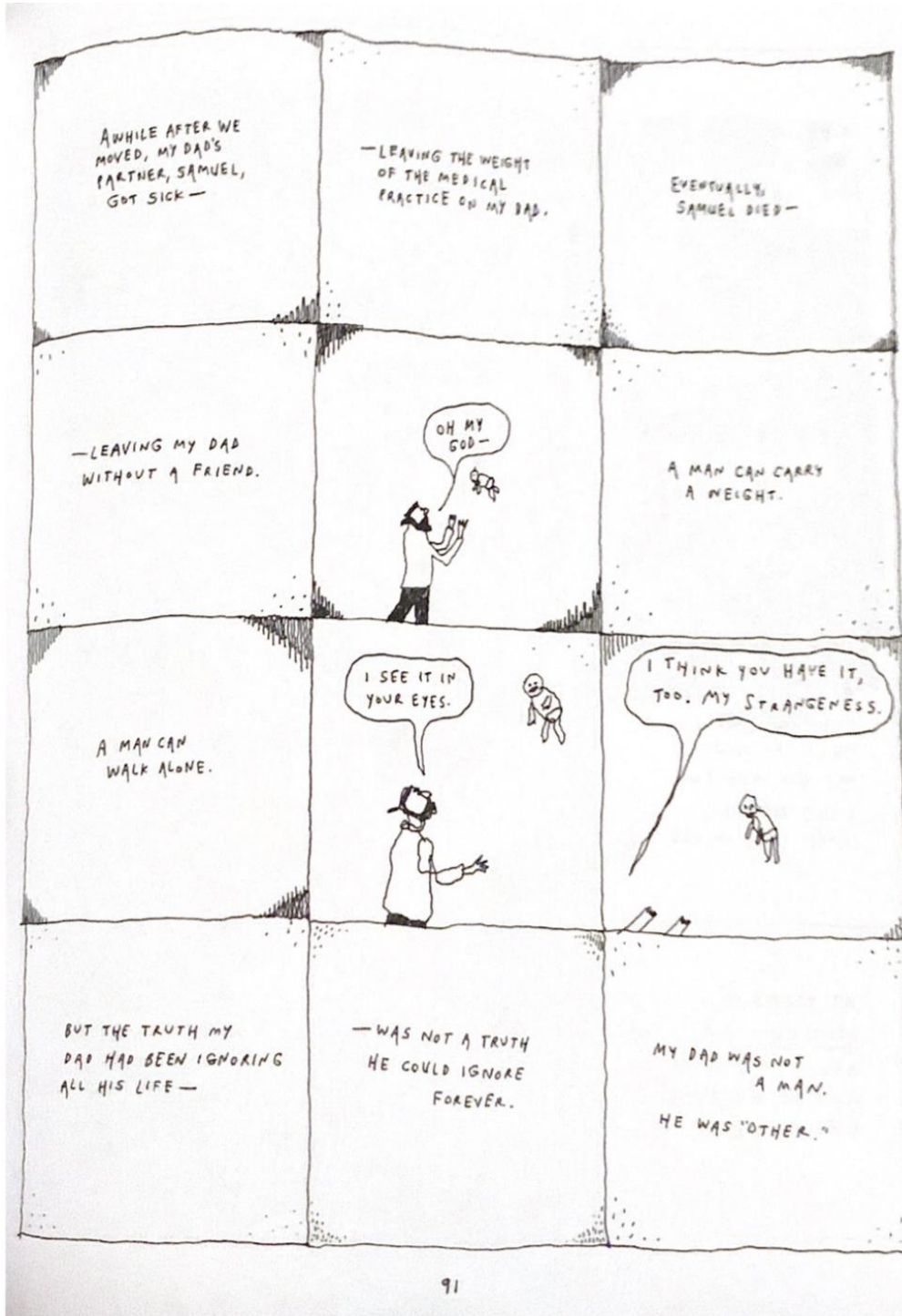
Finck, and her romantic mishap. The prologue then ends with a full-page of Leona running back to her desk alternating panels with text and handwriting on what appears to be small scraps of paper. The text throughout the page reads “A draw-er doesn’t draw because she loves to draw. She doesn’t draw because she draws well. She draws because she lost something” and the final row of three panels has the first two which read “and by drawing— she will find it” (14). The final panel of the page is a sketch of Leona sitting in her chair, holding a pen, with the word ‘breathe’ scrawled above her head. This frantic scene connects the framing panel before the prologue with the relationship mishap and subsequent visit from the fears that gnaw during the prologue. Her quick, sketched artistic style lends a frenzied pace to the scene, which is punctuated by the final panel and her moment of breath. For the duration of the prologue, Finck throws readers into Leona’s panic. Most importantly, this is a panic that is fueled by an undefined absence that led Leona to

feel different for most of her life and which leads the author to traverse her own terrain of memory looking for answers and searching for an undefined ontology of self.



Finck's search for the origins of her weirdness begins in others, namely her mother and father. In one particularly poignant scene, Finck draws a twelve panel grid evoking folded paper. Three panels in the center of the grid portray Finck's father throwing baby Leola into the air, exclaiming "oh my God-I can see it in your eyes. I think you have it, too. My strangeness" (91). The top half of the panels narrate the death of Leola's father's partner in his medical practice, Samuel. Underneath the panels of her father throwing her into the air, three panels read "but the truth my dad had been ignoring all his life—was not a truth he could ignore forever. My dad was not a man. He was "other.""(91). Liana searches further back than her own birth to find the origin to her 'strangeness' and attempts to pin that origin onto her father. She argues that an "other" is not even human. It cannot "bring a woman to live with him at the foot of a desolate mountain" or "practice medicine." An other is simply "pretending to be an actual man" and he passed that "conundrum" onto Leona (92). Leona's anxiety can be ascribed to her feeling that she is so 'other' that she is, in fact, not even human. Just as her father was 'pretending' to be a man, Liana is pretending to function normally, to pass. She feels less than human, like she is in reality simply, as the title of the book suggests, *Passing for Human*. Finck lacks not only an identity as a Jewish woman, but very fundamentally lacks an identity as conforming to what is considered a normal human being, thus leading to an overwhelming anxiety. The author casts herself in the role of "other." At the end of that chapter, after discussing her father's struggles with Depression, Finck is once again visited by the fears that gnaw while writing at her desk. "What were you thinking, trying to put your dad in a story?...Your dad isn't hiding some secret weirdness, you know." Then Leola responds "Maybe he isn't but I am. And it's helpful for me to have a lineage for my weirdness" (105). Finck's attempts to trace her weirdness leads to fabricating an origin story for herself and it is her anxiety, the fears that gnaw, that talk her out of it and force her to once again

restart her story. Her anxiety manifests as an all-consuming need to tell the story as accurately as possible and forces imaginative leaps, like the fabrication of her father's secret weirdness, to do so.



This anxiety surrounding the accuracy of her storytelling forces Liana to re-start her memoir five times, each time approaching it from a new angle. With each story, the fears that gnaw re-appear, forcing Liana to begin the story again. This stopping and starting motion results in a disjointed and multi-layered narrative style that moves between the past, present, and super-present with little transition. These three temporal modes—past, present, and super-present—are used by Finck much in the same way as Spiegelman utilizes them in *Maus*; however, Finck contributes an additional mode, the super-past, to her work. This ‘super-past’ is an imagined Biblical past. Throughout the memoir, Finck rewrites Biblical stories in an effort to lend authority to her origin stories. There are two different ways Finck evokes the Bible: mapping stories of her life onto existing Biblical stories and midrash. In the first chapter of the memoir, Finck riffs off of the Biblical story of Ruth and Boaz to tell the story of how her mother met her father. They were initially supposed to play the roles of Ruth and Boaz in a camp play of the Biblical story but a color war broke out before they had the chance to perform. Seven years passed before they were able to meet again, when they were reunited by a mutual friend and a feeling compelled by “the song of Ruth and Boaz.” Finck evokes the story of Ruth and Boaz which enables her parents’ two chance-encounters to be divinely-ordained. Just as Ruth and Boaz’ marriage was orchestrated by God after the loss of Ruth’s first husband, Finck’s parents’ marriage was the result of chance in the aftermath of the demise of her mother’s abusive relationship. The two stories map onto one-another well and ultimately imply that Finck’s parents’ relationship and subsequently Finck herself were purposefully anointed by God. Liana Finck’s creation story was Biblical and gave her an origin that was not accidental. By evoking the super-past—the Biblical past—Liana Finck creates a super-natural, authoritative origin story for herself that explains the sense of super difference she feels in her present.

Finck's tendency towards Biblical interpretation situates her work within in the long-standing Jewish literary tradition of midrash, a common feature of Holocaust literature. Midrash is the Jewish interpretation of Biblical texts that seeks to fill in the gaps of what is written in the Torah. It involves reading beyond written word and into active participation with the material presented. When evoking existing Biblical stories becomes too limited for her increasingly fragmented memoir, Finck performs a midrash by writing the origins of her fantastical elements as pieces forgotten by the Bible. Throughout the novel, Finck uses a midrashic interpretation to account for the existence of these things that she needs to exist in her story. Because so much of her story hinges on ideas of origin, most of her midrash is in interpretations of Genesis. This exists most clearly in the epilogue when Liana narrates the process of God creating shadows. She writes, "When God said 'let there be light,' that was the beginning and end of creation, as far as shadows were concerned. The light came and split God in two. The bright half kept the name 'God,' while the shadow became known as 'the devil'" (220). When it is written in Genesis "let there be light," what is implied is that there was also a creation of darkness in that moment because without light, there is no existence of darkness. Just as darkness relies on light for its existence, shadows are the result of light being cast onto objects. In the project of finding an origin for her anxiety, Finck first seeks understanding in the people around her. When she cannot find understanding in her mother and father, she searches in Biblical authority. Then the Bible itself does not have the written answers so she must interpret the written word of the Bible to account for her difference. By utilizing a distinctly Jewish mode of interpretation, Liana Finck searches to find her own personal and Jewish identity in her familial line and then in her spiritual community.



Eventually, she succumbs to the truth that the only way to resolve her anxiety caused by an unstable sense of self is to address her shadow—this unmoving, intrinsic part of her being that can only be described as “the presence of an absence.” The memoir’s beginning utilizes the language of childhood storybooks, reading “once upon a time, I lost something. Let’s call it ‘my shadow.’”(3). This sets up the memoir by fixating on this absence. Throughout the memoir, Finck’s anxiety appears surrounding the absence. She wants to represent it perfectly. It is only by setting down her pen, releasing herself of the need to describe that absence that it comes to her. The shadow re-appears just as Finck gives up on her project, saying “I’ve been waiting forever for you to put down that pen. I was too shy to come in while you were calling me. But I’ve been waiting outside your door” (211). The shadow was always with her but appears precisely when she realizes that the memoir is not about the shadow but herself. Throughout the memoir, Finck struggles with notions of identity and being. She is so preoccupied with thinking abstractly about how she became different than others that she was distracted from writing honestly about who she was and where she herself comes from. The imaginative leaps and disjointed stopgaps she leaves in the story result in a picture of a woman dealing with coming to terms fundamentally with who she is. Liana Finck reunites with her shadow precisely in the moment when she accepts the “otherness” that makes her uniquely her.



This graphic memoir begs to be read as a piece of Holocaust literature. It tackles the same main themes of intergenerational memory and identity as *Flying Couch* and *MAUS* but in a more abstract way. Finck's shadow, this intrinsic part of herself which is passed to her from her mother and guides her through her life, acts as a metaphor for intergenerational Holocaust memory. A shadow is nothing if not the presence of an absence, a term which is frequently used to describe the feeling of second- and third-generation traumatic memory. Just as Amy Kurzweil and Art Spiegelman write themselves into the Jewish canon by transcribing the stories of their family members as extensions of their own biographies, Finck comes to terms with her inheritance precisely when she releases herself from the psychological turmoil of carrying it. The kind of anxiety present in Kurzweil's *Flying Couch* over her Jewish identity is further extrapolated and abstracted in *Passing For Human* yet the anxiety itself remains fundamentally the same. Finck's graphic memoir points to a future of fourth-generation Holocaust graphic memoirs. As the third-generation clings to scraps of memory—overheard stories, returning to sites of terror, and personal archive work—to fulfill their duty to remember, the fourth-generation will once again be instructed as their ancestors have to maintain their remembrance of events occurring nearly a century before their births. Thus, as memory becomes increasingly abstract, so too will the language and image used to describe it.

Preserving Memory: Contextualizing the Charge of the Fourth-Generation

In the last decade, antisemitism resurfaced from the fringes of online forums into the American mainstream. An Anti-Defamation League report published in February of 2018 found that the number of antisemitic instances in the United States rose by 60% between 2016 and 2017—the largest single-year jump on record. The 1,986 reports of antisemitic instances made 2017 the year with the second-highest reports since the Anti-Defamation League began keeping records in

1979. In 2018, a white nationalist entered the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, killing eleven people during Saturday morning prayers, carrying out the deadliest attack on the Jewish community in American history (New York Times). The number of anti-Semitic attacks in America continue to climb but a resurgence of antisemitism on a scale not seen since the Holocaust is not just an American issue. In early 2018, the right-wing Polish government passed a law which makes implicating occupied Poland in the Holocaust a crime punishable with jail time. In France, where current president Emmanuel Macron narrowly defeated far-right candidate Marine Le Pen in 2017, French Jews face rapidly rising anti-Semitism. In 2017, nearly 40 percent of violent acts classified as racially or religiously motivated were committed against Jews, though Jews make up less than 1 percent of France's population. In October of 2019, just days before another antisemitic attack at a Chabad in San Diego, a far-right extremist in Halle, Germany was apprehended for fatally shooting two people after unsuccessfully attempting to enter a local synagogue on Yom Kippur. The accused man later confessed to the crimes before the court.

This resurgence of violent antisemitism is enabled by a growing global far-right populist movement. In the United States, antisemitic attacks spiked after the election of President Donald Trump in 2016. His anti-immigrant, pro-American rhetoric appeals to a populist tendencies of neo-Nazi groups. The President garnered backlash after refusing to condemn the participants in a 2017 Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia which aimed to create an alt-right coalition of members of white nationalists, neo-Nazis, and Klansmen. Participants marched and chanted racist and antisemitic slogans, ultimately resulting in clashes with counter-protesters and the death of one individual. The President responded to the rally publicly by stating that he "condemned hatred, bigotry, and violence on many sides" and that there were "very fine people on both sides" (CBS News). And, again, these trends in the United States appear globally. In Germany, where ultimate

reminders of the violent potential of antisemitism and extremism are all around in the built environment of cities—those same terrains of terror visited by the Grandchildren of survivors to rebuild memory—the far-right, anti-immigrant Alternative For Deutschland (AFD) party is experiencing growing support in the German Parliament. As of 2018 it was the biggest opposition party in the Bundestag and was drawing members from the moderate right party (BBC).

It is against this socio-political backdrop that the fourth-generation, the great-grandchildren of Holocaust survivors, is forming their Jewish identity. With reports emerging each day of anti-Semitic incidents and rising Holocaust denial, this generation is only beginning to navigate not only what it means to be Jewish but what it means to be the next generation called to testify to the events of the Shoah. Confronting a future without first-hand survivor testimony, this generation will face more pressure than ever to prevent the memory of the past from fading into oblivion. In this way, the fourth-generation will be following in the footsteps of their ancestors before them to perform a duty as old as the religion itself. In Deuteronomy 6:4-9, God gives the Israelites the following prayer: “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one” (Deuteronomy 4-9). In this prayer “Israel” is the Jewish religious community, *am Yisrael*, all Jews who ever have and ever will live. This central prayer represents the direct anointment given to the Jewish people by God and tasks the community with intergenerational remembrance. He says “and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children” and shall repeat those words “when thou lies down and when thou risest up” This ritual of remembrance calls on the Jewish people to reinforce their contract with God each morning and each night, repeating the same words that have been repeated by their ancestors since Biblical times. In a deuteronic practice, the fourth generation is called to remember, to testify to the events of the Holocaust, just as their ancestors have for generation. It is a ritual of remembrance that is as embedded in their DNA as repeating the words of the *Shema*. In the poem

“Shema” author and survivor Primo Levi writes, “Consider that this has been: I commend these words to you. Engrave them on your hearts...When you go to bed, when you rise: repeat them to your children. Or may your house crumble, disease render you powerless, Your offspring avert their faces to you” (10-23). Holocaust memory will be passed down generationally indefinitely to fulfill the centuries-old Deuteronomic commandment to teach one’s children to remember.

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