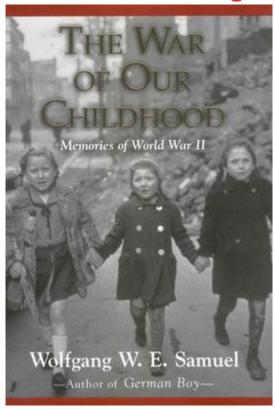
The War Of Our Childhood - Wolfgang W. E. Samuel



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One survivor tells of the fire bombing of Dresden. Another recounts the pervasive fear of marauding Russian and Czech bandits raping and killing. Children recall fathers who were only photographs and mothers who were saviors and heroes. These are typical in the stories collected in The War of Our Childhood: Memories of World War II. For this book Wolfgang W. E. Samuel, a childhood refugee himself after the fall of Nazi Germany, interviewed twenty-seven men and women who as children--by chance and sheer resilience--survived Allied bombs, invading armies, hunger, and chaos. "Our eyes carried no hate, only recognition of what was," Samuel writes of his childhood. "Peace was an abstraction. The world we Kinder knew nearly always had the word war appended to it." Samuel's heartfelt narratives from these innocent survivors are invariably riveting and often terrifying. Each engrossing story has perilous and tragic moments--school children in Leuna who are sent home during an air raid but are strafed as moving targets; fathers who exist only as distant figures, returning to their families long after the war--or not at all; mothers who are raped and tortured; families who are forced into a seemingly endless relocation that replicates the terrors of war itself. In capturing such experiences from nearly every region

of Germany and involving people of every socio-economic class, this is a collection of unique memories, but each account contributes to a cumulative understanding of the war that is more personal than strategic surveys and histories. For Samuel and the survivors he interviewed, agony and fright were part of everyday life, just as were play, wondrous experience, and above all perseverance. "My focus," Samuel writes, "is on the astounding ability of a generation of German children to emerge from debilitating circumstances as sane and productive human beings." Wolfgang W. E. Samuel, a retired colonel in the U. S. Air Force, is the author of German Boy: A Refugee's Story and I Always Wanted to Fly: America's Cold War Airmen, both published by University Press of Mississippi. He lives in Fairfax, Va.Author: Samuel, Wolfgang W. E. Publisher: University Press of Mississippi Illustration: N Language: ENG Title: The War of Our Childhood Pages: 00000 (Encrypted PDF) On Sale: 2002-09-27

SKU-13/ISBN: 9781578064823 Category: Biography & Autobiography: Personal Memoirs

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