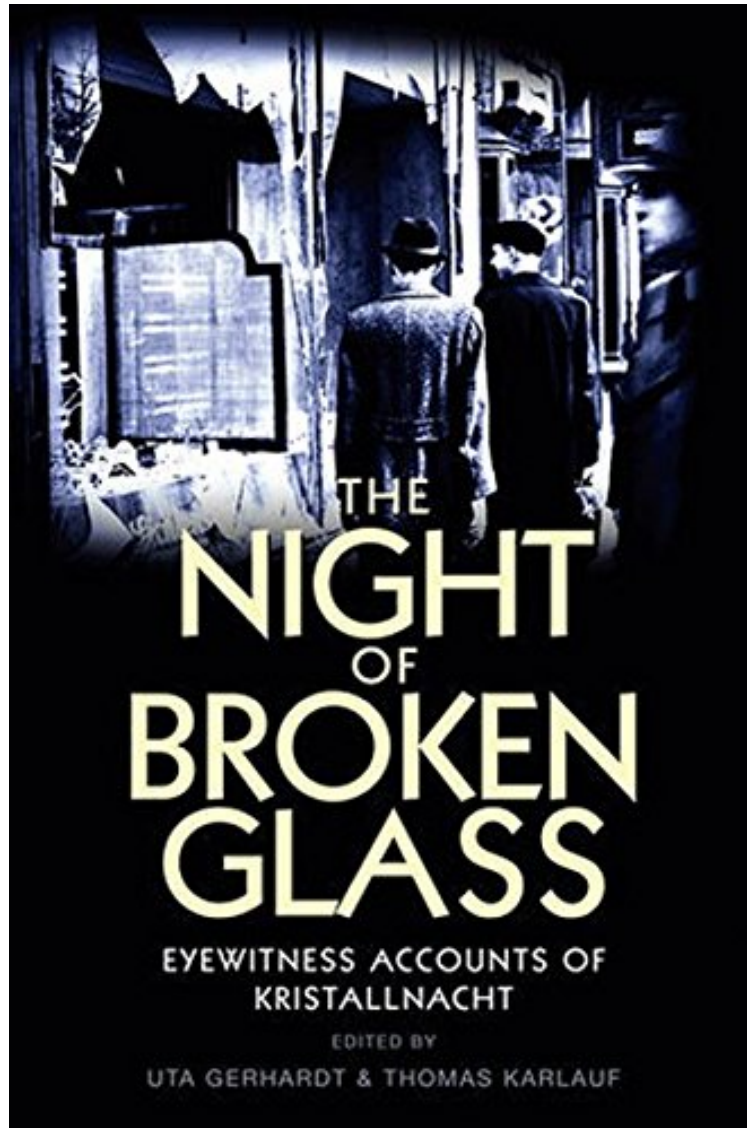


[E-BOOK] The Night of Broken Glass: Eyewitness Accounts of Kristallnacht

## The Night of Broken Glass: Eyewitness Accounts of Kristallnacht

*Uta Gerhardt, Thomas Karlauf*  
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**Uta Gerhardt, Thomas Karlauf : The Night of Broken Glass: Eyewitness Accounts of Kristallnacht** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Night of Broken Glass: Eyewitness Accounts of Kristallnacht:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I recommend it highlyBy APThis book was very hard to read. I cannot imagine going through what the Jews went through with the Nazis. It terrifies me just reading about it. I have

an 18 yr old niece who has read every book on the Holocaust that she has been able to get her hands on since she began middle school. She read this book. She said it doesn't matter how many books on the subject she reads, she always finds something new in each and every one of them. If you are one of those people who believe the Holocaust was just a hoax, you need to read this book. If you are one of those people who care about what happens to your family, your friends, your neighbors, you need to read this book. If you are one of those people who care about yourself, you need to read this book. I recommend it highly. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The Frightening Truth By Julie Merilatt This book offers rare first-hand accounts of the devastating pogrom against German Jews on the night of November 9-10, 1938. The testimonies here were originally compiled in 1939 by a Harvard sociologist in an attempt to educate Americans about the threat of Nazism and to convert isolationist attitudes. The statements presented here are heartbreaking. Many of the people who shared their experiences were affluent, educated, and often pillars of their community. They endured the destruction of their homes and businesses, many of them were imprisoned, often in concentration camps, and a majority were forced into exile. Not all were lucky enough to survive, but they were able to tell their stories and express their frustration at the injustices carried out against them. The testimonies vary in length and detail, but they all document the horrors of the night in which the Nazis systematically destroyed their continued existence in Germany. The editors Gerhardt and Karlauf offer great historical context in the introduction and afterward that set the tone for the frightening details presented by those who witnessed it. 5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. The most fortunate of the unfortunates By Maine Colonial In the mid-1930s, Edward Hartshorne was in Germany, working on his University of Chicago Ph.D. dissertation, *The German Universities and National Socialism*, on the destructive effect of National Socialism on German universities. Upon his return home to the US, he became an instructor at Harvard. As part of a research project, he worked with Harvard colleagues Sidney Fay (who was also Hartshorne's father-in-law) and Gordon Allport to compile personal histories of refugees from Nazi Germany. The Harvard team received 263 accounts, most of which were from Jews, and Hartshorne prepared a manuscript of selected accounts, which he titled *Nazi Madness: November 1938*. He was preparing this manuscript for publication, but it was never published, for reasons detailed in the note at the end of this review. Professor Uta Gerhardt, Emerita of the University of Heidelberg, and writer Thomas Karlauf, obtained Hartshorne's manuscript from his son and selected 21 personal accounts related to Kristallnacht and published them in Germany in 2009. This is a translation of that book. In 1938, the Nazis had been in power for six years, during which they relentlessly worked to exclude Jews from the life of the nation. They were removed from professional, academic and civil service positions; prohibited from marriage and sexual relations with so-called Aryans; disallowed from public facilities. With Kristallnacht, in November, 1938, the Nazis' anti-Semitic actions turned to violent extremes. In October, 1938, Germany expelled 16,000 Polish Jews from Germany. The "aktion" was sudden and violent, leaving the Jews stranded in the town of Zbaszyn, population about 6,000. One family, the Grynszpans, had a son, Herschel, then living in Paris. When Herschel received a postcard from his sister describing the family's treatment, he was so frustrated and furious that he went to the German embassy in Paris and shot Ernst vom Rath, a member of the diplomatic staff. Two days later, vom Rath died. Nazi propaganda chief Josef Goebbels used the death as a pretext to invite attacks on Germany's Jews by announcing that "spontaneous demonstrations" against the Jewish community would not be interfered with. This set off the orgy of violence--essentially a paramilitary riot orchestrated by the Nazis--since known as Kristallnacht, or the Night of Broken Glass, after the shards and crystals of glass heaped in the streets from shattered home and shop windows. Synagogues were burned throughout Germany and Austria, hundreds of people killed, and Jewish-owned homes and businesses destroyed. Over 30,000 German and Austrian Jewish men were rounded up and shipped off to camps at Dachau, Sachsenhausen and Buchenwald, where they were routinely and brutally beaten, with about 1,000 dying, before they were released. This volume of harrowing personal stories is divided into three parts, with seven accounts in each part. The first part describes the Kristallnacht riots themselves, the second part the concentration camp experiences and the third part "before emigration." This last part is a mix of different experiences of Jews in Germany and Austria in 1938 and 1939, before they were able to emigrate. Many of the stories are quite similar, which helps reveal some striking points, like that the real abusers were the Nazis' paramilitary units, the SA and SS. Actual police forces were instructed to stay away, and many were upset by the Nazi actions. Far from being an expression of the people's righteous anger, as Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels called it, this riot was upsetting to most Germans. Of course, there were exceptions, most troubling the many young people who had been thoroughly indoctrinated by Nazism and reveled in the brutality. Another striking point is what we don't see. Each of these personal accounts begins with a very short biographical sketch that includes information about where the person was able to emigrate to, generally in 1939. It reminds the reader that each of these accounts is from someone with the means to pay the extortionate demands of the Nazis and the good fortune to obtain emigration papers. As time passes and those who witnessed the Holocaust and World War II pass away, the publication of personal accounts like those in this book become increasingly valuable to the historical record. \*\*\*\*\*NOTE\*\*\*\*\* Edward Hartshorne's own story, which is the subject of this book's Afterword, could make an interesting book. Hartshorne's eye-opening experiences in the 1930s made him a fervent proponent of US intervention in the war. When the US finally entered the fight in 1941, he put aside his academic work (including plans to publish the *Nazi Madness* manuscript) and worked with the

OSS and the Office of War Information. Soon after Germany's defeat, he returned to the subject of his dissertation, Germany's universities. Attached to the US's Office of Military Government for Germany, Hartshorne worked to denazify the universities in the US zone of occupation and supervise their reopening. In August, 1946, Hartshorne was driving on the autobahn from Bavaria to Nuremberg when he was shot in the head by a man in a Jeep and died two days later. Uta Gerhardt and historian Richard J. Evans speculate that Hartshorne's murder may have been part of a plot by certain elements in the military government's Counter-Intelligence Corps. They write that Hartshorne was outraged to learn that the CIC was part of the ratline operation, which helped smuggle Nazi war criminals out of Europe to use them in the anticipated fight against Bolshevism. (For more about the ratlines, see Gerald Steinacher's *Nazis on the Run: How Hitler's Henchmen Fled Justice*.) Gerhardt and Evans claim that Hartshorne alerted the Soviets to the ratline operations and that this convinced the CIC that Hartshorne was too much of a threat to them. Novelist and historian Guy Walters disputes this conspiracy claim, stating there is no evidence to support the theory that Hartshorne contacted the Soviets about the ratlines or even knew anything about them himself. Walters refers to a *New York Times* report from 1946, which indicates that the killer was a German 19-year-old named Johann Detterbeck, who was a small-time criminal, active in the black market and wanted by the police for impersonating a US army officer, among other things. According to two German girls, they were riding in the Jeep with Detterbeck and two other men, out on a drunken joyride, when Detterbeck pulled out his pistol and shot Hartshorne after Hartshorne passed the Jeep. Detterbeck was himself shot and killed in a gunfight a few weeks later. Whatever the real reasons of Hartshorne's murder, I like to think he would be pleased that most of his manuscript is finally being published, even if it is over 60 years later than he anticipated. If you read German, you may be interested in an article about Hartshorne's work on the denazification of the German universities. You can find it by Googling "Edward Hartshorne und die Wiedereröffnung der deutschen Universitäten in der US-Besatzungszone." I'm not sure exactly what the following is, but here on there is also this title: *Academic proconsul: Harvard sociologist Edward Y. Hartshorne and the reopening of German universities : his personal account* (Mosaic) James E. Tent, Trier 1998.

November 9th 1938 is widely seen as a violent turning point in Nazi Germany's assault on the Jews. An estimated 400 Jews lost their lives in the anti-Semitic pogrom and more than 30,000 were imprisoned or sent to concentration camps, where many were brutally mistreated. Thousands more fled their homelands in Germany and Austria, shocked by what they had seen, heard and experienced. What they took with them was not only the pain of saying farewell but also the memory of terrible scenes: attacks by mobs of drunken Nazis, public humiliations, burning synagogues, inhuman conditions in overcrowded prison cells and concentration camp barracks. The reactions of neighbours and passersby to these barbarities ranged from sympathy and aid to scorn, mockery, and abuse. In 1939 the Harvard sociologist Edward Hartshorne gathered eyewitness accounts of the Kristallnacht from hundreds of Jews who had fled, but Hartshorne joined the Secret Service shortly afterwards and the accounts he gathered were forgotten - until now. These eyewitness testimonies - published here for the first time, with a foreword by Saul Friedländer, the Pulitzer Prize historian and Holocaust survivor - paint a harrowing picture of everyday violence in one of Europe's darkest moments. This unique and disturbing document will be of great interest to anyone interested in modern history, Nazi Germany and the historical experience of the Jews.