



Nazis, Lies, and Lullabies: A Case Study of Charactonyms in the National Socialist Children's Book *Trau keinem Fuchs auf grüner Heid*

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Abstract

In 1936, Elvira Theodolinde Bauer, a German kindergarten teacher and would-be graphic artist, wrote and illustrated a picturebook that would eventually become a classic of anti-Semitic children's literature. Entitled *Trau keinem Fuchs auf grüner Heide und keinem Jud bei seinem Eid!* [Trust neither a fox on a green heath nor a yid upon his oath!]¹ (Bauer 1936), the work was published and distributed by the infamous Nazi propagandist and publisher Julius Streicher—the Führer of Franken and the producer of the incendiary anti-Semitic weekly, *Der Stürmer*. After providing historical background on Streicher, Bauer, and the poisonous fruit of their literary collaboration, this article examines how character names in *Trau keinem Fuchs* were used to plant misinformation about and sow hatred against Jewish people living in the Reich. As this article also shows, by utilizing the names of real-life victims of Fascism, Bauer's fairy tales effectively blurred the line between fact and fiction for adult and child readers alike. The article ends with a discussion of the urgent need for more research into the ways hate groups, past and present, use names to indoctrinate new members, both great and small.

Keywords: literary onomastics, German, charactonym, anti-Semitism, children's literature, Julius Streicher, National Socialism

Introduction

The Rise of Julius Streicher

Julius Sebastian Streicher was born in a small Bavarian town on the 12th of February 1885. The son of a local school teacher, Streicher followed in his father's footsteps and entered the teaching profession at the age of 23. Five years later, he met and married the daughter of local baker, Kunigunde Roth², with whom he would have two sons: Lothar and Elmar. Streicher proved to be a miserable father and a brutal husband who regularly humiliated his family with his serial infidelity (Hahn 1978; Bytwerk 2001). At work, his unpredictable bouts of rage made him feared and disliked amongst both pupils and colleagues. In 1914, Streicher's ignominious pedagogical career was abruptly interrupted by the First World War. From 1914 to 1918, he served in the German infantry. Despite receiving multiple military reprimands for disorderly conduct, he gradually rose through the ranks to become a Lieutenant and was awarded two Iron Crosses (Bytwerk 2001). Like many young men in Germany, this period marked a radical turning point in Streicher's biography. After the War, Streicher obtained another teaching position in Nuremberg but his primary interest was German politics.

In 1922, he joined the **Deutschsoziale Partei** [German Social Party] (DSP), a rabidly xenophobic organization founded by the virulent antisemite, Max Liebermann von Sonnenberg (1848–1911). Von Sonnenberg was an influential and outspoken member of the German Reichstag. During his parliamentary tenure, he regularly used his power to promote discriminatory legislation such as the "Antisemites' Petition of 1880", which, among other things, called for prohibition of Jewish employees in Germany's justice and education systems (Levy 2005; Crowe 2018). Along with his hate-filled speeches before Parliament, von Sonnenberg spread his anti-Semitic rhetoric through his many publications (Lang 2007). Exemplary titles include "Die Schädigung des deutschen Nationalgeistes durch die jüdische Nation" [The Destruction of the German National Spirit by the Jewish Nation] and "Beiträge zur antisemitischen Bewegung von Jahre 1880–1885" [Essays on the Anti-Semitic Movement from 1880 to 1885].

Attracted by von Sonnenberg's racist vitriol, Streicher became an enthusiastic member of the DSP and in 1919, he founded a party chapter in Nuremberg. Just one year later, under Streicher's leadership, the Nuremberg DSP became one of the largest chapters in the nation with members throughout Franconia. Almost as quickly as it had ignited, Streicher's initial enthusiasm for von Sonnenberg and the other founding members of the DSP began to cool, however.

Like many radicals within the right nationalist movement, Streicher had come to believe that the DSP leadership was far too conservative and weak to bring about a true revolution. Frustrated, in April 1920, Streicher and several other DSP extremists established a new party, the German Workers' Collective or **Deutsche Werkgemeinschaft** (DWG). What the racist nationalist movement needed, they argued, was a complete break with the pre-existing political establishment and a leader who was willing to go to any lengths

necessary to establish a new world order. Despite this shared vision, internal power struggles amongst the party leadership threatened the existence of the new organization. By 1922, only two years after the group's founding, Streicher left the DWG and joined a rival white nationalist antisemitic organization led by an Austrian-born WWI veteran by the name of Adolf Hitler. Hitler's organization called itself the **Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei** (NSDAP) [National Socialist German Workers' Party]. Modelled on Benito Mussolini's Fascist Party, the NSDAP sought to overthrow the government using its paramilitary wing of Storm Troopers called the "Sturmabteilung" (SA). To be successful, however, the NSDAP needed more manpower. After negotiating the terms of collaboration, a temporary agreement was reached between Streicher and Hitler; Hitler agreed to give Streicher a freehand over Franconia and enough financial resources to settle the sizeable debts he had accumulated. In return, Streicher agreed to join the NSDAP and formally recognize Hitler as the supreme and absolute leader (Bytwerk 2001). In 1922, Streicher made good on his promise and became an official member of the NSDAP. But he did not come empty-handed. He took with him hundreds of his radicalized followers and immediately doubled the membership of the NSDAP (Roos 2014).

If Streicher and his men had had any lingering doubts about the NSDAP leader's resolve to establish a new political order, they were quickly quelled. In early November of 1923, Hitler and a few thousand of his loyal followers, including Streicher, waged an armed riot in the streets of Munich in an attempt to overthrow the government. Although the coup d'état failed, the experience forged a lasting bond between the two men. Even after credible and damning reports of Streicher's financial transgressions and sexual perversions proliferated in frequency and severity, Hitler staunchly refused to distance himself from Streicher, holding a protective hand over the self-anointed "Franconian Führer" for many years (Kulka & Jäckel 2004). In all likelihood, Hitler's unusual degree of tolerance was much less a question of personal affection than it was political expediency. For all his many reprehensible traits (or perhaps because of them), Streicher, like Hitler, had an uncanny ability to manipulate public opinion.³

In 1923, following the example of men like von Sonnenberg, Streicher took to the presses to spread the NSDAP message of hate. He named his publication *Der Stürmer* [The Stormer].⁴ The first issue was released April 21, 1923, a day after the Führer's birthday. Starting modestly with only a few thousand copies, within a few years, the German weekly boasted an international circulation of nearly half a million (Reuband 2008).⁵ The secret to *Der Stürmer's* success was simple but effective. Every week, it provided readers with a broad selection of shocking crime stories with lurid sex scenes. More often than not, the protagonist in these stomach-churning tales was an unsuspecting Aryan who had been shamelessly preyed upon by a diabolic figure who was almost invariably identified as Jewish. Without question, *Der Stürmer* was by no means the only fascist publication in Nazi Germany to rely on this formula. What set Streicher's newspaper apart, though, was its extremity. What others rejected for fear of offending readers (or worse yet, the Party), Streicher plastered across the front pages. For *Der Stürmer*, there was no lie too outrageous, no subject too taboo, no language too vulgar. And his readers loved it.

The popularity of *Der Stürmer* was bolstered by its wildly obscene illustrations of Jewish men, women, and children. In particular, caricatures produced by German illustrator Philipp Rupprecht, or "Fip(p)s" as he was commonly called, became a trademark of the anti-Semitic weekly. The Rupprecht reproduction shown below was confiscated by E. H. Mayer, a US American soldier. In May of 1945, Mayer retrieved the print from Streicher's private Bavarian villa. The lascivious illustration was featured in a 1924 edition of *Der Stürmer*.

Figure 1: Anti-Semitic Cartoon Drawn by Phillip Rupprecht (Fips) for 1924 Issue of *Der Stürmer*



Illustration is the property of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, Gift of Morton Mazer.

Rupprecht's obscene cartoons successfully synthesized widespread anti-Semitic stereotypes about "the Jewish menace". The Jewish community and its allies did not sit idly by as *Der Stürmer* spewed its poison week after week. Streicher was regularly required to appear in court to face charges of defamation and libel. In 1928, for example, in less than two weeks' time, Streicher and his staff faced five separate lawsuits (Bytwerk 2001). Dr. Walter Berlin, the Chair of the Nuremberg Chapter of the Central Union of German Citizens of the Jewish Faith [Central-Vereins deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens], brought several such lawsuits against Streicher for using cover illustrations so revolting that one could only conclude that their sole purpose was to communicate that all Jews must be utterly eradicated, by any and all means necessary. Such illustrations, Berlin argued, were clearly in violation of the German laws against inciting violence (Ruault 2006). Despite these efforts, Streicher's financial and political support throughout Franconia and beyond made him largely invulnerable. As Bytwerk (2001) explains, as far as Streicher was concerned, his "frequent court cases were generally no more than minor annoyances" and for the most part, he was free to pursue his two main political objectives: "building support for Nazism and spreading anti-Semitism" (24).

Interestingly, Streicher's weekly never became an official publication of the NSDAP. Nonetheless, the majority of its subscribers were made up of NSDAP sympathizers and members. Hitler himself reportedly never missed an issue (Wisstrich 2002). The fact that the newspaper remained privately owned by Streicher had advantages for both sides. While the Party could claim innocence whenever VIPs in Germany or abroad complained about the newspaper's obscene content, Streicher was largely free to publish what he liked and rake in the dividends. Streicher used these profits to finance his growing debauchery, and expand his publishing empire. In 1935, he founded the *Der Stürmer* Publishing House (Kreutzmüller & Weber 2008). Through this company, he released a virulent series of hate-filled pamphlets and books designed to exalt the Nazis' racist ideology.

Ever true to his pedagogical roots, some of Streicher's best-sellers were aimed at underage readers. This article examines one of his most notorious children's books, *Trau keinem Fuchs auf grüner Heide und keinem Jüd auf seinem Eid!* [Trust neither a fox on a green heath nor a yid⁶ upon his oath!] (Bauer 1936).⁷ More specifically, it focuses on how this children's book used character names to spread antisemitic propaganda. It also presents the back story of some of the real-life victims whose names appeared in what one US American journalist reporting for *the Southwest Jewish Chronicle* called the "Aryan Mother Goose" (1937, 3).

The Birth of *Trau Keinem Fuchs*

Although unfortunately few historical details have survived, according to most accounts, the author of *Trau Keinem Fuchs*⁸ (*TKF*) was a Miss Theodolinde Elvira Bauer. Born ca. 1915 in the German city of Nuremberg, Fräulein Bauer, like Streicher, had trained to become a teacher before her dreams took her in a completely different direction. At around the age of 18, she interrupted her pedagogical path to try her hand at becoming an artist. Bauer was accepted to attend Nuremberg's prestigious school of art but struggled to pay the fees. In hopes of shoring up her finances, she wrote and illustrated a children's book.⁹

In a style vaguely reminiscent of *Aesop's Fables*, Bauer's tales were designed to teach young Aryans the basic principles of National Socialism. In line with the Party ideology, Bauer's Aryan protagonists were attractive, noble, strong, and fair; while her Jewish antagonists were loathsome and repulsive—dark both in appearance and intention. Much to her frustration, Bauer's book proposal was rejected by a number of publishing houses with close ties to the NSDAP such as the Franz Eher Verlag in Munich and the Josef Scholz Verlag in Mainz (Doderer 1981). Where these publishers politely declined, Streicher eagerly accepted. Within a few weeks of viewing Bauer's preliminary material, Streicher had offered her an official publishing contract and even promised to pay her art school tuition.

It is unclear how much Bauer's final text was influenced by Streicher and his staff. Certainly, several of the Jewish caricatures appear to be identical to Fip's illustrations. A great deal of the terminological and thematic obscenities found throughout the picturebook also match Streicher's notorious style. And, Streicher certainly had experience in writing for underage readers. During his time as a schoolteacher, for example, he "wrote anti-Semitic plays for the children and developed an endless supply of hate-filled anecdotes about the Jewish people" that he regularly shared with his pupils (Dolibois 1989, 113). Moreover, Streicher had a reputation for heavily editing each issue of *Der Stürmer* to ensure that every article matched his own style (Roos 2014). Given these facts, it is only reasonable to assume that Streicher took special care to make sure that the very first children's book to be released by his publishing house carried his trademark style.

To help guarantee the book's commercial success, Streicher threw the full weight of his propaganda machine behind the project. Even before the picturebook appeared in print, readers of *Der Stürmer* were being encouraged to place their purchases. According to the advertisements, Bauer's work was an invaluable pedagogical tool for instructing Aryan children about the dangers of "the Jew". To maximize sales, the book was released in early December, just in time for the Yuletide shopping season. Once again, Streicher's instincts were proven right. The picturebook became a financial success and was widely considered obligatory reading for National Socialists, large and small. Before the fall of the Third Reich, the publication had undergone at least seven different editions and more than 100,000 copies had been distributed—quite a feat considering wartime shortages.

In terms of its layout, Bauer's work had many features in common with modern picturebooks currently on the market today. The bright red book was adorned with several multi-colored illustrations and large black and red lettering¹⁰ in "Fibelschrift": a style of script customarily used at the time for German primers. The text itself was composed of 43 unpaginated pages with 21 short stories that were told more but usually less successfully in end rhyme. The two overriding messages of the tales were consistent and simple: 1) all Jews, without exception, are the children of Satan; and 2) all Aryans, no matter their age, are charged with protecting the Reich against "the Jew's" evil-doings. With those themes as the underlying philosophical foundation, each story in the book was dedicated to teaching a particular Party principle. The importance of adhering to each of these rules was reinforced by showing, both in word and image, what misfortunes befell those who fraternized or dared to sympathize with Jews. In story after story, readers were told that those who foolishly trusted "the Jew" would receive ridicule, betrayal, and treachery as their only reward. According to *TKF*, in hopes of achieving their evil aims, Jews frequently used elaborate schemes to disguise their true identities. One of the most common forms of Jewish deception, Bauer's book claimed, was adopting so-called "Aryan" names. As will be detailed below, to help young readers to discover and denounce Jews hiding in their midst, *TKF* provided a twisted guide on Jewish naming patterns.

TKF Misinformation on Jewish Names and Naming

The *TKF* Tale "Jüdische Namen" [*Jewish Names*]

The first verse of this story reads: "Damit den Jud man sollt nicht kennen/Tat bald er anders sich bennen" [To make sure the Yid is not recognized/He hides his name in some other guise]. What follows is a lengthy description of the ways Jews allegedly altered their personal names so they could easily blend in with the Aryan

population and perpetrate their heinous crimes. According to the *TKF*, examples of such onomastic subterfuge include suffixation with -son (e.g., *Levin*→*Levinson*) and elision (e.g., *Abraham*→*Brahm*). In addition to these tricks, particularly cunning Jews, the *TKF* warned, would even go so far as to drop their original Jewish names in exchange for entirely new ones: [German original: “Doch andre sind besonders hell! Verschwinden lass auf der Stell” (Bauer 1936, 7)].¹¹

At the time that the *TKF* was published, the notion that an untold number of Jews were concealing their identity by using names common to non-Jews was frequently depicted in the NSDAP-controlled media as a threat to domestic security (Nick 2019). Fueling those public fears, *Der Stürmer* frequently outed prominent society members who were of Jewish heritage but had so-called “Aryan-sounding” names. Whether or not the people profiled were actually Jewish was of little concern to Streicher and his team. With every spectacular outing, public paranoia increased and paper sales were boosted. While it is true that the personal names of German-speaking Jews and non-Jews demonstrated a significant amount of overlap (Brechenmacher 2001), the reason was not, as the *TKF* suggested, a pernicious Jewish conspiracy designed to undermine the rule of law. In fact, precisely the opposite was the case.

Before the 18th century, the naming system of central European Jews followed the Biblical onomastic custom in which a person’s forename was accompanied by the gendered Hebrew form of “ben” ‘son of’ or “bat” ‘daughter of’ in conjunction with a progenitor’s forename (e.g., *Aaron ben Devorah* ‘Aaron son of Devorah’, *Joshua ben Nun* ‘Joshua son of Nun’, *Rachel bar Yehuda* ‘Rachel daughter of Yehuda’, *Chanah bat Leah* ‘Chanah daughter of Leah’) (Bering 1995; Brechenmacher 2001). By the 19th century, central European governments increasingly passed legislation which required Jewish residents to abandon this traditional system of nomenclature for one that conformed to the onomastic norms of the surrounding non-Jewish community. The philosophy behind much of this legislation was that cultural assimilation was the key to the successful and harmonious integration of Jewish people into the larger Christian society. At the time, this solution to inter-faith tensions was considered to be extremely liberal. One of the most famous and influential pieces of legislation to come from this progressive thinking was the Prussian Emancipation Edict of 1812 (Arndt 2003).

Ratified by King Friedrich Wilhelm III (1770–1840), this revolutionary statute decreed that all Jewish residents of Prussia would be afforded the general privileges and protections of Christian citizens under the proviso that they adopt a fixed family name to be used exclusively for all public affairs. According to this regulation, within six months of the edict’s official release, all persons of the Jewish faith were to report their new family names to the local governmental authorities and police. Those who complied with the edict would thereafter be exempted from antisemitic regulations that had previously restricted their choice of education, profession, and residence. They would also be allowed to purchase property of their choice and serve in the military to fight for their king and honor. As a part of the period of Enlightenment, such legislation gradually spread throughout the principalities that would eventually converge into the German Empire (1871–1918).¹¹

As Bering (1995) observes, it was with the so-called Judenedikt [Jews Edict] of 1812 that the names of German Jews became inextricably linked with their citizenship and freedom. While such legislation was frequently phrased in such a way that compliance appeared to be voluntary, in reality, refusal to adhere to these regulations was often made punishable by banishment, fines, and/or imprisonment. Alongside these external pressures to assimilate, there were also internal motivations. In an effort to protect themselves and their families against anti-Semitism, many Jewish Germans and Austrians filed legal petitions for an official name change. In cases where a clear and present danger of name-based stigmatization could be established, such petitions were regularly granted.¹³ Thus, contrary to what the *TKF* falsely asserted, the high degree of overlap between the personal names of Jewish and non-Jewish Germans and Austrians in the 20th century was not evidence of widespread deception for criminal intent: rather, it was the result of the Jewish community’s compliance with legislation in an attempt to avert xenophobic governmental and societal reprisals. As will be shown in the next section, “Jüdische Namen” [Jewish Names] was not the only segment of *TKF* that was filled with blatant onomastic misinformation.

The TKF Tale “Jud bleibt Jud” [A Yid is a Yid is a Yid]

In this tale, the story is told of a Jewish man by the name of *Itzig Ephraim*. In the story, Ephraim converts to Christianity and takes on the new name *Gothilf Joachim Fridricus Christian Itzig* upon his baptism. A short time after his conversion, on a Friday evening, Itzig is paid a visit by the local pastor. Upon his arrival, the clergyman is shocked to discover his new parishioner enjoying a goose dinner. When reprimanded by the pastor for eating meat on Friday, Herr Itzig replies that, before dining, he had made sure to baptize the goose and turn it into a fish. This anti-Semitic story once again characterizes Jewish people as disingenuous. It also openly mocks the Christian Church for foolishly ignoring the scriptural warning to remain wary of those who come in

sheep’s clothing but are ravenous wolves—or foxes (Matthew 7:15). In *TKF*, however, this Biblical adage is taught with a National Socialist twist: Jews can no more be converted into Christians than fowl can be changed into fish. This position flew directly in the face of centuries of European Judeo-Christian religious practice and stood in complete opposition to the historical trend.

In January of 1850, the constitution of the North German Confederation formally guaranteed the right of all subjects to practice whatever religion they so chose. Two decades later, in 1871, this religious freedom had been extended to the rest of Germany (Gerstenberger 1997). Taking advantage of this new guaranteed right, during the 19th century alone it is estimated that ca. 22,000 Jewish Germans converted to Christianity. By the start of the 20th century, the rate of Jewish to Christian conversions had increased radically: so much so that some described the movement as a “baptismal wave” [Taufwelle] (Gay 1992). Although the number of Christians who converted to Judaism remained comparatively small, the practice was by no means unheard of, particularly in interfaith marriages. As a part of the religious conversion process, it was not uncommon for novitiates of either faith to officially adopt a new name. Before the National Socialists came to power, German law routinely granted name change petitions made on the grounds of religious conversion (Nick 2019). However, as the intellectual liberalism of the Weimar Republic began to erode, Judaism was progressively re-defined in the legal statutes as a fixed racial classification rather than a mutable religious denomination. Along with this policy shift, conversion was no longer accepted as grounds for a legal change in name. In fact, under the Nazis, the very notion of conversion was broadly considered to be utterly preposterous. Precisely this point is made for underage readers in the final verse of the *TKF* tale “Jud bleibt Jud”:

German Original	English Translation
Fünf Eimer Wasser über'm Schopf Verändern keinen Judenkopf! Das sollt Ihr merken gut, Ein Jude bleibt ein Jud!	Even five pails of water poured over his head couldn't convert a Jew, not one little bit. That's something you'd all do well to remember. Don't ever forget A Yid remains a Yid! No matter what he did!

As with the other *TKF* stories, the moral of this antisemitic tale is powerfully reinforced by the character names. Not satisfied with a simple name change, after his baptism, the Jewish character *Ephraim* is depicted as adorning himself with an ostentatiously long string of new monikers: [*Gotthilf*, ‘God Help!’, a name popular amongst extremely devote German Lutherans in the 18th and 19th centuries] + [*Joachim*, a Hebrew name which means ‘peace’ and ‘tranquility’] + [*Fridericus*, a Latinate variant of the Germanic name *Friedrich*, one of the most popular boy’s names in Germany at the time of *TKF* and the nickname of a silver coin that featured the bust of the Prussian King Frederick II¹⁴] + [*Christian*, a name derived from the Latin “christianus” ‘follower of Christ’]. Despite the character’s elaborate change in forenames, his family name is the ancient Hebrew surname *Itzig*. The selection of this surname for the Jewish convert helped to underscore the Party’s position that conversion was futile. For attentive underage readers, the message was clear: for all the character’s onomastic flourish, in the end, his Jewish identity shone through. For adult *TKF* readers, this character’s surname may have served additional narrative functions.

During the Nazi period, *Itzig* was a common slur¹⁵ and many anti-Semitic jokes included a character named *Itzig*. In fact, the name was so strongly associated with Judaism that when Nazi officials began their search for a compulsory name to mark all Jews living within the Reich, *Itzig* was seriously considered as a surname affix (e.g., *Henriette Meier* → *Henriette Meier-Itzig*; *Hans Müller* → *Hans Müller-Itzig*) (Lommatzsch 2009). This suggestion was ultimately rejected, however, in favor of requiring all Jewish women and men to take on the additional forenames *Sara(h)* and *Israel*, respectively (e.g., *Henriette Meier* → *Henriette Sara(h) Meier*; *Hans Müller* → *Hans Israel Müller*). Nevertheless, the fact that *Itzig* was considered at all demonstrates just how stigmatized the name was at the time *TKF* was published. Of course, the children exposed to *TKF* might not have been cognizant of all these sociohistorical layers. However, without doubt, many adult anti-Semitic readers would have found the convert’s chosen name *Gotthilf Joachim Fridricus Christian Itzig* particularly entertaining. As Streicher’s advertisement promised, the picturebook offered something for all readers, both big and small.

Possible Names Behind the Names in *TKF*

Real-Life People Whose Personal Names Matched Those Found in the TKF

In the above sections, a discussion was provided of the ways in which fictional personal names helped to reinforce the NSDAP Party philosophy in the *TKF*. In this section, attention is turned to the ways in which *TKF* used the names of real people to spread the Nazis' anti-Semitic program of hate.¹⁶ For example, in the list of personal names provided in "Jüdische Namen" [Jewish Names], the surname *Dreyfuß* is given. Captain Alfred Dreyfus (1859–1935) was an officer in the French artillery. In 1894, in proceedings that made international headlines, he was court-martialed and convicted of treason. Following the court's guilty verdict, Dreyfus's military insignia were ripped away from his uniform and his sword was broken in half. The disgraced captain was then paraded before a jeering crowd who shouted "'Judas, Jewish traitor' and 'Death to the Jews'" (Fischel 2020, 90). Although Dreyfus's innocence was later proven, amongst German anti-Semites his surname remained inextricably associated with Jewish deceit, treachery, and dishonor. Within the Nazi Party, it was generally believed that it was this combination of Jewish cowardice and faithlessness that was ultimately responsible for Germany's defeat in WWI.¹⁷ Adult *TKF* readers could have easily made a connection between the fictional *Dreyfuss* in the children's book and the real-life *Dreyfus* covered extensively in fascist media.

Another surname presented in the *TKF* tale "Jüdische Namen" that might well have triggered strong negative associations amongst adult readers was *Schloss*. Louis Schloss was a widowed Jewish businessman in Nuremberg. In December 1925, Schloss was arrested by police on suspicion of moral depravity. He was then formally charged with having inflicted grievous bodily harm on Aryan women while performing sado-masochistic sexual acts. Schloss's defense lawyer argued that the acts were entirely consensual. The combination of sex, violence, and Jewish-Aryan miscegenation created a feeding frenzy in the German boulevard press which included of course Julius Streicher's team. As the trial progressed, *Der Stürmer* provided its readers with shocking details about what had gone on behind the doors of Nuremberg's "Yid-Torturer" (Folterjud). With every article, *Der Stürmer* stressed the contrast between Schloss's reputation as a respectable businessman in public and his alleged sexual perversion in private. The message was simple: no Jewish person could ever be trusted, no matter how trustworthy they appeared. At the end of the trial, Schloss was found guilty and given a prison sentence of seven years. In the spring of 1933, he was transferred from police custody to serve out his sentence in a newly erected prison facility located outside of Munich. The name of the penal complex was Dachau.

On the 15th of May 1933, Schloss arrived in the concentration camp along with ninety-five other detainees. The prisoners were met by a cadre of SS officers. Immediately upon arrival, Schloss was ordered to identify himself. Once he stepped forward, he was commanded to strip completely naked. No sooner had he removed his clothes was he descended upon by the SS guards with leather whips. Schloss was flagellated into unconsciousness. His bloodied body was then dragged into one of the detention cells where the beating continued. At some point during Schloss's torture, the SS officers were joined in the concentration camp by the Frankenführer himself, Julius Streicher. Streicher, who regularly boasted of horsewhipping political prisoners when the opportunity arose (Wistrich 2002), apparently could not pass up the opportunity of paying Schloss a personal visit (Möllenhauer 2019). On May 16, 1933, a day after his internment, the prisoner Louis Schloss was reported to have been found dead in his cell. According to the official camp records, the prisoner had hanged himself from a noose fashioned from his pants suspenders which he had allegedly attached to a hook on the wall of his cell. Schloss's death was listed as an apparent suicide. However, a forensic investigation conducted by a medical examiner on the 17th of May revealed that the recorded manner of death was highly questionable. Given the extensive lacerations evident on the deceased's body, the medical examiner ruled that these injuries were the more likely cause of death.¹⁸ Though not explicitly stated, this finding would mean that the official manner of death was not suicide but murder.

Just a few years after the sensationalistic coverage the Schloss Trial had received nationwide, there is little doubt that adult readers of the *TKF* would have recognized his surname among those listed in the Bauer children's book. Interestingly, *Schloss* was not the only Dachau concentration camp victim whose surname appeared in the *TKF* list of Jewish names. Just four lines above where Schloss's name appears, the surnames *Hirsch*, *Katz*, and *Strauss* were also listed. All three of these last names correspond to prominent men who were also imprisoned and tortured in Dachau: (1) Josef Hirsch was an outspoken Communist Party leader who served on the Munich city council. Hirsch was famous throughout Franconia for his fiery anti-Nazi speeches and was imprisoned in Dachau in April of 1933; (2) Dr. Delwin Katz was a fellow Communist and respected Jewish physician from Nuremberg. Katz earned an Iron Cross for his service in WWI. In April of 1933, he too was sent to Dachau; and (3) Dr. Alfred Strauss, a prominent Jewish lawyer in Munich, who was imprisoned in

Dachau in the early spring of 1933.¹⁹Both Katz and Strauss were murdered in the same month and year as Schloss, under equally suspicious circumstances. According to the initial camp report, Dr. Strauss was shot by an SS officer who claimed he was at least six feet away from the prisoner when he fired his weapon. However, the medical examination subsequently revealed the lawyer’s true cause of death was two gunshot wounds to the back of head which had been fired at close range (Ryback 2015). The same inconsistency was found in the initial camp report for Dr. Katz who, like Schloss, had been listed by concentration camp officials as having hanged himself in his detention cell. However, just like in the Schloss case, the Katz autopsy also revealed that the more likely cause and manner of death was severe beating and/or strangulation by another person (i.e., murder) (Ryback 2015). Finally, Josef Hirsch was also mercilessly whipped and beaten by the SS during his internment in Dachau. However, miraculously, with the assistance of his fellow Communists, Hirsch was able to escape and lived to give testimony about the Nazis’ crimes against humanity after the war.

Of course, given the commonality of the surnames *Schloss*, *Katz*, *Hirsch*, and *Strauss*, it is impossible to say with certainty whether these four last names were mentioned in *TKF* to make a direct and singular reference to the four real life persons described above. While those inside Streicher’s circle may have known precisely whom these names alluded to, for outsiders in the general public, the exact reference would have remained ambiguous. However, this lack of specificity was not without utility. On the one hand, it would have helped to shield Bauer and Streicher from charges of libel. On the other hand, the lack of specificity may also have strengthened the underlying message of *TKF*. At the end of the day, it was not one specific Jew who posed a danger to the Reich, but the entirety of Judaism.

The Shared Onomastic Pillory of the *TKF* and *Der Stürmer*

Remarkably, an examination of the internal records of *Der Stürmer* revealed that many of the so-called “Jewish names” featured in Bauer’s picturebook matched the names of real-life people who had been publicly pilloried in Streicher’s sadistic weekly. In many cases, the *TKF* list of “Jewish names” matched more than one person who had been profiled in *Der Stürmer* as an enemy of the Reich. Take, for example, the surname *Katz*. In 1934, issue 32 of *Der Stürmer* reported on a *Jud Katz* [a ‘Yid named Katz’] who was said to have defiled a German girl living in Westphalia. A year later, in issue 9, another Mr. Katz from Gelsenkirchen was alleged to be a child-rapist and an animal torturer. In the table below, a sample of some of the other concordances found between the charactonyms featured in the *TFK* and the personal names of Jewish citizens profiled in the *Der Stürmer* are presented.

Table 1: A Sampling of Charactonyms in *Trau Keinem Fuchs* that Correspond with the Personal Names of German Jews Accused of Crimes in *Der Stürmer*

TFK		Der Stürmer		
Charactonym	Alleged Offense German	Alleged Offense English	Yr/Issue	
1. Blühdorn	Rassenschande	miscegenation		1936/09
2. Blum	Knabenverderber	pedophilia		1936/13
3. Blumenfeld	Misshandlung einer deutscher Frau	assault of a German woman		1934/13
4. Fels	Rassenschande	miscegenation		1935/33
5. Herz	Tarnung Namen	identity concealment		1934/30
6. Hirsch	Rassenschande	miscegenation		1934/39
7. Katz	Mädchenschänder und Tierschänder	child molestation and animal torture		1935/09
8. Klein	Tarnung Namen	identity concealment		1935/09
9. Kohn	Tierquäler	animal torture		1935/35
10. Löwenstein ²⁰	Preiswücher	profiteering		1938/32
11. Mond	Rassenschande	miscegenation		1936/09
12. Stein	Ritualmord	ritual murder		1934/32
13. Stern	Rassenschänder	miscegenation		1933/30
14. Strauss	Rassenschande	miscegenation		1935/33

As shown in the table above, even a cursory sampling of the many charactonyms that appeared in *TKF* yielded positive matches with the personal names of individuals condemned in *Der Stürmer*. A review of their accused alleged crimes also reveals a preponderance of offenses involving identity concealment, sexual transgression, egregious bodily harm, or a combination of all three. The paper's concentration on themes related to violence and sexual defilement was a reflection of societal angst over the reported dangers of "race-mixing"^{21, 22, 23} as well as Streicher's own craven predilections (Baird 1978; Hahn 1978; Roos 2013; Mollenhauer 2019). However, nowhere in these public castigations was there one word mentioned about the horrific acts of violence being perpetrated against millions of innocent Jewish citizens throughout Europe on a daily basis.

It is impossible to know whether memories of all or any of these stories may have been (un)consciously triggered in the minds of adults who read the character names presented as being Jewish in *TKF*. However, given the fact that a substantial number of *TKF* readers were also at least occasional readers of *Der Stürmer*, the degree of overlap between the personal names listed in Streicher's newspaper and Bauer's children's book might not have been without consequence. The simple repetition of names may have lent the children's book the illusion of truth.

As decades of psychological research have shown, the more people are exposed to false information, the more apt they are to believe it (Bacon 1979; Begg, Armour, & Kerr 1985; Brown & Nix 1996; Marsh, Meade, & Roedinger 2003; Moons, Mackie, & Garcia-Marques 2009; Fazio, et al. 2015). Importantly, the so-called "repetition effect" remains remarkably robust even for known falsehoods (Fazio 2020) or statements that contradict people's prior knowledge (De Keersmaecker et al 2019; Pennycook, Cannon, & Rand 2018). What scientists have established today the Nationalist Socialists already recognized decades ago. As Nazi Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels declared, if a lie is repeated often enough, people will begin to believe it is the truth.

Discussion and Conclusion

Encouraged by the success of *TKF*, Streicher's publishing house went on to release an entire series of books for children and adolescents. Two prominent examples are *Der Giftpilz: ein Stürmer Buch für Jung und Alt* [The Poisonous Mushroom: A Stürmer Book for Young and Old] and *Der Pudelmopsdackelpinscher* [The Poodle-pug-dachshund-pinscher]. Both works were written by the anti-Semite Ernst Hiemer (1900–1974) in 1938 and 1940, respectively. Much to Streicher's disappointment, however, neither these nor any of the other *Stürmer* children's books achieved quite the same level of commercial success as *TKF*.²⁴ Part of the secret to the uncommon success of *TKF* was the book's ability to effectively appeal to two very different audiences. While underage readers were enticed by the colorful illustrations and simplistic messaging, adult readers were convinced by the book's compliance with the prevailing political ideology of the time. As was shown in this article, a key to the picturebook's adept management of this dual address was the character names which simultaneously targeted both reading audiences to instill and/or reinforce dangerous and incendiary disinformation about Jewish people. Although *TKF* is frequently singled out today as being a particularly repellant example of anti-Semitic children's literature, it is important to bear in mind that it was only one of countless publications aimed at indoctrinating underage readers in the Reich.

With the rise of the Nazi Party, the book market for children's literature was inundated with right extremist propaganda for every age group, across all genres, and in any area of interest imaginable. Thus, just as quickly as literary children's classics by celebrated Jewish authors and illustrators were being removed from the bookshelves and burnt in public bonfires,²⁵ their space was being filled with tens of thousands of pages of hate-filled propaganda aimed at promoting unquestioned allegiance to the Führer and his genocidal policies. The importance of this literature cannot be underestimated. As Mills (1999) explained in a lecture given before Yad Vashem, in many ways the emergence and proliferation of this poisoned children's literature not only heralded the atrocities committed during the Holocaust: "Without the hate these books sought to instill into young children, there could not have been a Final Solution" (7).

Today, there is no absence of research on children's literature during the Third Reich (e.g., Mann 1938; Wunderlich 1937; Kamenetsky 1984; Ortmeyer 1996; Schreckenberg 2001; Wegner 2002; Pine 2011; Goutham 2014; Feldman 2021). However, as yet, comparatively little work has been done on the role literary names and naming may have played in fascist propaganda published for children. This scholarly gap is regrettable, as there is much to be learned. For example, comparisons across authors, genres, languages, and nations might help shed much-needed light on the ways literary names were used and abused to demonize and dehumanize Jews and other minorities during the Third Reich.

However, such research would not only be useful to further our collective understanding of hate-crimes committed in the past. It would also be beneficial for identifying and preventing efforts by contemporary hate-groups to spread disinformation and indoctrinate new underage recruits today. As Philip (2008) explains, children's literature "is arguably the literary form most worthy of serious attention. These are the books people read before they are fully formed ... [when] their ideas about themselves and the world in which they live are still developing" (23). Given the shocking increase in disinformation, hate crimes, and hate speech, the importance of such work cannot be overstated.

Notes

¹ Unless otherwise indicated, all German to English translations are those of the author.

² On December 1, 1943, Kunigunde Streicher died after years of failing physical and mental health. Two years after her death, Julius Streicher married his 39-year-old secretary Adele Tappe (Ruault 2009).

³ Franconia soon became one of the most feared centers of anti-Semitism. It was home to not only Julius Streicher, but also many other powerful officials within the NSDAP (e.g., Heinrich Himmler, Hermann Göring, and Hans Frank). Together, these men created a deadly network of terror (Raim 2012). As scholar and survivor Werner Cahnman observed first-hand, much of the repressive legislation which the Nazis imposed throughout the Reich was "tried first in Franconia under the slogan 'Franconia First!'" (Maier, Marcus, & Tarr 1989, 121). For example, in 1933, most schools in Nuremberg had already banned Jewish students (Borut 2012). It would take another five years before this prohibition was officially made law throughout the rest of the Reich.

⁴ The name is reminiscent of the NSDAP paramilitary organization, Der **Sturm**abteilung (SA) with which many of the earliest Party members held very close ties. For a discussion of incidents in which Streicher and the SA worked together in Nuremberg, see (Roos 2014).

⁵ By comparison, rival publications such as *Der Angriff* [The Attack], *Der Führer* [The Leader], and *Der Freiheitskampf* [The Fight for Freedom] never reached a circulation of over 150,000 (Wohlfromm & Wohlfromm 2016).

⁶ In the German original, instead of the term "Juden", the deeply pejorative term "Jud" is used (Schmitz-Berning 2000). It is for this reason that the slur "Yid" was selected over the term "Jew" for the English translations presented in this article.

⁷ According to Streicher's testimony during the Nuremberg Trials, inspiration for the book title came from Martin Luther's 16th century publication "Von den Juden und ihren Lügen" [Everything About Jews and Their Lies]. The original passage was as follows: "Trau keinem Wolf auf wilder Heiden/Auch keinem Juden auf seine Eiden" [Trust no wolf on a wild heath/nor a Jew on his oath] (Roos 2014).

⁸ A facsimile of the German text can be found here: <https://www.mori.bz.it/Bauer%20Elvira%20-Trau%20Keinem%20Fuchs.pdf>

⁹ According to archival documents, the original idea of writing a children's book came from the Bavarian-based painter, writer, and art critic Rudolf Rösermüller, whom Bauer had turned to for advice (Doderer 1981). Rösermüller suggested a children's book might well help Bauer raise the funds she needed for her studies. At the same time, he explicitly advised Bauer against approaching Julius Streicher with her work. Streicher, he warned, was not to be trusted. Instead, Rösermüller promised to use his own contacts to help Bauer find a publisher. When his efforts failed, Bauer ignored his warnings and approached Streicher. True to Rösermüller's prediction, Streicher published Bauer's work, pocketed the profits, and refused to pay Bauer either the agreed-upon honorarium or her school fees (Schreckenberg 2001). There is more than a bit of irony in the fact that a picturebook claiming to warn children about the duplicity of Jewish people would be published by a man who was a notorious liar and manipulator. After the book's publication, Bauer reportedly left Franconia and moved to Berlin. It is there that her biographical trail ends. Correspondence between Rösermüller and Bauer can be found in the municipal archives of Nuremberg.

¹⁰ As the German author Erika Mann noted, even the lettering in Bauer's book was designed to maximize its anti-Semitic effect. As Mann rightly pointed out, those words which Bauer wished to stress were strategically printed in red coloring (e.g., "devil", "thick-lips", "Jews"). After reading the entire text, Mann concluded that it was "impossible to describe the level of sadistic cruelty, the dishonesty and barbarism of this book" (57).

¹¹ *Der Stürmer* also advised its readers on how to use names to detect cases of Jewish deception. These pseudo-scientific advice columns typically appeared in the section entitled "An ihren Namen sollt ihr sie erkennen" [You Shall Know Them by Their Names] which is a play on the Biblical verse Matthew 7:16 (KJV) where it is written that despite their attempts to hide, evildoers shall be known by their fruits.

¹² As detailed by Kunze (1998), other jurisdictions that passed legislation mandating that Jewish residents adopt fixed hereditary surnames include Austria (1787); Frankfurt am Main (1807); Hessen-Darmstadt (1808), Baden (1809); Bavaria (1813); Anhalt (1822); Saxony-Weimar (1823); and Saxony (1834). For a detailed analysis of anti-Semitic onomastic legislation passed during the Third Reich, see (Nick 2019).

¹³ Once the Nazis came to power, anti-Jewish prejudice and discrimination were no longer accepted as a condition for a legal name change, unless the petitioner could prove he or she was Aryan. For more on the history of name change policies during the Third Reich, see Nick (2019)

¹⁴ According to the British Museum, the inscription on the silver coin reads: “Fridericus Borussorum Rex” (https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/C_1841-0928-86). Accessed August 30, 2022.

¹⁵ In much the same way, the name *Sambo* came to be used as pejorative term for African-Americans in the United States. The term *Itzig* is still a recognized, albeit archaic, slur in modern German.

¹⁶ The character names in *TKF* featured not only the names of Jewish men and women who were famous in Germany. It also included the names of those who had reached international prominence. For example, in the segment “Jüdische Namen”, the names *Baron von Rothschild* and *Grossman* appear. Most modern readers will still recognize the former. However, the latter surname may only ring a bell among those familiar with opera in the 1930s. Walter Grossmann (1900–1973) was a Jewish operatic baritone who famously sang with the Viennese Philharmonic. During the Third Reich, one of his most unforgettable performances took place in 1938 when he sang before none other than Joseph Goebbels during a performance of Wagner’s “Meistersänger” at the world famous Salzburger Festspiele in Austria (Friedländer 2013).

¹⁷ Amongst French anti-Semites, the “Dreyfuss Affair”, as the scandal came to be called, became a rallying point in the pro-fascist Vichy regime “which collaborated with Nazi Germany between 1940 and 1944 and helped to send between 75,000 and 77,000 Jews, native-born and refugee, to their deaths” (Derfler 2002, 26).

¹⁸ In preparation for the Nuremberg Trials, the International Military Tribunal obtained copies of the original forensic report. A facsimile of the German autopsy report can be obtained here: <https://stacks.stanford.edu/file/jk658rw5293/jk658rw5293.pdf>

¹⁹ For a detailed account of these cases and the remarkable medical examiner who dared to speak the truth about these and other crimes in Dachau, see Ryback (2015).

²⁰ In the case of the surname *Löwenstein*, many adult readers at the time might have been reminded of Dr. Leo Löwenstein, the decorated WWI German Army veteran and President of the Reich Association of Jewish Frontline Soldiers. Within this position, the former Captain fought tirelessly for the recognition of Jewish Germans as productive and valuable members of society. In *TKF*, the name *Löwenstein* appears in a couplet with *Veilchen*. Meaning ‘little violet’, this term was used as a derogatory term for Germans who quickly joined the NSDAP after 1933 in hopes of obtaining political or financial advantage (Botz 2017). The juxtaposition of the two names *Löwenstein* and *Veilchen* might then be an indirect criticism of those who longed to belong to the Reich but were considered undesirable and those who claimed to belong to the Reich but were undeserving.

²¹ Both Streicher and Hitler were ardent proponents of the fallacy that, during any form of sexual intercourse, the semen of Jewish men had the power to be “partially or totally absorbed by the female body” and that even one incident would be enough to poison an Aryan woman’s blood for life (Huebel 2022, 52). Similar theories of blood defilement were used in the United States to prohibit cross-racial blood transfusions by the Red Cross until the 1950s (Woo 2017). Louisiana legislation banned interracial blood transfusions until 1972 (George 2019).

²² Marching in step, one of the tales in *TKF* is dedicated to warning readers about the sexual dangers posed by Jewish men who covet Aryan women. In the accompanying color plate, a beautiful blonde woman is shown being led away by a well-dressed, troll-like figure named *Sali Rosenfeld*. In reaction to this particular story, celebrated author Klaus Mann wrote from his exile in Madrid: “Miss Bauer clearly seems to be of the opinion that the pornographic style that made *Der Stürmer* famous will also do no harm to her enlightening picturebook”. For more on Klaus Mann and *TKF*, see (Mann 1937; Naumann & Töteberg 1993).

²³ In May of 1945, the Jewish American soldier Major Henry Plitt apprehended Streicher who had been living under the assumed alias *Joseph Seiler* (Roos 2014).

²⁴ Sadly, even today, versions of Bauer’s book can be found in Neo-Nazi circles. For example, White Power Publications included in its book catalogue, *Satan’s Children: A Picturebook for Young and Old*.

²⁵ Jewish writers whose works were deemed no longer acceptable for young Aryan readers include Alfred Döblin, Heinrich Heine, Jakob Wassermann, Franz Werfel, and Stefan Zweig (Kamenetsky 1984). Illustrators of children’s books were also banned for either producing artwork, holding opinions, or possessing heritage deemed objectionable to the NSDAP. For more on picturebook illustrators during the Third Reich, see Kamenetsky (1984), 152–171.

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