

The Image of Anne Frank in Modern Theatre

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Abstract

This thesis seeks to explore Anne Frank and her representation in theatre and how it has changed over time.. Anne Frank is one of the most well known victims of the Holocaust and is often used to represent the 1 million children who perished in the Nazi genocide. As such, numerous theatrical products have been created about her, including those that have been “allowed” by the official organizations who protect her memory (the Anne Frank House and Anne Frank Fonds) and those that are written by artists wishing to explore their own relationship to Anne. While the two Broadway products of *The Diary of Anne Frank* are often explored in literature relating to the Holocaust in theatre, as of yet, there has been no thesis exploring Anne in theatre as a whole. Speaking about only the Broadway productions severely limits the discourse and leaves out the question of why so many artists are compelled to create new productions about Anne Frank and why, when so many pieces already exist about her, people continue to attempt to capture her “true essence” in theatre—and the question of whether authenticity is important when producing a historical piece. This thesis also explores the enduring popularity of the Broadway production with professional and amateur theatrical groups throughout the United Kingdom and what motivates companies to continue to perform this piece, despite the glaring flaws that both historians and theatrical professionals have noted in its writing as well as its dated nature. Lastly, this thesis seeks to explore the on-going issues and controversy concerning the future Anne’s legacy in theatre since the death of her father and first cousin, both of whom were in charge of allowing pieces to be made about Anne. This thesis fills a much-needed gap in research about Anne Frank, but also speaks to the representation of the Holocaust in modern art as a whole and whether true historical representation is necessary and how interpretation of texts change over time.

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Introduction

"I am told that every night when the sun goes down, somewhere in the world the curtain is going up on a stage play made from Anne's diary."

-Miep Gies, *Anne Frank Remembered: The Story of the Woman Who Helped Hide the Frank Family*¹

"For anything so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature, to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure."

-Shakespeare, *Hamlet* Act III Scene 2

Anne Frank is one of the most famous Holocaust victims, if not the most famous. Her diary has been translated into 67 languages² and is well known the world over. Teenagers around the world still connect to her story, which includes the familiar struggles of going through puberty, sibling rivalry and arguments with parents, all set to the backdrop of the Holocaust. While Anne's story ends where her Holocaust experience begins, her story is still known as one of the foremost in Holocaust literature, particularly where teens are concerned.

Tim Cole states, "'Anne Frank' stands as *the* 'Holocaust victim.' ...This 'Anne Frank' is the ideal symbol of the 'innocent victim' and the ideal symbol of innocence snuffed out."³ Since Anne's diary was published by her father, she has become, through his lens, an idealized version of herself and one that is represented in mass media.

¹ Gies, M. and Gold, A.L. 1988: *Anne Frank Remembered: The Story of the Woman Who Helped Hide the Frank Family*. New York: Simon and Schuster, p. 11.

² The Anne Center for Mutual Respect. (n.d.). *About Anne Frank*. Retrieved from <http://annefrank.com/about-anne-frank/>. 20 June 2016.

³ Cole, T. 1999: *Selling the Holocaust: From Auschwitz to Schindler How History is Bought Packaged and Sold*. New York: Routledge, p. 46

Anne has become sanitized, universalized and devoid of her original personality in order to fit with what we have come to expect of her. The Anne that appears in our minds, and the minds of theatrical producers, is not the true Anne, but the Anne that Otto and we imagine. Although she is fervently remembered, her memory more serves a purpose for those she has left behind; and it serves a purpose of inspiration and hope, however inaccurate, for those who did not know her. Studying this in the theatrical sense, and what her memory meant and means onstage, helps scholars understand what Holocaust memorialization will look like moving forward.

In doing a thesis about the ways in which Anne has been represented over the past 70 years since her death, it could be tempting to discuss all of the ways in which she has been presented. Whether “approved” by the Anne Frank Fonds, the foundation that her father Otto Frank started to preserve her work, or not, Anne’s image has managed to find its way into pop culture. However, because Anne has been represented in such a wide range of media, it would be impossible to discuss Anne in all of these instances, as justice would not be done in one particular mode of art.

Because Anne is so frequently represented in popular culture, it may seem, at first glance, like overkill to continue studying her story when there are so many other lesser known stories of the Holocaust that exist. To this date, however, there have been no studies that focus solely on Anne Frank’s representation in theatre. This thesis seeks to fill the gaps in the field that have been previously neglected.

The theatrical adaptation of Anne Frank’s diary is of particular interest because it represents one of the first times a play about the Holocaust was mounted in commercial and popular American theatre. Edna Nahshon states, “The original stage production of *The Diary of Anne Frank* was a watershed event: It marked the first time that the mainstream American theater presented a play whose plot

focused on the Holocaust.”⁴ While Nahshon characterizes *The Diary of Anne Frank* as the very first Holocaust play, this is inaccurate on two counts. It can firstly be argued that the play is not necessarily a play about the Holocaust at all, but instead is a play about family drama with the backdrop of the Holocaust; the Holocaust being the uniting force that brought the families into the situation in which they must hide in the Secret Annex. This statement is also problematic, as Ben Hecht’s *A Flag is Born* staged on Broadway in 1946 is actually the first time a play about the Holocaust was staged in American theatre.⁵

Still, this quote by Nahshon is none the less valuable in the examination of Anne Frank’s image in theatre, as it demonstrates that while it may not have been the first play to stage the Holocaust in American theatre, it was the first to achieve such success and thus become a part of public consciousness. Had the play not been successful, it is doubtful a movie adaptation would have arisen from the play. It can be argued that film can offer a more transformative experience for some in addition to the fact that film can be accessed by people all over the country, not just those living in New York or near where a touring production happens to come. Thus, the play marks more of a watershed moment in public consciousness about the Holocaust itself.

Interested parties have protected Anne Frank’s image for the past 70 years. After her death in 1945, her father, Otto Frank, oversaw all works in which Anne was to be represented. After his death in 1980, this task was given to his nephew, Buddy Elias and the Anne Frank Fonds. Since Buddy’s death in 2015, the way Anne is portrayed has been left to the Anne Frank Fonds and their discretion. As they own the copyright to Anne’s words, and have altered caveats to keep the copyright for many more years to come, thus further protecting Anne’s image, she is closely guarded.⁶ The Fonds has the right to allow or deny the use of Anne’s words in art

⁴ Nahshon, E. 2012: Anne Frank from Page to Stage. In B. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett and J. Shandler, (eds.). *Anne Frank Unbound: Media, Imagination and Memory*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, p. 64.

⁵ Citron, A. 1998: Ben Hecht’s pageant-drama: *A Flag is Born*. In C. Schumacher (ed). *Staging the Holocaust*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 70.

pieces, however anyone can create a story about Anne Frank. This leads to a sharp distinction between the Anne that has been crafted by the Anne Frank Fonds and the Anne that millions of people related to.

Because of this steadfast grip on Anne's image works about Anne in any form of media have been fiercely regulated. But, this has not stopped many artists, who have felt deep connections to Anne's story, from creating their own pieces about the famous teen.

The closest one can come to an analysis of Anne on stage is the multi-author work, *Anne Frank Unbound: Media Imagination Memory*. This work, edited by Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett and Jeffrey Shandler, covers all of the ways in which Anne has been represented in the media, including theatre. However, the chapter dedicated to Anne on stage stops short at the 1997 Broadway production and does not include current analysis on the subjects that affect Anne's memory. The work does not discuss the 2014 Dutch staging of the play *Anne*, which sparked massive controversy between the Anne Frank Fond and Anne Frank House, the two foundations Otto Frank set up to keep his daughter's memory and works alive. It also fails to recognize any plays outside of the realm of works "approved" by the Anne Frank Fonds, which only demonstrates how Anne is "officially" represented. To neglect other artists' interpretations is to neglect the way in which the wider public sees and relates to Anne and offers us an unfiltered look into the emotions that Anne stirs, whether or not they are "approved" by the Anne Frank Fonds.

Furthermore, this thesis seeks to discuss Anne's legacy and the impact the theatrical performances have on individuals. Within this body of research, I have sought out small productions of *The Diary of Anne Frank* (both the 1955 and 1997 versions) and discussed with those involved how the play has affected them and their motives for producing the play. This gives tremendous insight into how others, specifically those who are not scholars, see Anne apart from the "official"

⁶ Flood, A. The Guardian. 18 January 2016. *Anne Frank's diary caught in fierce European copyright battle*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/jan/18/anne-franks-diary-caught-in-fierce-european-copyright-battle>. 26 May 2016.

representation that has been molded for her by the Anne Frank Fonds. It is incredibly important to discuss this with those who have no formal connections with the Anne Frank Fonds and Anne Frank House, as it allows for candid conversations into their insights about Anne. It also offers a comparison and a contrast of the Anne the Anne Frank Foundation (or Fonds) has attempted to manipulate us to see, and the Anne that others see despite the tight grip that retains on her image and memory.

Lastly, and perhaps the main question within this thesis, is to discuss how representations of Anne Frank relate to society at large. Using Anne Frank as a case study shows a linear way in which the terrain of memory of the Holocaust has changed over time, and the limitations that still exist today. For example, when *The Diary of Anne Frank* was first presented, the focus was not on historical accuracy, but making the Holocaust accessible to a largely Christian audience. As such, the 1997 version focuses on attempting to convey a sense of historical accuracy, and later theatrical versions of her diary seem to focus on the author of the play's relationship to the text or the terrain of memory.

Scholars often speak about theatre as a reflection of society at large. And while in the context of the notion seeks to mean that specific theatrical performances mirror human experiences, the way theatrical performances are written and staged can also be indicative of the changing nature of the society in which they are written and performed.

An in depth study of how one Holocaust victim's narrative changes and adapts over time, particularly in the realm of theatre, has never been done before in one coherent work by a single author. Thus, this adds a whole new discussion and allows scholars and theatre educators to see how Anne's narrative has changed and been molded over time to fit both popular culture and the current narrative of the Holocaust.

This thesis will then discuss in depth, and chronologically, how Anne Frank's representation has changed over time in an effort to both capture the ever-elusive

(and non-existent) authentic Anne, as well as how her image changes as the Holocaust is perceived by society at large.

The thesis will also discuss the ways in which Anne Frank's narrative stays stagnant, and the ways in which she is expected to be portrayed.

Hank Greenspan expresses in his essay *The Power and Limitations of Survivor Testimony* that many survivors are asked to speak to schools and students, but not to make their experience a sad or depressing one. Although his essay reflects on living survivors, it can be said that, in a way, Anne's story is the ultimate tale that has been tasked with educating about the Holocaust without being "too depressing" or leaving the audience with a feeling of overwhelming sadness.⁷

Limitations of Sources and Previous Studies on Anne Frank's Representation in Theatre

Studying such a narrow subject within a wider context presents many obstacles and limitations. The first obvious limitation is that there is very little information to build upon. This is because Anne in theatre has not been studied extensively, and instead only has a few chapters dedicated to it in different volume works. Thus, throughout this thesis, it is fair to say that there may be an overreliance on certain source materials, simply because no other scholarly work exists in English.

Edna Nahshon's *Anne Frank from Page to Stage* is an essay within the multi-volume work *Anne Frank Unbound*. As the book itself was published in 2012, this is the most recent scholarly work on Anne's image in theatre. Nahshon's work focuses on the history of the original 1955 work and how it came about as a play. Nahshon focuses on Otto Frank's involvement in the creation of both his daughter's diary as a literary work and the play itself. The essay also touches on the positive reception the original play received in the United States and its mixed reviews in Israel and

⁷ Greenspan, H. 1998: Power and Limits of Survivors' Testimonies. In C. Schumacher (ed). *Staging the Holocaust*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 28.

briefly discusses the bland reception the 1997 Broadway revival received. She also takes notes of the less-than-stellar reviews the now-famous Natalie Portman received in the title role as Anne.

Nahshon briefly discusses other plays about Anne Frank in the context of the Meyer Levin trial, which will be discussed at length later on in the thesis. Meyer Levin, a novelist who was instrumental in helping *The Diary of Anne Frank* be published despite opposition that it might be too soon or too depressing, felt he was owed the right to pen the Broadway version first. The producers of the play found his script lacking, and decided to hire Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett, something that would haunt Levin for the rest of his life. His obsession was so great that the playwright Rinne Groff created a play entitled *Compulsion, Or the House Behind* based on Levin's almost psychotic level of obsession. This obsession culminated in Levin suing Otto Frank for "stealing" some of his work. Nahshon's chapter also briefly touches on this issue as well as *Compulsion*. She briefly mentions a few other non-sanctioned plays about Anne Frank, but fails to go into any detail.

Though Nahshon's work is not an overly critical view of the history of Goodrich and Hackett's version of *The Diary of Anne Frank*, the point of her chapter can be deduced that *The Diary of Anne Frank* is regarded as much more than a show and its very existence, to some, transcends the spectacle of theatre. She states, "Attending a performance of this play in lieu of a Passover Seder may not be common practice, but the notion that seeing *The Diary of Anne Frank* is an exceptional, morally galvanizing experience has a considerable history dating back to the play's first production....When replacing the church or synagogue as the forum for contemplating the nature of good and evil, the theater has the power of endowing everyday life with a moral order."⁸

The theatrical version of *The Diary of Anne Frank* is analysed in Gene A. Plunka's *Holocaust Drama: The Theater of Atrocity* in the chapter *Transcending the Holocaust*. In Plunka's work, he focuses on the universalization of the story by

⁸ Nahshon, E. *et al.* 2012 (as n. 3 above), p. 59.

comparing it to the play *Eli: A Mystery Play of the Sufferings of Israel* by Nelly Sachs. He states of the two plays, "The Holocaust dramas *Eli* and *The Diary of Anne Frank*, transcend the Holocaust by universalizing the experience, leaving the audience with the philosophical notion that the Shoah was essentially a quasi-moral or religious battleground, a momentary phase of history in which evil temporarily triumphed over good."⁹

While the thesis I have written speaks to the carefully crafted image of Anne and those who have spoken out against it in order to discuss how they relate to Anne, Plunka focuses almost exclusively on the universality of Anne's story. He does not analyze the more modern adaption of the play in depth, the 1997 version, instead using only the original 1955 text as source material. However, it likely does not matter much, as both plays do use the Holocaust as a form of universality, noting, perhaps erroneously, that the Jews are not much different from anyone else who has been persecuted.

Though Plunka's analysis is brief, it does touch upon two of the chief scholarly issues with the text itself, both of which are important and covered more in depth in this thesis.

Plunka regards *The Diary of Anne Frank* not necessarily a play about the Holocaust, but instead one that falls into the old fashioned category of the "kitchen sink drama," named so because it typically takes place in one house and explores the intricacies of family life. He states, "*The Diary of Anne Frank* degenerates into a domestic drama that, in some ways, could occur in virtually any Western environment in the twentieth century. Anne even describes the environment as typical and nonthreatening: 'You know the way I'm going to think of it here? I'm going to think of it as a boarding house.'"¹⁰

⁹ Plunka, G. 2009: Transcending the Holocaust. In *Holocaust Drama: The Theatre of Atrocity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 95.

¹⁰ Plunka, G. *et al.* 2009 (as n. 7 above), p. 111.

Although *The Diary of Anne Frank* is billed as a play about the Holocaust, its universal undertones are what made it incredibly relatable to audiences of all faiths. Some of this erasure of Jewish culture was intentional. Plunka describes the Anne that Goodrich and Hackett have created as typical American teenager, and this was further cemented by the casting of glamorous and beautiful young American actresses like Susan Strasberg in the Broadway version and then Millie Perkins in the film adaptation.¹¹

Plunka describes the Anne created out of the drama as, “an idealistic teenager, viewed the Holocaust as merely a ‘phase,’ a brief historical glitch in which evil triumphed over good....Goodrich and Hackett transcend the Holocaust by focusing on the evils of fascism and the commercial viability of Anne’s postwar popular culture mentality.”¹² But no matter which way the play is spun by Goodrich and Hackett, it is a historical fact that Anne was killed simply because she was Jewish. No matter the meaning assigned by theatrical scriptwriters, the fact remains, which makes the universality of the play in a word, problematic.

Not only does the Anne created by Goodrich and Hackett universalize the Holocaust and attempt to draw in members of all faiths with her message, but another issue with the play that Plunka accurately mentions is that in all of her scenes, we see Anne pre-Holocaust, or before she entered into the depths of Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen. In a way, *The Diary of Anne Frank* is, instead, a preamble into her experience in the Holocaust.

Furthermore, Anne is reduced to an eternally optimistic, almost Orphan Annie like character who continues to see the good in people despite the horrors going on around her. The fault in this, which is explored in greater depth in the thesis itself, is that the words are taken out of context. When we hear Anne echo these words, we imagine that she has already died in the horror of Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen, and is telling us from beyond the grave that she believes people are “good

¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 104.

¹² *Ibid*, p. 113.

at heart.” However, the Anne that wrote those words not only wrote them before her experience in the camps, but the words were taken strongly out of context.

Plunka states, “The conclusion that Anne draws about humanity is not that people are good at heart, but that because evil exists, humanity’s fate is precarious at best.”¹³

He further comments on Anne’s confinement in Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen:

Anne’s fate does not suggest that she was ever an icon of faith and idealism. After her confinement at Auschwitz, she was transported with Margot to Bergen-Belsen. There she slept in overcrowded tents camped on mud, unable to wash, while being systematically starved to death. Hannah Pick-Goaslar, who saw Anne at Bergen-Belsen, recalls a broken girl, depressed by the apparent deaths of her parents. Another eyewitness recalled Anne’s last day: “She was in rags. I saw her emaciated, sunken face in the darkness. Her eyes were very large.”¹⁴

While Plunka’s points are both excellent and important, they do not draw on why Anne Frank’s theatrical image remains so powerful in modern culture, despite the fact that most scholars and theatre professionals regard the play as sorely lacking. My thesis, while discussing the issues Plunka has discussed, also seeks to fill the void in the research.

In Plunka’s narrative, he completely neglects an important aspect that has made Anne so famous, and that is the audience that has felt called to her story. Nahshon does speak somewhat of reception in her analysis, but Plunka neglects it entirely. Aside from his chapter being much briefer than my thesis, this is where my research fills the gap.

¹³ *Ibid*, p. 106.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 106.

This multi-volume work, edited by Harold Bloom includes two chapters worth noting when speaking of research on the stage play. The first chapter, The Americanization of the Holocaust by Lawrence Langer, speaks to the morphing of Anne from a Dutch-Jewish girl to a squeaky-clean American teenager by way of the play and film. In some cases, it could also be argued by my own account, that in the United Kingdom, Anne gets the British treatment, becoming a typical English teen. Nonetheless, the erasure of both her national and Jewish identity is real. This is especially evident in the film version of *The Diary of Anne Frank* with the casting of Millie Perkins, whom Plunka describes as reminiscent of a young Elizabeth Taylor, an icon of American cinema.¹⁵

Langer's chapter speaks to the Americanization of the Holocaust in film and theatre, mentioning *The Diary of Anne Frank* only briefly. Like Plunka, he does criticize the upbeat ending, not only of *The Diary of Anne Frank*, but most films and television movies that deal with the Holocaust.

Langer first discusses a diary exhumed from Auschwitz after the war written by Salmen Lewenthal. Lewenthal describes a scene of a mother and daughter who are about to die in the gas chamber, resigned to their fate. After the mother tells the daughter, they will die in about an hour, the girl cries, "Mama!" and says nothing else, the child's last words. Langer writes:

Perhaps "last words" like these are not dramatic; certainly they are not commercial; undoubtedly they are not American. But they are authentic, and they were what the Holocaust was all about....To leave an audience of millions with an image like the one of mother and daughter bereft of hope, of life, of speech, would have been too dark—too dark altogether. The American theater and screen, the American mind itself, is not yet ready to end in such silence. The heroic gesture still seizes us with its glamour, tempting the doom of men and women who have lost control of their fate....The memory of eleven million dead echoes as a symphony of pain: in

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 104.

that denial of final triumph lies our acceptance and understanding of the Holocaust experience.¹⁶

This “upbeat ending” echoes Plunka’s own analysis of *The Diary of Anne Frank*, the almost complete denial that Anne suffered greatly before her death. The audience is spared the scenes that are too difficult; we are given the freedom to look away and placate ourselves with an inspiring and uplifting ending.

During my studies and discussions with various theatrical groups, I spent time with them discussing the merits of the play and how they felt about it in general. Almost unanimously, as will be discussed later, actors and directors alike call Anne “inspiring” and “strong,” and other positive descriptors associated with the upbeat ending of the play. However, the truth of the matter is that the play does not show Anne in her final days, so the views that many of my subjects in my thesis had, and that the Anne Frank Fonds perhaps has asked us to have, may be an inaccurate portrayal of the way Anne felt in her final days. Although there is eyewitness testimony about Anne’s final days, we do know that before she died, she had become incredibly despondent and depressed, which would not be an abnormal reaction to her situation. A further discussion of Anne’s state prior to her death is explored in the first chapter of this thesis. But, as Plunka writes above and Langer echoes, the issue is not that Anne’s sentimentality is expressed, but the lines written before her most intense period and suffering are seemingly attributed to her as though her spirit was never broken by Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen. From what we know of Anne’s final days, this could not be further from the truth, and in that way we negate what Anne might have said had she survived or been able to continue her diary in the camps.

Langer discusses this in his chapter:

¹⁶ Langer, L. 1999: *The Americanization of the Holocaust*. In H. Bloom (ed). *A Scholarly Look at the Diary of Anne Frank*. New York: Chelsea House Publishers, p. 34.

The line that concludes her play, floating over the audience like a benediction assuring grace after momentary gloom, is the least appropriate epitaph conceivable for the millions of victims and thousands of survivors of the Nazi genocide....Those who permit such heartwarming terms to insulate them against the blood-chilling events they believe they need to recall that they were written by a teenager who could also say of her situation: "I have often been downcast, but never in despair; I regard our time in hiding as a dangerous adventure, romantic and interesting at the same time."by sparing us the imaginative ordeal of such consanguinity, the drama *The Diary of Anne Frank* cannot begin to evoke the doom that eventually denied the annex's victims the dignity of human choice.¹⁷

Langer also analyses the insistence that Anne be continually categorized as eternally optimistic. This, he asserts, might even stem from Otto Frank who has insisted on remembering his daughter in this way. And while it may be painful to picture on a personal level it does not mean that Anne's character should be eternally trapped in her pre-Auschwitz/Belsen mindset. Langer quotes Anne Frank's father, Otto, who says in the play, and has been quoted saying as such, "It seems strange to say this, that anyone could be happy in a concentration camp. But Anne was happy in Holland, where they first took us [Westerbork transit camp.]"¹⁸

It is possible that some of the denial we have been asked as audience members to accept could be attributed to Frank's own personal pain, which, in some ways, cannot be blamed.

Also contained in this volume is Molly Magid Hoagland's essay *Anne Frank On and Off-Broadway*, a very useful piece of work analysing the original 1955 production and the 1997 Natalie Portman revival.

Hoagland's central approach to her essay is that the Anne Frank seen in the play has very little to do with the Anne that lives in her diary. She argues this point

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 19.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 18.

using Brooks Atkinson's original critique of the 1955 Broadway play in *The New York Times*, in which he states that, "Everything that one says about the play, one says about Anne Frank."¹⁹

As with other critics, Hoagland asserts that the play has been painted with a universal brush, and that Anne herself has been somewhat erased. She says:

But the Anne Frank presented on Broadway was a construct. As many critics have since pointed out, missing from the play were Anne's intellect, her sense of irony, her dark foreboding, her sensuality and most of all her Jewish consciousness. What was left were, in Brooks Atkinson's enthusiastic words, "the bloom of her adolescence" and her challenge to the "conscience of the world," which unfortunately amounted to little more than pallid universalism.²⁰

Hoagland's essay has merit in itself, but simply adds to the canon of work that again, criticizes the play for its broad universalism and watering down of Anne's character. She also asserts that one can still find her true character within her diary, if only people let her speak for herself. She states, "Anyone who has a mind to can still turn to the work that Miep Gies rescued and that Otto Frank, despite misgivings, and to his everlasting credit, brought into the light of day. In its pages, in whatever edition, his daughter has always spoken for herself."²¹

This short essay, while extremely interesting, does little to add a new perspective to the discussion of Anne Frank in the theatre, especially in the context of other writings about Anne.

Lawrence Graver wrote *An Obsession with Anne Frank: Meyer Levin and the Diary*, which although offers some insight into the play (although nothing particularly of

¹⁹ Hoagland, M. M. 1999: Anne Frank On and Off Broadway. In H. Bloom (ed). *A Scholarly Look at the Diary of Anne Frank*. New York: Chelsea House Publishers, p. 75.

²⁰ *Ibid*, p. 76.

²¹ *Ibid*, p. 84.

note as most of his thoughts on the play are covered fairly well in the aforementioned essays), most of his work is devoted to the Meyer Levin case, and Levin's unrelenting quest to create a work that divulged Anne Frank as Levin saw her. It also focuses on the legal issues Levin created with Otto Frank and the team of the original production. While interesting, I would not classify this book as one particularly helpful to the production of this thesis, nor as one that has much to do with the subject more than in a cursory way. However, I do feel it warrants mention simply because it is a book all about the dramatic interpretations of Anne Frank, though Graver's conclusions simply echo that of all of the previous scholars.

Limitations of Source Material

Within this thesis, there are two major limitations when it comes to source material. The first being that there are not many scholarly articles, and certainly no full-length books or theses on the production of *The Diary of Anne Frank*. Because of this, thus the literature creates an insular work, where the same scholars are quoted throughout this thesis. As such, this also shows the need for this thesis in the context of Anne's memory, and that this body of work is sorely needed to fill that void. Were other scholarly articles available, it would be much easier to create a thesis with a chorus of voices. Instead, most opinions of scholars echo one another, creating repetitive and in some cases, not very useful analysis in the context of this thesis.

Another limitation to this thesis is in finding subjective analyses of the amateur plays used in this study. When referring to the reception of productions of *The Diary of Anne Frank*, there are many resources readily available as it will have been reviewed in major periodicals, magazines, and in contemporary cases, theatrical websites. These resources are helpful in that they are entirely subjective and exactly what the reviewer thinks, not a watered down version so as not to insult an amateur cast's feelings after months of working hard. Because amateur theatre communities are often small, any review that is published on these productions is typically a good one. If the play itself does not have much merit, the reviewer may choose to focus on the story or the sets or costumes, or the strengths of the play,

making it very difficult to truly understand how other people reacted to this production. Although I did set out to do surveys of the audience, this proved practically very difficult, and as such, I could only rely on my own instincts and theatre training—as well as overhear discussions around me during the piece.

In some cases of amateur productions, no reviews exist at all, making it even harder to figure out what it was the audience connected with. In the case of many of the productions I have written about that either tell an alternate story of Anne's diary, tell Anne's story in a new medium (i.e. puppetry) or use Anne as a springboard for another story, the reviews are limited. They are not limited so as to protect the feelings of those who worked on it, but instead they are limited simply because the production itself was too small to merit large scale reviews. In some cases, I may only have one review of the production, in others there may one or two. Not having seen the productions myself, it makes it much more difficult to analyze the merit of the production as well as the reception it received.

Further limitations of this thesis include the inability to conduct an audience reaction study. It would have been incredibly useful to discuss how an audience would have reacted to each individual production. While this was the goal originally, to be done in tandem with teachers and their students seeing the show, it was ultimately unable to be executed. This is mostly because there was little coordination with the theatre and who attended, thus making it impossible to conduct a study. Additionally, a pilot in which I called people to answer questions about the production at the Southampton presentation of *The Diary of Anne Frank* yielded only three responses. Additionally, while many of the productions were welcoming, there were others that seemed to see my study of their production as something that was “in the way,” and thus were not willing to accommodate my interaction with “their” audience.

Lastly, I am limited in the analysis of the 1955 production of *The Diary of Anne Frank* because I have not seen it on stage. No archive footage of it exists, however I was able to watch archive footage of the 1997 *The Diary of Anne Frank*.

Historical Accuracy and Anne Frank

A central theme this thesis will also explore is the idea of historical accuracy in relation to Anne's story, the Holocaust in general and whether or not it is central to creating a successful narrative.

The need to create a historically accurate Anne, and one that the audience and playwright see as authentic, changes very dramatically over time. The Anne we see portrayed on stage is often an Anne representative of society at large and the era in which the work was written.

As we will explore in further chapters, the quest to create authenticity insofar as Anne's narrative seems to change depending on the time period and the public's reaction to such an authentic narrative. Originally, Anne's diary was heavily sanitized to attempt to protect both Otto Frank's dead family and to create a piece of work that everyone, not just Jews, would find interesting. When the play was first mounted, America was not as rooted in identity politics, and as Hilene Flanzbaum notes in her Introduction to the book *The Americanization of the Holocaust*, many Jews felt uncomfortable singling themselves out as victims of the Holocaust.²² After so much rampant anti-Semitism both in America and the United States, there was a desire to blend in, and thus create a Holocaust narrative that would be "appropriate" and "relatable" to all people. Therefore, the idea of creating a play without specific focus on Jewishness or authentic facts was more amenable to the time.

When the play was then remounted in the 1990s, it had become clear that Jews were the main victims of the Holocaust. By then, as we will explore in depth later in the thesis, identity and multiculturalism became celebrated, and thus the desire to create a piece as authentic to the Holocaust as possible was birthed.

²² Flanzbaum, H. 1999: Introduction. In H. Flanzbaum (ed). *The Americanization of the Holocaust*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, p. 3.

However, as time goes on and more artists create plays based on Anne's experiences, many seek to use Anne and her story as a vehicle not only for Holocaust remembrance, but also for their own artistic exploration into their own feelings or family's heritage. As such, authenticity becomes less of a priority in these secondary productions than the 1997 version of Anne's diary, which was produced on Broadway that year.

The questions we must ask ourselves are simple: is authenticity important? What is the changing role of the authenticity in Holocaust narratives? Is it the job of the playwright to create an historical accurate narrative, or is his or her job to simply find meaning in the experience?

Holocaust in Theatre

Whether appropriate or not, *The Diary of Anne Frank* belongs to the canon of plays about the Holocaust. The scholarly literature of the Holocaust in theatre is limited to two scholarly works, *Holocaust Drama: The Theatre of Atrocity* by Gene A. Plunka and *Staging the Holocaust: The Shoah in Drama and Performance* Edited by Claude Schumacher.

The limitations of the theory of Holocaust in theatre are that it is not only completely subjective, but typically focuses on one to two plays per chapter in each volume. As such, *The Diary of Anne Frank* is only relevant in one essay, that of Gene A. Plunka's. Because of this, and the nature of the types of plays, there is little that seems to thread them together, besides emphasizing the complexity in a "successful" play written about the Holocaust, something that *The Diary of Anne Frank* wholly fails at. As previously discussed, adding a moral element and Americanizing the Holocaust both present distinct issues within the theatre.

Alvin Goldfarb in his essay *Inadequate Memories* states:

What do we then conclude about these American dramatists' attempts to represent survivors? Simply stated, while all are well meaning, their focus on the non-survivor and their use of traditional, well-made dramatic techniques and formulae diminish the complexity of the subject matter and let the audience members off the hook too easily.²³

This sentiment, which is expressed throughout the analysis of many productions related to the Holocaust could very easily be used to describe the scholarly discourse surrounding *The Diary of Anne Frank*, making the discourse on Holocaust theatre and the stage play of *The Diary* almost indistinguishable.

In the same volume, Freddie Rokem quotes Danny Horowitz's Holocaust melodrama *Uncle Artur* in his essay *On the Fantastic in Holocaust Performances*, "It was very theatrical: in go people at one end and out comes smoke at the other."²⁴

However, *The Diary* completely neglects any kind of theatrical nature of the Holocaust itself, instead collapsing into a family drama. Very few theatrical dramas on the Holocaust itself actually delve that deep into the horrors of the event; perhaps the better known play *Who Will Carry the Word* by Charlotte Delbo or Tim Blake Nelson's *The Grey Zone*, both of which take place within the confines of Auschwitz, actually confront the audience with this theatricality and reality of the Holocaust. However, in many plays, the audience can conveniently forget that this was part of the narrative.

I will conclude this introduction with Claude Schumacher's thoughts on what makes a successful Holocaust drama. If we use his criteria, it is clear that although *The Diary of Anne Frank* succeeds in resonating with audiences and in enduring popularity, it fails next to his assertions of a successful play about the Holocaust. Schumacher writes:

²³ Goldfarb, A. 1998: Inadequate Memories. In C. Schumacher (ed). *Staging the Holocaust*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 127.

²⁴ Rokem, F. 1998: On the Fantastic in Holocaust Performance. In C. Schumacher (ed). *Staging the Holocaust*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 40.

There is no model, there can be no model of representation of the Holocaust. As the variety of approaches mapped out in the following pages clearly show, each playwright must solve the problem of representing the unrepresentable, of offering staging suggestions for the unstageable which will stimulate the imagination of directors and actors and challenge the spectator. Is it possible to judge the success of the various attempts, inasmuch as one can offer a judgement on a play divorced from performances? I shall venture to argue that the successful Shoah drama or performance is one that disturbs, offers no comfort, advances no solution; it is a play that leaves the reader or spectator perplexed, wanting to know more although convinced that no knowledge can ever cure him of his perplexity. It must be a play that generates stunned silence.²⁵

Though *The Diary of Anne Frank* does often generate stunned silence at its end, it is not because the audience has been confronted with the reality of the Holocaust itself. Instead, it is because they are confronted with her fate. It does not necessarily focus on the enormity of the Holocaust, but rather the loss of the girl that we have come to know through the lens of others, who as Tim Cole describes as *the* Holocaust victim. She is a girl many of fiercely relate to in her struggles of adolescence, which makes her loss much more palpable than the reality of the Holocaust itself, the horrors she and her family and others endured, and the millions lost.

Anne Frank becomes what others have made her. And thus, artists have attempted to understand her beyond these confines. Still, we will all ultimately fall “short” of capturing the “real Anne,” who, no matter how we continue to remember her and assign her virtues and characteristics onstage and off, died a tragic and needless death in 1945 in Bergen-Belsen.

²⁵ Schumacher, C. 1998: Introduction. In C. Schumacher (ed). *Staging the Holocaust*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 8.

Throughout this thesis, I will explore Anne as a representative Holocaust victim in theatre and the impact this has on Holocaust remembrance. I will also be discussing why Anne's story continues to endure, and why scholars and playwrights write and rewrite her story in an effort to "make it right," and how Anne's own story has evolved within the landscape of memory and reflects the age in which it is told.

Central “Characters” in Anne Frank’s Diary

Those in Hiding



²⁶

Anne Frank

Age 13-15 during the time of writing her diary. Born in Germany, she emigrated to Amsterdam as a young child. She was deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau with her family and the other members of the Secret Annex in 1944. She died, likely of typhoid fever or typhus in Bergen-Belsen not long before the liberation of the camp and not long after her sister, Margot’s death, in February or March of 1945.²⁷



Margot Frank

Anne’s older sister by three and a half years. She is often described as quiet and studious and portrayed in fictional literature as meek and obedient. Margot died just days before Anne in Bergen-Belsen, also likely of typhoid fever, in 1945 at the age of 19.



Otto Frank

Anne and Margot’s father and Edith’s husband. He is the only member of the Secret Annex to have survived the war.

²⁶ Anne Frank House. (n.d.) *All People*. Retrieved from <http://www.annefrank.org/en/Anne-Frank/All-people/>. 30 July 2016. (all photos derived from this site)

²⁷ These very short biographies are acquired from the above as well as: The Anne Frank House. (n.d.): *Who Was Who in and Around the Secret Annexe?*. Amsterdam: The Anne Frank House.

**Edith Frank**

Otto's wife and Anne and Margot's mother, for which Anne had much contention with. She died in Auschwitz-Birkenau on January 6, 1945, not long before the liberation of the camp. It is reported that she died of an unknown illness in Auschwitz, or perhaps starvation and exhaustion.

**Hermann van Pels**

Hermann van Pels was given the pseudonym of van Daan in Anne's diary. Also a German immigrant to the Netherlands, van Pels began working with Otto Frank at Opteka in 1938. He died in Auschwitz-Birkenau sometime in October 1944. He is the only member of the Secret Annex to have been gassed. He was Peter's father and Auguste's husband.

**Auguste van Pels**

Auguste van Pels was given the pseudonym of Petronella van Daan in Anne's diary. She is the wife of Hermann and mother of the teenage Peter. She was also born in Germany. She died in the spring of 1945 either enroute to or at the ghetto of Theresienstadt. She may have died of typhus or by being thrown onto the tracks and run over by the train on the way to the ghetto.

**Peter van Pels**

The teenage son of Auguste and Hermann and Anne's love interest in the Annex. He died in Mauthausen sometime near the liberation of the camp in May 1945 at the age of 18.

**Dr. Fritz Pfeffer**

Assigned the pseudonym of Albert Dussel in the diary, he was acquainted with the van Pels family and the Gies family before the war, working as their family dentist. Also a Germany immigrant to the Netherlands, he shared a room and contentious relationship with the teenage Anne. He died in December 1944 in the Neuengamme of an unknown illness.

The Helpers

**Miep Gies**

Born in Austria, Miep Gies immigrated to the Netherlands as a young girl. She worked at Opteka and was acquainted with those in hiding from before the war. She and her husband, Jan Gies, were heavily involved in the Dutch resistance.

**Jan Gies**

Married to Miep and a social worker. He was active in the Dutch Underground for most of the war.

**Bep Voskuijl**

A young woman and employee of Opetka who aided the Gieses in helping the families in hiding. Anne gave her the pseudonym of Elli Vossen in her diary.

Johannes Voskuijl

Bep's father. He designed the famous bookcase entrance to the Sercet Annex.

**Johannes Kleiman**

An employee of Opteka, Kleiman was given the pseudonym of Mr. Koophuis in Anne's diary. He took over Opteka after Otto Frank permanently moved to Switzerland. He spent six weeks in Nazi labor camps as a punishment for hiding the families.

**Victor Kugler**

An Opteka employee, he was given the name Mr. Kraler in Anne's diary. He spent seven months in Nazi labor camps for his involvement with the families in hiding. He escaped in March of 1945.

Opteka/Gies & Company

A pectin and spice company founded in Cologne, Germany. Otto Frank was moved to Amsterdam in 1933 to become the managing director of the Netherlands firm at Prinsengracht 263, which would later become the Anne Frank House. In 1940, ownership was conferred onto Jan Gies and Johannes Kleiman to prevent its closure as a Jewish-owned business, whereby it took the name Gies & Company.

Chapter One: Anne Frank's Diary From Book to Play

The phenomenon of Anne Frank, as both a person and icon (her icon status will be discussed at length later in this thesis), had a rather banal beginning. The girl who would later become arguably the most well known symbol for the deaths of Jewish children in the Holocaust had a very common upper-middle class upbringing.

Anneliese (better known by her nickname, Anne) Marie Frank was born in June 12, 1929 in Frankfurt am Main, Germany to Otto Frank and Edith Holländer Frank, where she remained until she was four years old. Due to rising tensions in Germany, the Frank family immigrated to Amsterdam in 1933 while Anne stayed behind with her maternal grandmother in Aachen, Germany until 1934.²⁸

Anne was born into a highly educated and assimilated German-Jewish family. Otto Frank, Anne's father, was born in Frankfurt am Main on May 12, 1889 and was the second of four children of successful businessman Michael Frank and his wife, Alice (nee Stern). The family would, however, suffer financial hardship when Germany was defeated in World War I.²⁹ The assimilation of the Frank family in regards to Anne's paternal grandparents, aunt and uncles is evidenced in the fact that the family not only celebrated Christmas at home, but also annually threw parties for other Christian occasions, such as Mardi Gras.³⁰ Private letters from Frank family members to one another are analyzed in an extraordinary volume, penned by Anne Frank scholar Mirjam Pressler and Gerti Elias (Anne's first cousin, Buddy's wife), *Treasures from the Attic: The Extraordinary Story of Anne Frank's Family*.

Pressler notes that Yiddish, the traditional secular language of Ashkenazi Jews, is rarely used in Frank family correspondence—and when it is, it is reduced to a

²⁸ Frank, A. 2002: *Anne Frank: The Definitive Edition*. O. Frank and M. Pressler, eds. S. Massotty trans. London: Puffin Books. p. 7.

²⁹ Pressler, M., Elias, G. and the Anne Frank Fonds. 2011: *Treasures from the Attic: The Extraordinary Story of Anne Frank's Family*. D. Searls trans. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson. p. 68.

³⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 72-75.

word here and there.³¹ A secular education was also very important to the Frank family. Anne's father, Otto, attended the University of Heidelberg where he studied Art History, but did not complete his degree due to his father's death.³²

Anne's mother, Edith Holländer Frank, was born to a wealthy German-Jewish family in Aachen on January 16, 1900. Edith's family had made their money in scrap metal and her father, Abraham, managed several such factories throughout Germany. Although Edith did not attend university, she did finish secondary school at a Protestant school for girls, despite her Jewish faith. The Holländer family was not Orthodox, but they were much more religious than the Frank family and kept kosher in their home.³³

Edith and Otto were married in 1925.³⁴ Their first daughter, Margot Betti, was born in Frankfurt am Main in 1926, three years before Anne.³⁵

The year Anne turned thirteen, she received the diary she would affectionately call "Kitty." It was simply one of a host of other typical and mundane presents she was given by her family and friends for the occasion. These presents are excitedly catalogued in an entry in the diary dated June 14, 1942, as any young teen might do in the wake of her birthday.³⁶ On June 12, 1942, Anne wrote in the blank pages of her favorite present that year, "I hope I will be able to confide everything to you, as I have never been able to confide in anyone, and I hope you will be a great source of comfort and support."³⁷

The first few pages of Anne's diary chronicle the banalities of a young girl's life, including school gossip about classmates and budding teen romance. On July 8, 1942, the entries suddenly begin to take a turn as Anne's family goes into hiding from the Nazis on July 5, 1942 at Prinsengracht 263 in her father's office

³¹ *Ibid*, p. 114.

³² *Ibid*, p. 88.

³³ *Ibid*, pp. 115-116.

³⁴ *Ibid*, p. 115.

³⁵ Frank, A. *et al.* 2002 (as n.1 above). p.7.

³⁶ *Ibid*, p. 1.

³⁷ *Ibid*, p. 1.

building.³⁸ Anne would inscribe all of her thoughts and feelings in her diary from July 8, 1942 until the diary's last entry on August 1, 1944; three days before the family's arrest by the Nazis on August 4, 1944. During this time, Anne experienced the feelings many young girls going through puberty do, but in the cramped quarters she shared with seven other people during her time in hiding. She wrote down her observations without reservation, sometimes portraying others in "The Secret Annex" (the term she used for her hiding place) in a less than flattering light.

In 1944, Anne heard Gerrit Bolkestein, a member of the Dutch government in exile, state that after the war, he hoped to collect and publish personal letters and diaries in an effort to document the suffering of the Dutch people under the Nazi regime. Inspired by this, Anne rewrote parts of her diary. In *Anne Frank, the Definitive Edition*, it is noted that Anne set to work "improving on the text, omitting passages she didn't think were interesting enough and adding others from memory. At the same time, she kept up her original diary."³⁹

After her arrest, Anne, her family, and the other members of the Secret Annex (the van Pels family, Hermann, Auguste and their son Peter and Dr. Fritz Pfeffer) faced the horrors of the Holocaust. The Franks and their compatriots were taken to Westerbork Transit Camp in eastern Holland, near the German border, where they were housed in the criminal S-barrack. The crime they had committed was a "failure to report." All eight members of the Secret Annex were loaded onto cattle cars on September 3, 1944, the last transport to leave Holland for the East. They arrived in Auschwitz-Birkenau several days later, where Anne and her sister, Margot, stayed for over two months. Anne and Margot were separated from their mother sometime in October (the actual date is not known, but Willy Lindwer, the author of *The Last Seven Months of Anne Frank*, estimates the date to be October 28, 1944) and transported to Bergen-Belsen. Although the actual date of their

³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 19.

³⁹ *Ibid*, p. v.

deaths is unknown, both girls are believed to have succumbed to typhus within days of one another in February or March of 1945.⁴⁰

Otto Frank, the only survivor of the Secret Annex, held hope that his daughters would one day return and Anne would reclaim her diary. In the summer of 1945, Otto Frank met with Janny Brandes-Brilleslijper, a Dutch political prisoner who was interned in Bergen-Belsen. Janny and her sister had known Margot and Anne in the camp. Whilst looking for survivors of her family, Janny saw a list of names that surviving relatives were looking for, among them, the Frank sisters. Janny stated to the Red Cross that she knew of their fate and a few days later, Otto Frank came to her door. She says in her first-hand account in *The Last Seven Months of Anne Frank*, "He asked if I knew what happened to his two daughters. I knew, but it was hard to get the words out of my mouth. He had already heard from the Red Cross, but he wanted it confirmed. And I had to tell him his children were no more..."⁴¹

The days leading up to Anne's death and its context are also extremely important when it comes to the criticism of her diary and works of art it has inspired, which will be discussed at length in the next several chapters of this thesis. Much of the work and official narrative of Anne leaves out her last days, so it is necessary to ensure this portion of Anne's life is understood when taking a critical stance.

On, or about, October 28, Anne and Margot left Auschwitz-Birkenau on a transport bound for Bergen-Belsen. Their mother, Edith, was left behind in Auschwitz where she perished a few months later. Conditions in Belsen were already deplorable, but they began to deteriorate as more inmates arrived. This was largely due to the SS attempting to move their prisoners westward, away from the advancing Russian army. The camp had not been designed to accommodate such a large population and tents were erected in order to temporarily house prisoners. During the winter months, many of the tents were blown away during wind and rainstorms. Food

⁴⁰ Lindwer, W. 1991: *The Last Seven Months of Anne Frank*. A. Meersscaert trans. New York: Random House. pp. 4-7.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, pp. 83-84.

rations were scarce and sanitation was almost non-existent—the conditions only managed to get worse as more women were sent to the camp. Outbreaks of typhus and other diseases managed to claim most of the lives of the inmates, as the lack of sanitation, and in some parts of the camp, a complete absence of toilets, helped diseases spread rapidly.⁴²

Those who saw Anne in her final days piece together her story in Lindwer's book, *The Last Seven Months of Anne Frank*, which is a compilation of first hand accounts by survivors of Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen. In the narrative, each survivor tells both her story and when her path crossed with Anne and Margot during her internment. Since there are no known surviving eyewitnesses to Anne's actual death, it is with these accounts that her condition in her last surviving months is put together.

In February of 1945, Anne's childhood friend Hannah Pick-Goslar saw Anne at Bergen-Belsen. Pick-Goslar was separated from Anne by a fence filled with straw so neither could get a full view of the other side. Pick-Goslar was in the "exchange" camp and as an exchange prisoner. Pick-Goslar, her father and younger sister were held as "hostages" to be traded for German prisoners of war. As a result, Pick-Goslar received small Red Cross packages and was allowed to keep her clothes and hair. A woman who had known Anne previously told Pick-Goslar that Anne, Margot and Mrs. van Pels (one of the members of the Secret Annex) were imprisoned on the other side of the fence. Pick-Goslar asked Mrs. van Pels if she could see the girls. Mrs. van Pels went to get them, but told her Margot was very ill and could not come to the fence.⁴³

In her testimony published in Lindwer's *The Last Seven Months of Anne Frank*, Pick-Goslar says this of her encounter with her former childhood friend:

Anne came to the barbed-wire fence—I couldn't see her. The fence and the straw were between us. There wasn't much light. Maybe I saw her shadow.

⁴² *Ibid*, p. 6.

⁴³ *Ibid*, pp. 27

It wasn't the same Anne. She was a broken girl. I probably was, too, but it was so terrible. She immediately began to cry and she told me, "I don't have any parents anymore."

I remember that with absolute certainty. That was terribly sad because she couldn't have known anything else. She thought that her father had been gassed right away.....I always think, if Anne had known that her father was still alive, she might have had more strength to survive, because she died very shortly before the end—only a few days before [liberation]. Maybe it was all predestined.

So we stood there, two young girls, and we cried. I told her about my mother's [death]. She hadn't known that; she only knew the baby had died. And I told her about my little sister. I told her my father was sick in the hospital. He died two weeks later; he was already very sick. She told me that Margot was seriously ill and she told me about going into hiding because, I was, of course, extremely curious.....

Then she said, "We don't have anything at all to eat here, almost nothing, and we are cold; we don't have any clothes and I've gotten very thin and they shaved my hair." That was terrible for her. She had always been very proud of her hair....

Then for the first time—we had already been in the camp for more than a year....we received a very small Red Cross package: my sister, my father and I. A very small package, the size of a book, with knackebrot (Scandinavian crackers), and a few cookies. You can't imagine how little that was....My friends also gave me something for Anne.

....We agreed to try to meet the next evening at eight o'clock—I believe I still had a watch. And, in fact, I succeeded in throwing the package over. But I heard her scream and I called out, "What happened?"

And Anne answered, "Oh, the woman standing next to me caught it, and she won't give it back to me."

Then she began to scream.

I calmed her down a bit and said, "I'll try again but I don't know if I'll be able to." We arranged to meet again, two or three days later, and I was actually able to throw over another package. She caught it; that was the main thing.

After these three or four meetings at the barbed-wire fence in Bergen-Belsen, I didn't see her again, because the people in Anne's camp were transferred to another section in Bergen-Belsen. That happened around the end of February.

That was the last time I saw Anne alive and spoke to her.⁴⁴

Janny Brands-Brilleslijper paints an equally grim portrait of Anne's last days in her testimony. This is also included in Lindwer's books:

Anne was sick, too, but she stayed on her feet until Margot died; only then did she give in to her illness. Like so many others, as soon as you lose your courage and your self-control....

At a certain moment in the final days, Anne stood in front of me, wrapped in a blanket. She didn't have any more tears. Oh, we hadn't had tears for a long time. And she told me that she had such a horror of the lice and fleas in her clothes and that she had thrown all of her clothes away. It was in the middle of winter and she was wrapped in one blanket. I gathered up everything I could find to give her so that she was dressed again. We didn't have much to eat, and Lientje [Janny's sister] was terribly sick but I gave Anne some of our bread ration.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 27-29.

Terrible things happened. Two days later, I went to look for the girls. Both of them were dead!

First, Margot had fallen out of bed onto the stone floor. She couldn't get up anymore. Anne died a day later. We had lost all sense of time. It is possible Anne lived a day longer. Three days before her death from typhus was when she had thrown away all of her clothes during dreadful hallucinations. I have already told about that. That happened just before liberation.⁴⁵

Publication of Anne's Diary

When it was confirmed that Anne and Margot had died, Miep Gies (the woman instrumental in organizing the hiding and providing for those in the Secret Annex) gave Otto Frank the diary manuscript and several fictional stories Anne had been working on during her time in hiding. Gies had kept it in her desk, unread, for safekeeping for Anne when she returned to Amsterdam.⁴⁶ Margot also kept a diary, but it was lost in a shuffle of papers during the arrest and has never been found.⁴⁷

In the beginning stages, Otto Frank seemed to be uncertain about publishing his daughter's diary, yet it was clear he wanted to send excerpts to close friends and family members. In a letter to his mother, Alice, dated September 1945 (with no day attached), Otto says the following about Anne's diary:

What I read [in Anne's diary] is incredibly upsetting, but still I read it. I can't describe it to you, I'm not done reading it yet and want to finish reading through the whole thing before I make any excerpts or translations. Among other things, she describes her feelings in puberty with unbelievable self-awareness and self-criticism. Even if it wasn't Anne who had written it, it

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p. 74.

⁴⁶ Frank, A. *et al.* 2002 (as n.1 above). p.vi.

⁴⁷ Pressler, M. *et al.* 2011 (as n.2 above). p. 259.

would still be so moving. What a terrible shame this life was snuffed out! I have hours and hours of stories to tell you when I come visit.⁴⁸

Pressler claims in *Treasures from the Attic*, that Otto's siblings were concerned by him reading the diary so often and felt he was simply rehashing old wounds again and again. However, there is no citation to this claim.⁴⁹

In a letter, again to his mother Alice and also without a recorded day, Otto seemed to have clear misgivings about publishing Anne's diary, despite Anne's wishes. However, as a doting father, he was proud of her writing talent, namely the book of stories she wrote during her time in the Secret Annex:

I can't stay away from Anne's diaries and they are so unbelievably moving. I'm having her book of stories copied now since I don't want to let the only copy out of my hands, and I'll translate some things into German for you. I can't let the diaries out of my hands, there is too much in them that is not intended for anyone else, but I'll make excerpts.⁵⁰

Not long after this letter was sent, in September 1945 (again, there is no day listed), Otto began to translate and copy entries for his family and friends. He sent Buddy Elias, Anne's first cousin, the diary entry dated October 18, 1942, in which Anne describes a fantasy about becoming an ice skater. This was omitted from the original diary and the *Definitive Edition*, but remains intact in *The Revised Critical Edition*. This fanciful entry full of Anne's unfulfilled childhood dreams was pertinent to Buddy because he became a professional ice skater as an adult and often skated as a boy.⁵¹

Otto continued throughout the year to send excerpts of Anne's diary entries to his family members. In response to a few unknown entries that Alice Frank received, she wrote the following to her son:

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p. 242.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p. 243.

⁵⁰ *Ibid*.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, p. 244.

I can't tell you how much the lines from Annelien's diary mean to me and to everyone [in Basel]. They are so darling and so incredibly insightful. I read them constantly and they put me right into the thoughts and feelings of that sweet, warmhearted [sic] child....How terrible that we didn't find any more of Margot's writing, but maybe she didn't have the same gift of expressing herself and kept her feelings more to herself.⁵²

The feedback Otto received about Anne's diary was certainly encouraging and he began to open up to friends and acquaintances, sharing with them excerpts of his late daughter's manuscript. As he received more and more favorable opinions, Otto began to seek professional counsel on the matter of publishing his daughter's work, as she had wished. Gradually, he began to eschew the idea that the diaries were too private for anyone else to read. In an undated letter to his mother and the rest of his family in Basel, Switzerland, (likely in late 1945 or early 1946), Otto Frank wrote:

....and I started to read to [his friend Werner Cahn] from Anne's diary, to get Werner's opinion about publication. He has worked at Querido Press for years, you know, where Jetty worked too. To be continued next Friday, but already he says: Absolutely publish it, it is a great work! You can't even imagine everything in it, I can't translate it at the moment unfortunately, but it'll happen and it will also come out in German and in English. It's about everything that happens in a group of people while they are hiding, all the fears and conflicts, all of the arguments, the food, politics, the Jewish question, the weather, moods, education, birthdays, memories: everything.⁵³

After deciding to publish the manuscript, Otto Frank and his close friend Albert Cauvern got to the task of editing the diary for publication. Otto and Albert used both the original diary and the edited, rewritten version Anne had compiled for

⁵² *Ibid*, p. 250.

⁵³ *Ibid*, p. 253.

her own publication, and streamlined the two into one manuscript. The original editing also included some of the short stories Anne had been working on, which had not been part of the diary itself.⁵⁴

In the second version of Anne's manuscript, she assigned pseudonyms for all of those in the Secret Annex and the helpers, which Otto decided to keep instead of using their real names. This was in case they wanted their identities concealed. This was also out of respect for the dead. Anne had also set aside the pseudonym Aulis as her surname and then later changed it to Robin. However, Otto decided he would keep the family's true surname, despite Anne's original wishes.⁵⁵

Mirjam Pressler explains in the Foreword of *The Definitive Edition of The Diary of Anne Frank* other reasons for Otto Frank's redactions:

In making his choice, Otto Frank had to bear several points in mind... several passages dealing with Anne's sexuality were omitted; at the time of the diary's initial publication, in 1947, it was not customary to write openly about sex, and certainly not in books for young adults. Out of respect for the dead, Otto Frank also omitted a number of unflattering passages about his wife and other residents of the Secret Annex. Anne Frank, who was thirteen when she began her diary and fifteen when she was forced to stop, wrote without reserve about her likes and dislikes.⁵⁶

Before the manuscript was published, however, it was rejected by several publishers.⁵⁷ It was not until Otto Frank's friend, Jan Romein, wrote an article in *Het Parool* (the most well-known Dutch newspaper to this day) praising the diary

⁵⁴ Shandler, J. 2012: From Diary to Book. In B. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett and J. Shandler, (eds.), *Anne Frank Unbound: Media, Imagination and Memory*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, p. 30.

⁵⁵ Frank, A. *et al.* 2002 (as n.1 above), p.vii.

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, p. vi.

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p. 30.

that publishers began to take notice.⁵⁸ Romein did not name Anne as the child he was discussing in his April 3, 1946 article, "A Child's Voice," instead identifying her as an unnamed extraordinarily talented Jewish girl.⁵⁹ It was clear that from the beginning, Anne's diary, even in the early stages, was set to serve a "higher purpose" than just a document of the era. Romein wrote in his article, "A Child's Voice":

That this girl could have been abducted and murdered proves to me that we have lost the fight against human bestiality. And for the same reason, we shall lose it again, whatever inhumanity may reach out for us, if we are unable to put something positive in its place. The promise that we shall never forget or forgive is not enough. It is not even enough to keep that promise. Passive and negative rejection is too little, it is as nothing.⁶⁰

Once the diary was accepted for publication, Otto Frank wrote an article for the Dutch newspaper *Die Nieuwe Stem*, where Romein worked, later that summer entitled, "Fragments from the Diary of Anne Frank."⁶¹

The original title of the Dutch version of the diary, published in 1947 was *Het Achterhuis* or *The House Behind*, describing the Secret Annex in which Anne and her family hid for over two years. Annie Romein-Verschoor, Jan Romein's wife, wrote the foreword for the first Dutch edition of Anne's diary. Rather than focus on the triumph of spirit or Anne's eternal optimism, which the play and English editions of the book would highlight, the Romein couple focused on Anne's maturity and ability to scrutinize herself. They also recognized the importance of the document in terms of Anne's development from girl to woman, in addition to the documentation of wartime struggles the families in the Secret Annex faced.⁶²

⁵⁸ Bloom, H. (ed.). 1999: Chronology. In H. Bloom (eds), *A Scholarly Look at the Diary of Anne Frank*. Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, p. 123.

⁵⁹ Shandler, J. *et al.* 2012 (as n.27 above), p. 30.

⁶⁰ Frank, A. 2003: *Anne Frank: The Revised Critical Edition*. O. D. Barnouw, G. van der Stroom, eds. S. Massotty, B. Mooyaart, A. Pomerans, trans. New York: Doubleday, p. 67-68.

⁶¹ Bloom, H. *et al.* 1999 (as n.27 above), p. 123.

⁶² Shandler, J. *et al.* 2012 (as n.27 above), p. 37.

Although reports differ on how many copies the book sold initially, it is clear that the book was uniformly praised and sold well in its original Dutch. The book then received its first translation to a foreign language in 1950, when it was translated to French. It was then that the diary “lost” the title of *The Secret Annex*, and became known as a diary from its name alone. Its French title was *Le journal d’Anne Frank* or, literally, *The Diary of Anne Frank*.⁶³

The Diary is Translated Into English

Although the diary sold well in French and Dutch, it wasn’t until its English translation that its popularity soared. Meyer Levin, an American novelist, would be instrumental in its publication. He would, however, continue to have a very fraught relationship with the diary, the dramatic interpretation of it and Otto Frank himself. This will be discussed briefly in this and the following chapters. The Meyer Levin “saga” could take up two to three chapters in a thesis, or perhaps even lend itself to an entire thesis. In the interest of exploring other topics within this thesis, the Meyer Levin case will be kept to a minimum.

Meyer Levin was a Jewish-American novelist and journalist. Although he had somewhat of a critical success with his six novels, they were not able to secure him a future financially.⁶⁴ During World War II, Levin worked both in the United States and abroad, documenting the war effort, first with films showcasing life on the home front. He was then assigned to London to write for the Psychological Warfare Division before being stationed in France to work with the *Jewish Telegraphic Agency* as a battlefield correspondent. Fascinated and horrified by the genocide of his fellow Jews taking place in Europe, Levin made it his mission to tell the world about the atrocities. He was one of the first Americans to see the carnage at several concentration camps immediately after liberation, including Bergen-Belsen, where Anne and Margot perished.⁶⁵

⁶³ Bloom, H. *et al.* 1999 (as n27 above), p. 123.

⁶⁴ Graver, L. 1995: *An Obsession with Anne Frank: Meyer Levin and the Diary*. Berkeley: University of California, p. 3-4.

⁶⁵ Graver, L. *et al.* 1995 (as n.37 above), p. 7.

Levin first read the *Le journal d'Anne Frank* in 1950, the year of its French translation. Lawrence Graver, author of *An Obsession with Anne Frank: Meyer Levin and The Diary*, states that Levin's wife purchased the book for him after it "caused a stir" in French bookshops when the diary appeared in the spring of 1950.⁶⁶ Thoroughly impressed by the work, Levin wrote to the book's Parisian publisher and stated a desire to have the book translated into English in order to reach a wider audience. The publisher passed the letters on to Otto Frank.⁶⁷ Frank told Levin that he was hoping to get the diary published in English, despite the numerous rejections the manuscript had received thus far by American and English publishing houses alike. Graver writes that Frank was told almost unanimously, "There [is] no market for special-interest war books....and besides, few readers in England or America could be expected to buy the prosaic diary of a teenage Dutch girl whose life ended so unhappily."⁶⁸

Levin asked Otto Frank if he could translate the book to call it to American attention, and was the first to say he saw potential for a play and film adaption of the book. Frank was extremely wary of such a theatrical adaptation of his own personal story but was open to the idea. He wrote to Levin that he could make contacts within the film and theatrical industry to see if anyone could produce a work in which Frank found appropriate. Levin was unable to secure anything at this stage, and with his frustration, wrote an article called "Restricted Market" for the American Jewish Congress' *Congress Weekly*, praising the diary's French translation in hopes that it would lead to a publishing contract in the United States. Levin would believe for the rest of his life that this singular article was what eventually earned the book a contract at Doubleday. Contrary to Levin's opinion, one of the most instrumental individuals in its publication remains Judith Bailey, an assistant at Doubleday who urged her boss to take a second look at the book after having dismissed it initially. Judith, who was about the same age Anne would have been had she not perished, is also a character in Rinne Groff's play *Compulsion or The House Behind* which explores Levin's obsession with Anne

⁶⁶ Graver, L. *et al.* 1995 (as n.37 above), p. 1.

⁶⁷ Graver, L. *et al.* 1995 (as n.37 above), p. 15.

⁶⁸ Graver, L. *et al.* 1995 (as n.37 above), p. 18.

Frank.⁶⁹ Had Bailey not had her boss take re-read the manuscript, despite Levin's article, the diary might have never made it onto American bookshelves.

The diary was finally published in the United States in June of 1952, and bookstores received heavy demands for the book. Where Levin did have an influence over the sales was with his 1952 review of the diary in the *New York Times*, in which he praised it extensively.⁷⁰ Originally, it was not expected for the book to even sell through its first 5,000 printed copies. However, it did so by the end of the afternoon of June 16 and a new print run was ordered, which sold out again within a few days.

Highlighting Anne's "enduring optimism" began almost immediately in the English translation, especially in the American edition of the book that featured an introduction by Eleanor Roosevelt. Roosevelt states, "At the same time, Anne's diary makes poignantly clear the ultimate shining nobility of [the human spirit]. Despite the horror and humiliation of their daily lives, these people never gave up."⁷¹

Despite Otto's reservations of the diary being turned into a play or a film, Meyer Levin continued to shop around for a producer. By June 18, 1952, Levin had sufficiently convinced Otto Frank that the book could lend itself to both the stage and screen. Without having seen any physical evidence of Levin's work as a playwright, Frank sent a telegram to Doubleday stating that he wanted Levin to write the theatrical and film adaptations of the diary. Graver asserts that during the initial early stages of the success of Anne's diary, Otto Frank was susceptible to the power of suggestion by those within "the industry." Frank, although a highly intelligent man, was an adept businessman in selling pectin and furniture, not in the marketing of a book, film or play.⁷²

⁶⁹ Graver, L. *et al.* 1995 (as n.37 above), p. 18.

⁷⁰ Levin, M. 1952 July 15: The Child Behind the Secret Door. *New York Times Book Review*, p. 1.

⁷¹ Frank, A. 1958: *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl*. O. Frank, ed. B. Mooyaart trans. New York: Doubleday, p. ix.

⁷² Graver, L. *et al.* 1995 (as n.37 above), p. 28.

After giving it some thought, Otto Frank decided what he wanted to highlight in the play: what he felt people were “most moved by.” This included the love story with Peter (however small it was), the arguments Anne had with her mother and her struggles going through puberty. Otto Frank also wanted to emphasize Anne’s “optimistic approach to life.” Mirjam Pressler and Gerti Elias state one of Otto’s main goals when producing the play with the following passage in the chapter “The Play” in *Treasures from the Attic: The Extraordinary Story of Anne Frank’s Family*:

In other words, Otto didn’t want it to be a “Jewish” play—he felt that it should be “universal,” not directed only to a Jewish audience. Still, the conditions in the Secret Annex were obviously and unambiguously based on the fact that they were Jews who had gone into hiding.⁷³

Frank further comments on his expectations of the play as quoted in the essay “The American History of Anne Frank’s Diary” by Judith Doneson:

I always said, that Anne’s book is not a warbook. (sic) War is the background. It is not a Jewish book either, though Jewish sphere, sentiment and surrounding is the background. I never wanted a Jew writing an introduction for it. It is (at least [in Holland]) read and understood more by gentiles than in Jewish circles. I do not know, how that will be in USA, it is the case in Europe. So do not make a Jewish play out of it! In some way of course it must be Jewish, even so that it works against anti-Semitism. I do not know if I can express what I mean and only hope that you won’t misunderstand.⁷⁴

At the time Frank gave permission for a play to be written, Doubleday, who were entitled to handle the dramatic and film rights of the play, were not aware that Otto Frank had already told Levin that he could write the play. Instead, interest

⁷³ Pressler, M. *et al.* 2011 (as n.2 above). p. 321.

⁷⁴ Doneson, J. 1987: *The American History of Anne Frank’s Diary*. In Bauer, Y. (ed.), *Holocaust and Genocide Studies Vol. 2*. Oxford: Pergamon Press, p. 152.

from the theatrical and Broadway communities poured into Doubleday with scores of writers interested in the job, and soon misinformation and miscommunication was flowing. Several well-known Broadway producers began to express interest, each wanting to assemble their own team of directors and writers. Some agreed to consider Levin whilst others were wary based on his inexperience as a playwright. However, Levin managed, during the negotiations, to get Frank to agree to a preference of Levin as a writer over anyone else who was interesting in create an adaptation of the diary. On July 23, Doubleday almost gave up on creating a Broadway version of the bestseller, saying that negotiations were far too difficult since so many people had been speaking to each other separately and failing to communicate with them. However, Otto Frank still wanted to continue and thought that it would be possible for everyone to reach a satisfactory agreement and a quality play to be produced.⁷⁵

After some deliberation, Cheryl Crawford was chosen as the producer of the new play based on Anne's diary and she entered into a legal agreement with Otto Frank. Otto Frank, it was decided, would own the rights to the dramatic production and material. Any draft to be produced would have to have Otto Frank's approval. Doubleday and Levin agreed Cheryl Crawford, an extremely experienced producer, would be able to oversee a successful and sensitive adaptation of the material. By 1952, Crawford was already well-known in the New York theatrical circle, having formed an ensemble-based company with giant Lee Strasberg (whose daughter, Susan, would originate the role of Anne) and Harold Clurman called "The Group."⁷⁶ At this point, several names were being tossed around in regard to the writer who would actually write the script, including high profile names like Arthur Miller. Crawford was not "sold" on Levin, but told him that she would give him a chance to prove his work by writing an adaptation of the diary. Levin writing the play, Crawford said, was the best-case scenario due to Levin's overwhelming

⁷⁵ Graver, L. *et al.* 1995 (as n.37 above), p. 32.

⁷⁶ Clurman, H. 1983: *The Fervent Years: The Group Theatre and the Thirties*. New York: Da Capo Press, p. 138.

enthusiasm for the work. If Crawford did not like it, however, she reserved the right to compensate Levin for his time before pursuing other writers.⁷⁷

Meyer Levin went to work on the play and during this time, wrote a radio play based on Anne's diary to premiere on CBS during Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year. Although the 30-minute adaptation received largely positive reviews,⁷⁸ it lacks, above all, historical accuracy. The radio play oddly portrays Anne's friend, instead of Otto Frank, as giving her the diary for her thirteenth birthday and is much too short to provide a nuanced portrait of Anne's time in hiding.⁷⁹ Following the success of the radio broadcast, Levin felt incredibly confident. He turned in a draft of the play to Cheryl Crawford who liked it upon her first review, but then decided upon a re-read that it was not what she was looking for and that the characters were difficult to relate to. She ultimately decided to pass on Levin and began looking for a new writer.⁸⁰

Levin, however, had become so wrapped up in the play and his perceived personal connection to it, that he could not simply let it go. Instead, Levin became obsessed with being the one to write the play, continuing to badger those involved and ultimately take his side to court. His fascination was so much so that he even wrote a memoir, aptly titled *The Obsession* in 1973, chronicling his struggle to have his own play produced. Levin says his work was not rejected simply because it was not up to par, but instead states:

I became convinced that I had been barred because I and my work were in [Cheryl Crawford and Lilian Hellman—a playwright considered for the adaptation] political view “too Jewish.” The Broadway play omitted what I and others, including several serious critics, considered essential material in the Diary....The whole affair increasingly appeared to me as a classic instance of declaring an author incompetent in order to cover up what was

⁷⁷ Graver, L. *et al.* 1995 (as n.37 above), p. 38.

⁷⁸ Graver, L. *et al.* 1995 (as n.37 above), p. 41.

⁷⁹ “Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl.” Writer: Meyer Levin. CBS. Radio. September 15, 1952.

⁸⁰ Graver, L. *et al.* 1995 (as n.37 above), p. 41.

really an act of censorship. And in this, not only I, but Anne Frank was involved, as well as the public. Yet because of rampant McCarthyism, I could not then make public what I saw as the real issue: doctrinaire censorship of the Stalinist variety.⁸¹

In late 1952 and early 1953, Crawford would eventually allow Levin to rewrite the play, but ultimately she did not find it to be appropriate for what she was looking for in an adaptation. Unsatisfied by this, Levin protested. Finally, Crawford agreed that if he could find someone from the list of producers she and Otto Frank had agreed upon to sign a production agreement and stage the play, she would then allow him to go ahead with his version. Levin was unsuccessful in securing the rights and became irate, writing angry letters to both Frank and Crawford and attempting to rally the theatrical community behind him. Additionally, if the play was rejected, Levin still wanted the rights to perform it in Israel with a Hebrew translation. Levin's work and his subsequent trial to sue Otto Frank and those involved in the play will be important in subsequent chapters in terms of contextualizing images of Anne on stage. One of Levin's major criticism of the production that ultimately took place is the characterization of Anne, which will be discussed further in this thesis. Levin is mentioned in this chapter simply to give a foundation and timeline of his work with Otto Frank and Cheryl Crawford.⁸²

With regard to the play and Anne Frank's enduring legacy, Eva Schloss, Otto Frank's stepdaughter, states in her memoir *After Auschwitz* of Levin, "Overall, the case was a glaring example of the deep feelings, and even madness, that the legacy of Anne Frank would draw out in people."⁸³

Meanwhile, Cheryl Crawford and Otto Frank went ahead with the search for another playwright, and ultimately settled on husband and wife team Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett. The pair did have their roots in professional theatre, but were also Hollywood screenwriters, having penned *It's a Wonderful Life* and

⁸¹ Levin, M. 1973: *The Obsession*. New York: Simon and Schuster, p. 9.

⁸² Graver, L. *et al.* 1995 (as n.37 above), p. 47-50.

⁸³ Schloss, E. 2013: *After Auschwitz*. London: Hodder & Stoughton. pp. 241.

Easter Parade.⁸⁴ In Edna Nahshon's essay "From Page to Stage" published in *Anne Frank Unbound: Media, Imagination, Memory*, she asserts that Otto Frank did hire the pair, but it is obvious that Otto's advisors heavily influenced his decision to take them on as writers.⁸⁵

The pair spent two years researching and writing *The Diary of Anne Frank*, going through eight drafts before Otto Frank was satisfied with their efforts. Although Otto Frank had the last word, several others needed to voice their approval as well. Kermit Bloomgarden (an accountant-cum-theatre producer with works like Aruthur Miller's 1949 *Death of a Salesman* under his belt), was ultimately chosen as the producer, and he chose Garson Kanin to direct. Both agreed with Otto Frank's sentiments that the play should not focus on Anne's Jewishness, but instead the universality of human suffering. It is interesting to note that both Bloomgarden and Kanin were Jews themselves.⁸⁶ Kanin also asserted that the audience should have a few laughs here and there to ensure it would be "possible for them to sit through the show."⁸⁷ Otto Frank agreed that he did not wish for the show to be too depressing, and, as mentioned above, wished for it to have universal appeal. He also wanted the play to emphasize Anne's moral strength and "optimistical [sic]" views.⁸⁸ Otto worried, within earlier drafts, that the portrayal of Anne was too superficial and that "the writers were neglecting her interiority and maturation."⁸⁹ He wanted the portrayal of Peter van Pels, the teenage son of his former business partner with whom Anne had a teenage romance, to reflect not just the boy in the Secret Annex as seen in Anne's diary, but also the man Frank saw him become in the camps. Frank stated that he felt the circumstances of Peter's death (either in Mauthausen Concentration Camp or on a death march from

⁸⁴ Internet Movie Database. 2014 August. *Frances Goodrich*. Retrieved from http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0329304/?ref=fn_al_nm_1

⁸⁵ Nahshon, E. 2012: Anne Frank from Page to Stage. In B. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett and J. Shandler, (eds.). *Anne Frank Unbound: Media, Imagination and Memory*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, p. 64.

⁸⁶ *Ibid*, p. 67.

⁸⁷ Hogenson, B. 1983: *Reminiscences of Albert and Frances Hackett*. New York: Columbia University Oral History Research Office, p. 29.

⁸⁸ Goodrich, D. 2004: *The Real Nick and Nora: Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, p. 209.

⁸⁹ Graver, L. *et al.* 1995 (as n.37 above), p. 86.

Auschwitz to Mauthausen) were too “heartbreaking” [sic] to portray him in such, what Frank deemed, a juvenile manner.⁹⁰

Although Otto Frank was instrumental in deciding what would be in the play, he was decidedly meek in expressing himself when it came to earlier drafts. Although he did speak his mind to ensure his daughter’s memory was preserved to his liking, he was extremely afraid of hurting Goodrich and Hackett’s feelings. Graver claims that Frank kept a letter critiquing a draft of the play in his pocket for a full three days before working up the courage to mail it.⁹¹

Otto Frank approved the final script, but there were still parts of the play that he was not exactly pleased with. For example, in Mirjam Pressler’s *Treasures from the Attic*, she (as well as members of the Frank family who were instrumental in writing Pressler’s book) asserts that although Otto Frank wanted to present Anne as a universal character, he felt the play was too “non-Jewish, too light and cheerful.” For example, in the play, Garson Kanin (the original director) purposefully changed Anne’s line indicating that Jews have suffered throughout the ages to: “We are not the only people who have to suffer. There have been people who had to suffer for centuries, now this race, now that one.”⁹²

Additionally, one scene was added that did Otto Frank disliked from the beginning. As a diary is not conducive to dramatic action due to the day-to-day episodic nature of it, Goodrich and Hackett saw it necessary to add a climax in order to make the play more watchable. This was achieved by adding a fictionalized scene in which Hermann van Pels (or Mr. van Daan in the play), steals a piece of bread from the dwindling rations. This leads to an emotional “break down” in which the characters then call for a division of food and marks a turning point in the narrative. Pressler says the following of Otto’s reaction to this scene:

⁹⁰ Hawkins, W. n.d.: “Diary of Anne Frank,” *New York World-Telegram*, n.p., Performing Arts Research Library, New York, Billy Rose Theatre Collection, Clippings, “The Diary of Anne Frank,” File MWEZ+n.c. 17,522.

⁹¹ Graver, L. *et al.* 1995 (as n.37 above), p. 86.

⁹² Pressler, M. *et al.* 2011 (as n.2 above). p. 321.

As Buddy [Elias, Anne's first cousin] related later, that didn't seem right to Otto himself, since obviously no such theft had taken place. Anyone who saw the play without having read the book would think that Anne had described this scene, he said, and he repeatedly expressed his regret that Dussel ([Fritz] Pfeffer) as well as van Daan (van Pels) were being presented as not very sympathetic characters. In his opinion, the play showed them in a false light. He nevertheless let himself be talked into agreeing every time, when Bloomgarden and Kanin argued that it was crucial for the play.⁹³

Additionally, Pressler notes that Otto would sometimes say, "Everyone talks about Anne, but I had two children. No one talks about Margot."⁹⁴ As will be discussed in the next chapter, Margot's role is very diminished next to Anne's in most theatrical adaptations.

Curiously, Otto Frank was the only one who lived through the event to be consulted on the story of the play and the characters within. While he certainly was the person most affected by the losses, there are no references to consultation with Miep Gies or the other employees who aided Fritz Pfeffer, the Frank family and the van Pels family. Also glaringly missing is any guidance from Charlotte Kaletta, the surviving Gentile partner of Pfeffer (Albert Dussel in the diary).

Pfeffer died in Neuengamme concentration camp in December of 1944 after being transferred there from Auschwitz. Pfeffer also had a surviving son, Werner Pfeffer, who escaped to England on the Kindertransport. Werner immigrated to the United States as a young man and changed his name to Peter Pepper, presumably to escape the celebrity status surrounding his father.⁹⁵ Although Pepper spoke up about his father only at the very end of his own life, it is unclear if he refused to speak to the producers of the play or simply was not consulted. If Otto Frank was, indeed, extremely uncomfortable with the portrayal of Fritz Pfeffer, it would have seemed logical to contact both Pepper (who was an adult by the time the play was

⁹³ *Ibid*, p. 322.

⁹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 323.

⁹⁵ The Anne Frank House. (n.d.). *Fritz Pfeffer*. Retrieved from <http://www.annefrank.org/en/Anne-Frank/All-people/Fritz-Peffer/>.

written and produced) and Kaletta, especially when earlier versions of the play were being drafted. From all accounts, however, Otto Frank does seem to have been a man of integrity and compassion, so overlooking this detail may not have been his doing. As accounted above in Graver's book, discussing Frank's extreme reluctance to even mail criticism regarding his own daughter's portrayal, he may have felt too inexperienced in the world of publishing and theatrical production to suggest interviews with others. It is also of note that Otto Frank decided to keep the pseudonyms of the others in the Secret Annex, despite the name Dussel translating from German as "dope." Although this is most certainly lost on English speaking audiences, it is still of note concerning Frank's misgivings regarding Fritz Pfeffer's portrayal.

As Pressler's book is approved by the Anne Frank Fonds and therefore "allowed" in Anne Frank's "official narrative," it is interesting to note that Otto Frank's concerns about the play, despite the success it would enjoy, are still mentioned. The question of who owns Anne Frank's narrative will be explored at further length later in this thesis.

On October 5, 1955, the curtain went up on *The Diary of Anne Frank* on Broadway at the Cort Theater, despite Otto Frank's reservations. The structure and the reception of the play will be examined thoroughly in the following chapter.

Although he had the final word on the content of the play and was kept abreast on all casting and production issues, Otto Frank could not find it within himself to attend the play. In lieu of his presence, he wrote a heart-felt note to the cast and crew, which hung on the callboard before the star-studded opening night, notably attended by Marilyn Monroe.⁹⁶ It read:

You will all realize that for me this play is a part of my life, and the idea that my wife and children, as well as I, will be presented on the stage is a painful one to me. Therefore it is impossible for me to come and see it. My thoughts are with every one of you, and I hope the play will be a success and that the

⁹⁶ Goodrich, D. *et al.* 2004 (as n.60 above), p. 227.

message which it contains will, through you, reach as many people as possible and awaken in them a sense of responsibility to humanity.⁹⁷

⁹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 227.

Chapter Two: Idea to Stage

Although *The Diary of Anne Frank* made its debut on Broadway in 1955, the story was destined to become a play, even before the manuscript was released to a wider English-speaking audience. In June of 1952, as mentioned in the previous chapter, novelist Meyer Levin was already hard at work convincing Otto Frank that the story of his time in the Secret Annex as told by his daughter, would make a celebrated play and film.⁹⁸ And Levin would prove to be correct.

Levin would also be correct in the idea that producers, directors, and oddly Otto Frank himself, would not be concerned with the authentic nature of Anne, those who hid with her or the actual narrative of the events. The original play was woven together to create a piece that was more or less universal. As Flanzbaum states, and explored in the Introduction, although this would be the first play to touch on the subject of the Holocaust, the Jews involved in the production seemed to still be “apologizing” for their Jewishness, attempting to create a piece that sanitized Anne to make her both more appealing to an American audience and one that was largely church-going. Though New York has always been one of the epicentres of Jewish culture, the effort to shrink Anne’s story to make her feel like she could be your non-Jewish neighbor was partially the tone of the script. In that way, the tragedy of her death felt less like someone the audience had no ability to relate to.⁹⁹ In this way, Anne becomes devoid of her Jewishness, almost again having to apologize for her religion.

For reasons that seem particularly unclear, after a flurry of letters back and forth between Levin, Otto Frank and the producers of the Broadway production and ultimately a lawsuit, Meyer Levin was not chosen to pen the stage version. This issue, as stated in Chapter One, could lend itself for an entire thesis, and it has, in fact, lent itself as material for entire books. Instead, it can be summed up very

⁹⁸ Graver, L. 1995: *An Obsession with Anne Frank: Meyer Levin and the Diary*. Berkeley: University of California, p. 28.

⁹⁹ Flanzbaum, H. 1999: Introduction. In H. Flanzbaum (ed). *The Americanization of the Holocaust*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, p. 3.

simply that Meyer Levin long held the belief that his version of the play was “too Jewish” and therefore vetoed because of it was “too authentic.” Holding tightly to Anne’s Jewish heritage, Levin stated that the Goodrich and Hackett version of the play undermined Anne herself, stating, “The real creator was Anne Frank, and what they had altered, and meaningfully left out, was important. The very quality of the Diary as a document of the Jewish disaster. Every Jew who had died in the Holocaust was misrepresented.”¹⁰⁰ Levin also states that he feels Goodrich and Hackett were ultimately chosen not for their ability to create a Broadway hit around the material, but partially because they were not Jewish.¹⁰¹

After Levin had been turned down for the project, several other writers were queried for the task of turning Anne’s diary into a theatrical piece. By the end of 1952, Albert Goodrich and Frances Hackett, a husband and wife team, were secured as the writers for the new play. The couple had a wealth of writing credits behind them, including many Hollywood classics including *It’s a Wonderful Life* and *Easter Parade*.¹⁰²

Although the 1955 version of *The Diary of Anne Frank* continues to face criticism for its lack of Jewish identity and perceived over-reliance on Anne’s optimism, it cannot be said that the pair were not diligent in their research, at least according to their nephew. David L. Goodrich, who penned a book on his famous aunt and uncle, portray the pair as having worked tirelessly on draft after draft, initially taking a six-month leave from their posts at MGM from December 1953. This six-month period was extended after several drafts were rejected from the director and producers.¹⁰³ When faced with the task of writing a play with such a grave subject matter, they were advised by Kermit Bloomgarden to both find the spirit of Anne and focus on her “lighter, girlish side...[and] her natural humor and optimism.”¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, p. 124.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*, p. 92.

¹⁰² *Ibid*, p. 207.

¹⁰³ *Ibid*, p. 207.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid*, p. 206.

This emphasis on her optimism, however is in line both with the celebratory nature of the 1950s conquering the evils of World War II, and the same sentiment discussed in the Introduction that includes expected survivor narratives.

Though's Anne's story is not one of a survivor per se, the play is filtered through the lens of her father who is the only one of the group to have survived the camps. In Hank Greenspan's essay *Power and Limits of Survivors' Testimonies*, he discusses that in those early years, many survivors were made to feel ashamed of their experiences, which may partly be why Otto Frank consciously (or subconsciously) chose not to include very much about the torturous experience he and his family shared in Auschwitz and subsequent camps.¹⁰⁵

Evidently, the pair took to their task with enormous sincerity, despite the lack of authenticity in the script they ended up creating. According to David L. Goodrich, the couple read about the history of Holland, Jewish history, Jewish religion, Jewish holidays and on teenagers in general. They asked the BBC for original broadcasts of D-Day and met with a couple for which Anne was present at their wedding. The Dutch-Jewish couple showed Goodrich and Hackett their yellow star that they were forced to wear under Nazi occupation, their identity papers and a version of an underground Dutch newspaper. Similarly, Goodrich and Hackett met with non-Jewish members of the Dutch resistance and scoured original source material from ration cards to fake ID papers. Frances Hackett wrote in an undated diary entry, "We are brazen about asking people for help, but we feel this play is a tremendous responsibility."¹⁰⁶ But for Frances, the content of the play was especially difficult. Ravaged by guilt for her perceived inaction and life that she lived during the time Anne was in hiding and then the camps, Albert told his nephew that Frances cried any time she talked about Anne. "[Frances Goodrich] kept saying, 'Where was I when this was happening? Why didn't we know about this, what was going on over there?' ...Anytime she thought of Anna, she could hardly speak."¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ Greenspan, H. 1998: The Power and Limits of the Metaphor of Survivors' Testimony. In C. Schumacher (ed). *Staging the Holocaust*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 27-28.

¹⁰⁶ Goodrich, D. 2001 (as n.6 above), p. 206.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*, p. 208.

The pair poured their heart and souls into each draft of the play, and from David Goodrich's accounts, worked tirelessly to honor the memory of Anne and those who hid in the Secret Annex with her. But no matter how hard they worked on the first few incarnations, they seemed unable to get it "right." The script was refused over and over by the producers and director, and Frances began to feel despondent¹⁰⁸

Goodrich and Hackett moved from their home in Los Angeles to New York City, yearning for inspiration as they continued honing in on their work. Otto Frank, having read the failed fourth draft, sent them an undated letter detailing his own issues with the play. As no date or citation is given for this letter, it is assumed that it is currently part of the Goodrich family's private collection or has been discarded. The entirety of the letter is not revealed, but David Goodrich quotes parts of the letter in his book *The Real Nick and Nora: Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett, Writers of Stage and Screen Classics*. According to Frances Goodrich's journal, Otto Frank carried this letter in his coat pocket for three days before sending it off to the playwrights. Frances further detailed some of the letter in her journal:

Otto Frank said he knew "how devoted [sic] you worked...All your letters showed me your warm feelings, so that I feel a close relation to you even not knowing you personally. Therefore, it is very difficult for me to answer as I have to do." He then spelled out his reservations, saying among other things that the script didn't convey, "Anne's wish to work for mankind, to achieve something valuable still after her death, her horror against war and discrimination," and didn't show her "moral strength and optimistical [sic] view on life." There were more specific objections, then more regrets—"My heart aches in writing [this] way knowing that I must hurt your feelings"—and then a roundabout invitation to keep trying. "I beg you to answer me just as openhearted as I...You wrote that it was your intention to come to

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*, p. 209.

Europe...Perhaps it is not too late to do so...I would be *delighted* to see you [and] discuss everything with you.¹⁰⁹

Although understandably frustrated, the pair faced his criticism, detailing their own struggles in writing the script back to Otto. Namely, with light hearted credits such as the screenplays to the classics *Easter Parade*, *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* and *It's a Wonderful Life* under their belts, they were having difficulty coping in writing a play with such a heavy subject matter. After another rewrite, a fifth draft was refused and Frances wrote in her journal on September 4, 1954 that she was "so blue" about the play that she could "cut her throat." However, Lillian Hellman's advice about this version (although it is unclear what exactly she advised) proved to be so helpful that it lifted the pair out of their despair and they went to work on a sixth draft. And although the draft needed a bit of reworking, this one was finally approved and Kermit Bloomgarden gave it the green light so the crew could finally start production. From there, the production went about making preliminary casting as well as creating the sets for the piece. At this point Susan Strasberg, Lee Strasberg's daughter, was offered the role of Anne. Joseph Schildkraut, an Austrian-born actor with a striking resemblance to Otto Frank was offered the role.¹¹⁰

The casting of Susan Strasberg in the role of Anne Frank would begin a long legacy of casting actresses of exceptional beauty to portray her. Although Anne Frank herself was not an unattractive teenager, Strasberg set the precedence for casting young women of conventional Hollywood beauty, or even models (as the case with Millie Perkins in the film version) to portray Anne.

Despite some doubts, (Garson Kanin mused in his journal that perhaps writing a play about Germany's Nazi past would be a wrong move politically and one of the couple's friends questioned why the pair didn't stick with writing comedy), Goodrich and Hackett made their way to Amsterdam in December of 1954 to further research the play. They aimed to create an authentic approach to the piece,

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid*, p 209.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 210

doing everything from visiting the Secret Annex to the apartment Anne had lived in with her family before going into hiding. The pair also went to Anne's school and some of her favorite after school spots and spent hours interviewing Otto Frank. In order to retain historical accuracy, according to David Goodrich, the couple had the script checked by members of the NIOD (Netherlands State Institute for War Documentation). They also meticulously took photos of everything from doorknobs to cabinet pulls and recorded the sounds of the streets of Amsterdam for use in the play. It is clear Goodrich and Hackett approached and carried out this project with extreme sincerity, despite the critiques the play would later receive.¹¹¹ Frances Goodrich, in fact, was so sincere in her efforts that she invested in the show (\$1500) and became one of about sixty "partners" to do so. Albert Hackett declined to invest his own money.¹¹² At the end of their visit to Amsterdam, the pair made their way to London (presumably because Otto Frank spent a considerable amount of time there with his second wife, Fritzi, and her daughter, Eva Schloss, who has lived in London since the end of the war) where they polished off the eighth and final draft. Although the play was set to go ahead in the spring of 1955, Garson Kanin decided that it was too late in the season to do the play and would have to postpone it until the fall. This, of course, was one more blow to the writers who had worked endlessly over the past couple of years.

The play's content would also have an emotional impact on both Otto Frank and Goodrich and Hackett. After regaling his story for the visit, David L. Goodrich reports that Otto Frank collapsed and was put to bed for several days after the pair had returned home. Frances, too, seemed to suffer, writing in her journal that she could not stop crying.¹¹³

A Brief Analysis of the Historical Merit of the Play (1955 version)

Although Goodrich and Hackett achieved success on their eighth draft, the challenge of creating an episodic work, such as a diary, and transforming it for the

¹¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 214-215

¹¹² *Ibid*, p. 215

¹¹³ *Ibid*, p. 216

stage was a daunting task. Anne's original diary has no beginning, middle and end and also lacks an important aspect of all theatrical productions: a climax. Thus, Goodrich and Hackett had to find a way to make episodes in someone's life become a work that audience members would find poignant and nuanced, as well as capturing the characters' spirits in a way that would please Otto Frank.

This analysis seeks to understand the ways in which the play has been "watered down" to create a more relatable version, contrary to historical evidence. Although the writers, indeed, took their task seriously, it seems that Anne's optimism and the universality of human suffering was to be highlighted, no matter the historical fact that had to be sacrificed. And in some ways, this was successful, as the play itself proved tremendously popular, which we will discuss in subsequent chapters.

America's first glimpse of the Holocaust occurred in newsreels immediately after liberation¹¹⁴—but the horrors of those images are so extremely divorced from either version of *The Diary of Anne Frank* that one could almost mistake the two tragedies as two separate events. The fact that the play also opened over 10 years after these first images appeared, and were subsequently forgotten, also might have made it more difficult for the public to make a connection to the Holocaust.

As Greenspan states in his essay, *The Power and Limits of Survivor Testimony*, one of the overwhelming notions many survivors felt after their liberation was shame at what they had endured, and an increasing social pressure to not reveal too much about their horrific experiences. Many, he says, were outwardly encouraged by family and friends to simply "move on" with their lives, even though such a task would have been impossible.¹¹⁵

In an effort to both appeal to the audience of the time and shield Otto Frank's feelings, the play becomes a Holocaust play devoid of the Holocaust—as many early works about the Holocaust were.

¹¹⁴ Shandler, J. 1999. *While America Watches*. New York: Oxford University Press, p. 9.

¹¹⁵ Greenspan, H. 1998: The Power and Limits of the Metaphor of Survivors' Testimony. In C. Schumacher (ed). *Staging the Holocaust*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 27-28.

Although *The Diary of Anne Frank* was the first popular play, and subsequent film on the Holocaust, the media before dealing with the subject was rather sparse. For instance, three Holocaust films in the English language had been created before theatrical version of *The Diary of Anne Frank: The Juggler* (1953), *The Search* (1948) and *The Stranger* (1946). All such films dealt with the Holocaust peripherally, in that they followed survivors in their journeys after their incarcerations. As such, at the time, audiences were used to receiving media that was the Holocaust without the Holocaust, a way to dip their toe in to the waters, so to speak, without having to learn of the real horrors.

The previous Holocaust media was also devoid of Jewishness, much like the original version of *The Diary of Anne Frank*. While many victims did not identify as religious Jews, there was barely so much as a hint of Judaism in the entire media prior, as if a mysterious group of people were targeted for no real reason.

Much of this may be attributed to Greenspan's notion of shame and could be connected to the fact that many Jews still felt that being Jewish somehow bore a mark on them, thus it wasn't necessary to bring their Jewishness to the forefront.

As such, the original *The Diary of Anne Frank* fits in seamlessly with the other media from the time, but adds a touch of originality in that the main character feels and seems like that of any American (or British or Australian or South African, depending on the location of the performance) girl they may know.

The 1950s were also a time of Americana, in which differences were not something to be celebrated. Conservatism was the order of the day, in what Joanne Meyerowitz refers to as "containment." This extended beyond sexuality and intolerance of what was thought of as sexual "deviance," but also strictly held white Christians as the "proper Americans" with a strong focus on the nuclear family unit with a father as the provider and wife at home caring for domestic duties. And although Jews were considered white by society at large, it interesting to note that interracial marriage was also banned for most of this decade in the

United States, forcing many Jews to want to blend in even further with their Christian and “white” counterparts.¹¹⁶

During this time, Jews in the United States were considered white within the context of racial laws like Jim Crow, but were also excluded in some ways from the public sphere. For instance, many country clubs or recreational centers legally discriminated against Jews and barred them access to their clubs and Greek organizations on college campuses were also only for Christian students. Jews, however, could, join their own “othered” organizations. This is evidenced in my own family’s legacy, wherein my own mother spoke about Jewish students not being allowed to join certain Greek organizations on university campuses in the 1960s, and if a Jewish boy was to date a non-Jewish girl, he would not be allowed inside of her Christian sorority house, even to sit in the front room supervised, as non-Jewish men were allowed to do. While Jews of the time clearly had similar access to education and other tenants of society that white non-Jews did, it was these subtle nuances and microaggressions that would likely drive the desire to mold Anne into an “every man” or “every woman.”

And it is perhaps this driving force of the experiences of many of the Jewish authors and producers to create an Anne that is not “othered” but similar to that of children in the audience’s own lives.

The desire to present Anne as similar to her audience and not as an “other” are two fold. Firstly, presenting Anne in such a way, as spoken about before, may have had something to do with the shame and survivors’ guilt Otto Frank projected upon the writers. This may not have been done consciously, as there is no evidence that Otto Frank ever spoke about this openly and to Goodrich and Hackett. However, suffice to say, one cannot escape such a traumatic situation without suffering some scarring on the psyche.

¹¹⁶ Meyerowitz, J. 2014: The Liberal 1950s? Reinterpreting Postwar US Sexual Culture. In K. Hagemann and S. Michel (eds). *Gender and the Long Postwar: Reconsiderations of the United States and the Two Germanys, 1945-1989*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, pp. 297-313.

Alvin H. Rosenfeld speaks of this in his book *The End of the Holocaust*, in which he discusses the suicides of survivors Primo Levi and Jean Amery. Both survivors made their livelihood discussing and dissecting their experiences of the Holocaust through writing, which Rosenfeld suggests may have brought about their own ends.

He says of Levi, "Memory, the very source of his genius as a writer, was also the source of much of his pain."

Rosenfeld expands on this, stating the survivor, "learns to live with such pain, to disguise it or suppress it or otherwise evade a direct confrontation with it, but these maneuvers work at best to tame the inner suffering,, not eliminate it."¹¹⁷ As such, it is possible that the original play is both devoid of Jewishness and the Holocaust at large as a way to minimize the impact on Otto Frank and other survivors of the time.

Lastly, immigrants to the United States have always been very quick to shed their "immigrant" identity and assimilate into the dominant culture. While Frank himself was never an immigrant to the United States, Goodrich and Hackett are descendants of immigrants, like most citizens, and were likely aware of the nuances of "foreignness" and otherness.

The concept of shedding the "other" is spoken about at length in American literature relating to immigration. For instance, my own family speaks of the halt of the German language around World War I when the family decided that no longer speaking it at home and avoiding teaching it to their children would allow their children more opportunities in life and give them the advantage of being a "real American."

John Guzłowski, author of *Echoes of Tattered Tongues*, speaks about his experience and pressure to become American at length in his memoirs and in speaking engagements. Guzłowski, a child of non-Jewish Poles who were imprisoned in

¹¹⁷ Rosenfeld, A. 2011: *End of the Holocaust*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, pp. 190.

concentration camps, was born in a Displaced Persons camp. As a child, he made his way, with his family, to the United States where assimilation was encouraged.

In one of his poems, he speaks about how as a child, he spoke Polish exclusively, but as he grew in the United States and was encouraged to adopt the English tongue, his mother often joked that his Polish “hurt her ears.” He expands on the concept of being a refugee and a child of war in his blog, *Echoes of Tattered Tongues: Memory Unfolded*.¹¹⁸

The concept of assimilation in America is a strong one, even today, and was undoubtedly more so encouraged in the 1950s. A 2016 article from the Foundation of Economic Education attempted to reassure readers that immigrants are “still assimilating” (as in finding jobs and speaking English predominately) and that this should not be a concern in terms of accepting them into the country.¹¹⁹ The fact that enough people are “concerned” about foreigners absorbing the predominate culture shows, without a doubt, that this concept is still alive and well. Thus, it would be difficult for a predominately American audience, who held the concept of assimilation dear to their hearts, to watch a play about anything other than a very Americanized teenager during the mid-1950s.

Because of the context of the time period and the points mentioned above, I feel it is necessary to then discuss how and why the play is historically accurate and what may have spurred some of these decisions, despite the playwright’s concerted effort to be as historically accurate as possible and falling majorly short of the mark in an effort to play to societal expectations of the time. This allows the reader for a clear analysis of the changes made to suit the intended audience.

¹¹⁸ Guzowski, J. *Echoes of Tattered Tongues: Memory Unfolded*. 24 March 2017. *How’s Your Polish?*. Retrieved from <http://lightning-and-ashes.blogspot.co.uk/2017/03/how-your-polish.html>. 16 April 2017.

¹¹⁹ Nowrasteh, A. *Freedom for Economic Education*. 19 January 2016. Retrieved from <https://fee.org/articles/are-immigrants-still-assimilating-in-america/>. 16 April 2017.

Although there is no “official” organization of scenes, according to Edna Nahshon in her essay, “From Page to Stage,” the play is organized as follows:

Act I

Scene 1: Prologue

Scene 2: Arrival at the Annex

Scene 3: Daily life in hiding

Scene 4: Nightmare

Scene 5: Hanukkah Celebration and break-in

Act 2

Scene 1: The New Year

Scene 2: Romance

Scene 3: Hunger

Scene 4: Arrest

Scene 5: Epilogue¹²⁰

Before discussing the play, it is necessary to lay out the pseudonyms and aliases of the helpers and how they differ from the diary to the play. Just as in the original diary, the Franks have retained their original names. And as in the diary, the van Pels family is referred to by their alias Anne had given them of the van Daans, and Fritz Pfeffer is referred to as Albert Dussel. Miep retains her real full name of Miep Gies (though Anne originally referred to her as Miep van Santen in her diary¹²¹), but Bep Voskuijl and her father Johannes, also helpers of the Secret Annex, are omitted entirely in the play. Johannes Kleiman and Victor Kugler (referred to as Koophuis and Kugler respectively in Anne’s original diary) are amalgamated into one character named Mr. Kraler. Miep’s husband, Jan Gies, whom Anne renamed Henk van Santen, is referred to as Dirk. In the foreword of the play, meant for the

¹²⁰ Nahshon, E. 2012: *Anne Frank from Page to Stage*. In B. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett and J. Shandler, (eds.). *Anne Frank Unbound: Media, Imagination and Memory*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, p. 65.

¹²¹ Frank, A. 1952: *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl*. O. Fran, ed. B.M. Mooyaart trans. New York: Simon & Schuster, p. 13.

actors to read, all characters retain their pseudonyms, including Bep (whom Anne referred to as Elli Vossen) and Kleiman (Koophuis).

The prologue and epilogue of the play feature Otto Frank returning to the Secret Annex in November of 1945. He is described in the stage directions as being “weak and ill and making a supreme effort at self-control.”¹²² Miep Gies, still employed at the office, greets him. She is described as “a Dutch girl of about twenty-two, pregnant now.”¹²³ The latter is very curious, considering Miep was originally from Austria, sent to the Netherlands as a young child after World War I. She was born in 1909, making her 36 at the end of WWII. And although Goodrich and Hackett decided to characterize her as pregnant in 1945, Miep and her husband, Jan, did not have their first and only child, Paul, until the early 1950s.¹²⁴

Both the prologue and epilogue of the play feature Miep and Otto poring over Anne’s diary. In the prologue, Miep attempts to give the embittered Otto Frank some of his letters and files from a “pile of rubbish” found on the floor. Otto asks for all of it to be burned, until he realizes that one of them is Anne’s diary. He begins reading it aloud, a diary entry from July 6, 1942. This entry, which does not actually exist in Anne’s diary, is dated when the Frank family first went into hiding. Instead, it is an amalgamation of entries from June 20, 1942 to August 14, 1942.¹²⁵

Interestingly, the frame of Otto Frank reading his daughter’s diary in a prologue and epilogue is also a device that was used by Meyer Levin in his original script. It was also present in the CBS radio play adaption of the diary, which Levin penned.¹²⁶

¹²² Goodrich, F. and A. Hackett. 1995: *The Diary of Anne Frank Play*. Oxford: Heinemann Educational Publishers. p. 1.

¹²³ *Ibid*, p. 1.

¹²⁴ The Anne Frank House. (n.d.). *Miep Gies*. Retrieved from <http://www.annefrank.org/en/Anne-Frank/All-people/Miep-Gies/>. 13 Dec. 2014.

¹²⁵ Frank, A. 2002: *Anne Frank: The Definitive Edition*. O. Frank and M. Pressler, eds. S. Massotty trans. London: Puffin Books.

¹²⁶ “Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl.” Writer: Meyer Levin. CBS. Radio. September 15, 1952.

The first scene of the play, although it is marked as “Scene Two” in the script, provides an exposition for the characters. It begins with the van Daan family anxiously awaiting the arrival of the Franks. However, Anne writes in her diary on August 14, 1942 that the van Daans (van Pels) arrived on July 13, 1942, seven days after the Franks.¹²⁷ Miep escorts the Frank family into the Secret Annex, and curiously, the stage directions indicate that Margot is 18, although the diary itself states that she was 16 when they first went into hiding.¹²⁸

During Scene Two, Anne’s exuberance is made clear, as she flits about the Annex, helping her father set up and harassing the teenage son of the van Daans, Peter van Daan, and his cat. Very early on, Otto Frank is established as the patriarch of the Annex, both helping set up the living quarters, showing Peter van Daan to his room and offering him some of the Franks’ own bread and butter. Mr. and Mrs. van Daan have already exited the stage by that point, leaving their son alone in the downstairs area. Even though the situation is new and unfamiliar, it is not in the stage directions for either of the van Daans to comfort their son with physical touch before they exit.¹²⁹

Toward the end of Scene Two, Otto Frank bequeaths his daughter, who is already incredibly romantic about life in hiding (one of Anne’s lines moments before the diary is revealed is, “You know the way I’m going to think of it here? I’m going to think of it as a boarding-house. A very peculiar Summer boarding-house...” [sic]) the iconic diary. Anne excitedly expresses that she has always wanted a diary, and excitedly wants to get to work on it immediately. She begins to go downstairs to her father’s office to retrieve a pen. However, she is stopped by Otto who reminds her that she can never leave the Attic, further sealing their fate and conveying the feeling of confinement and finality to the audience.¹³⁰

Again, this scene contradicts historical fact, presumably for dramatic effect.

Although Anne’s parents did give Anne the diary, it was given to her a few weeks

¹²⁷ Frank, A. *et al.* 2002 (as n.23 above). p. 30.

¹²⁸ Frank, A. *et al.* 2002 (as n.23 above). p. 20.

¹²⁹ Goodrich, F. *et al.* 1995 (as n.20 above). p. 13.

¹³⁰ *Ibid*, p. 20.

earlier for her 13th birthday. In fact, the diary was not a surprise at all. Anne states in her July 14, 1942 entry that she had picked it out and was present when one of her parents (it does not state if it was Otto or Edith) purchased it, but was not allowed to have it until her birthday.¹³¹

To transition from one scene to another, a voice over of Anne is added, which is supposed to be the thoughts Anne is penning in her beloved diary. Originally, Goodrich and Hackett had total black outs between the scenes where the curtain would fall and the audience was expected to sit in total darkness. Evidently, the set was to be changed to accommodate different rooms in the Annex, but Garson Kanin felt this would be difficult for the audience. Instead, he offered the suggestion of Anne's voiceovers whilst the lights dimmed, indicating a passage of time. He indicated that the voiceovers should not be diary entries describing what was already acted out, but an amalgamation of entries that would "provide further enriching detail." This suggestion was incorporated into the script for the sixth draft.¹³²

Scene Three, which takes place on an unspecified date in August 1942, attempts to shed light on the dynamics of the individuals in the Annex as they become better acquainted with one another. It is a particularly long scene, at about thirty pages in length and takes up the bulk of Act I. In this scene, Anne's exuberance and the optimistic attitude that Goodrich and Hackett were told to highlight is very apparent. She begins the scene by hiding Peter's shoes, begging her to chase him, only to be corrected by her mother:

MRS FRANK: Anne, dear, I think you shouldn't play like that with Peter. It's not dignified.

(ANNE is now deflated and inspecting her chafed elbows.)

ANNE: Who cares if it is dignified? I don't want to be dignified.

¹³¹ Frank, A. *et al.* 2002 (as n. 23 above). p. 1.

¹³² Goodrich, D. 2001 (as n.212 above), p. 206.

(She throws herself across the chair in a most undignified manner. MR FRANK turns off the table-lamp. MARGOT gives him her copybook. They come into the centre room. MARGOT moves to help MR. FRANK. MR FRANK moves below the table and gathers up ANNE's copybooks. PETER, in his room, puts on his shoes.)

MRS FRANK: You complain that I don't treat you like a grown-up. But when I do, you resent it.

(MARGOT brings a cloth and wipes the table.)

ANNE: I only want some fun—someone to laugh and clown with. After you've sat still all day and hardly moved, you've got to have some fun...I don't know what's the matter with that boy.

MR FRANK: He isn't used to girls. Give him a little time.

ANNE: Time? Isn't two months time? I could cry. Come on Margot—dance with me. Come on, please.

MARGOT: *(pulling away)* I have to help with supper. *(She returns to her duties with MRS FRANK.)*

ANNE: You know we're going to forget how to dance. When we get out we won't remember a thing. *(She sings to herself, and waltzes. MR FRANK is looking at PETERS [sic] copybook. As ANNE approaches he holds out his arms and they do a few turns of a waltz.)*¹³³

This tiny exchange within the Frank family represents a good deal of interesting characterization choices made by Goodrich and Hackett. Firstly, it is clear that Anne's high spirits are highlighted, and her outgoing nature and thirst for a good

¹³³ Goodrich, F. *et al.* 1995 (as n.20 above). pp. 24-25.

laugh is not forgotten. The struggles with her mother, which Anne first begins to identify in earnest in her October 3, 1942 entry, are dramatized within this tiny bit, and it is clear from this small exchange that Anne favors her father. Although in her diary, she had not written much by August of 1942, she expresses her dislike of her mother in detail in the entry mentioned above in full. It also shows that her mother chiding Anne, and Margot as the “good dutiful daughter” allows the family to fit in with Meyerowitz’s assessment of the time period; a nuclear family in which girls are taught and expected to participate fully in domestic duties, even if this may not have been what Anne or Margot envisioned for their own lives.

Yesterday Mother and I had another run-in and she really kicked up a fuss. She told Daddy all of my sins and started to cry, which made me cry, too, and I already had such an awful headache. I finally told Daddy I loved ‘him’ more than I do Mother, to which he replied it was just a passing phase, but I don’t think so. I simply can’t stand Mother and I have to force myself not to snap at her all of the time, and to stay calm when I would rather slap her across the face....[Daddy] says I should volunteer to help her, but I’m not going to because I don’t love her and don’t enjoy doing it. I can imagine Mother dying someday, but Daddy’s death seems inconceivable.¹³⁴

However, it is evidenced that the rift between Edith and Anne is quite downplayed in the original play, sticking to small arguments between the two, such as the one illustrated in the scene above. The harsh words Anne has for her mother in the full edition of the diary were redacted in the 1952 English version of her diary, presumably because Otto did not want to speak ill of his late wife. Instead, it states that Anne is much more fond of her father, but does not include her statement about imagining her mother’s death. Otto also redacted the portion in which Anne states that she does not love her mother.¹³⁵ Presumably, this is the version of the diary Goodrich and Hackett were given to work with, thus the tension between mother and daughter can only be seen in the play in a somewhat superficial light.

¹³⁴ Frank, A. *et al.* 2002 (as n.23 above). pp. 50-51.

¹³⁵ Frank, A. *et al.* 1952 (as n.19 above). p. 34.

This exchange in Scene Three also highlights the issue with the portrayal of Margot perfectly. In the original Goodrich and Hackett version, Margot is hardly a character. She does have a sister-to-sister moment with Anne in Act II Scene Two in which they discuss Anne's budding romance with Peter, but otherwise is always seen dutifully doing whatever her mother asks. She is the complete opposite of Anne, her total counterbalance, never raising her voice and always seemingly preparing dinner or some other similar kitchen-related task.

Meyer Levin took issue with this as well and wrote in his book, *The Obsession*, "Their relationship had been so important in the Diary, and so important to Anne...In what I was seeing there was no relationship between the sisters; Margot was a nonentity, usually kept at the back of the stage washing dishes."¹³⁶

The rest of Scene Three plays out like a kitchen sink drama, a term used to describe a theatrical (although it can include novels, television and plays) production that depicts domestic life. Although this style typically refers to the American and British working class, it seeks to offer a look into the cramped and less desirable conditions the members of the Secret Annex under. It could be argued that although the characters are supposed to be Dutch, that the play fits the description of a kitchen sink drama, as their nationality seems to mold to that of wherever the play is being performed.

This scene serves as a way to introduce the issues the members of the Annex experienced whilst living together. On page 36-37, the van Daans argue over Mr. van Daan's smoking habit. Anne mentions on September 2, 1942 that the van Daans often argue over trivial matters, though she does specify which matters they are arguing over.¹³⁷ On page 39, Mr. van Daan accuses Anne of having been spoiled after scolding her for being too boisterous and unable to quiet down. In Anne's September 27, 1942 entry, she states that Mrs. van Daan, not Mr. van Daan as characterized in the play, finds her to be particularly spoiled. She writes, "Then Mrs. van D. really flies off the handle: 'You should have been at our house, where

¹³⁶ Levin, M. 1973. (as n.3 above), p. 121.

¹³⁷ Frank, A. *et al.* 2002 (as n.23 above). p. 33.

children were brought up the way they should be. I don't call this a proper upbringing. Anne is terribly spoiled.'"¹³⁸

Scene Three's somewhat monotony breaks up on page 45 when Mr. Kraler (an amalgamation of two male Opteka employees who helped hide the members of the Secret Annex, Johannes Kleiman and Victor Kugler) announces that Albert Dussel (the pseudonym of Fritz Pfeffer) needs a place to hide. In the theatrical version of the diary, Dr. Dussel is already downstairs and ready to come into the Secret Annex. In Anne's diary, she describes him as not arriving until November 17, 1942,¹³⁹ though the scene in the play is supposed to be taking place in August. In her November 10, 1942 entry,¹⁴⁰ she says that Miep asks if they had room for an eighth member of the Secret Annex. On November 12, she says that Dussel, a dentist by trade, wanted to settle accounts and finish up the appointments with his patients that week before taking up residence the Secret Annex.¹⁴¹

After Dussel's arrival scene, the troubling characterization of the fictional version of Fritz Pfeffer begins. It is as if there was no research done into his life and it is very strange that Otto Frank made no attempt to correct this. However, following Meyerowitz's assertion of her theory of 1950s "containment," Meyerowitz makes it clear that nonmarital relationships are seen as taboo during in 1950s America.¹⁴² Because Fritz Pfeffer was divorced and living with a woman he was not married to (because his partner was Christian and he was Jewish and the racial laws in question during the period did not allow it), Goodrich and Hackett may have thought the audience would accept him more as the male form of a spinster than as an unmarried man living "in sin."

After his arrival, Dussel tells the members of the Secret Annex:

¹³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 42.

¹³⁹ *Ibid*, p. 65.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p. 63.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid*, p. 64.

¹⁴² Meyerowitz, J. 2014: The Liberal 1950s? Reinterpreting Postwar US Sexual Culture. In K. Hagemann and S. Michel (eds). *Gender and the Long Postwar: Reconsiderations of the United States and the Two Germanys, 1945-1989*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, pp. 297-313.

DUSSEL (*to MRS VAN DAAN and shaking her hand*) Forgive me if I haven't really expressed my gratitude to all of you. (*He shakes hands with MRS FRANK.*) This has been such a shock to me. (*He shakes hands with PETER.*) I'd always thought of myself as Dutch. I was born in Holland. My father was born in Holland, and my grandfather.¹⁴³

This is completely incorrect and there is no indication of why Goodrich and Hackett made these choices. In actuality, Pfeffer was born in Giessen, Germany and lived in Germany until he emigrated after Kristallnacht.¹⁴⁴ These choices were either due to ignorance of Fritz Pfeffer's life (although it seems odd, considering Otto Frank lived with him in such close quarters for so long) or because the Goodrich and Hackett team wanted to emphasize how betrayed Dutch-born Jews felt during the Holocaust. Fritz Pfeffer, or Dr. Dussel, apparently was a convenient device for doing so.

A few lines down, Anne and Dussel make their way into their new accommodations, which they share in the play just as in the diary. At this point, another curious characterization is made, which completely contradicts historical fact.

DUSSEL: I am a man who's always lived alone. I haven't had to adjust myself to others. I hope you'll bear with me until I learn.

ANNE: Let me help you. (*She takes the bags and places them on the cot.*) Do you always live alone? Have you no family at all?

DUSSEL: No-one. (*He opens his medicine case and spreads the bottles on the dressing table.*)

¹⁴³ Goodrich, F. *et al.* 1995 (as n.20 above). pp. 53-54.

¹⁴⁴ The Anne Frank House. (n.d.). *Fritz Pfeffer*. Retrieved from <http://www.annefrank.org/en/Anne-Frank/All-people/Fritz-Pfeffer/> 15 Dec. 2014.

ANNE: How dreadful! You must be terribly lonely.

DUSSEL: I'm used to it.¹⁴⁵

Fritz Pfeffer, in actuality, was married to a woman named Vera Bythiner in 1921. In April of 1927, the pair welcomed a son, Werner. After the couple divorced in 1933, Fritz Pfeffer was granted full custody of their child. By 1935, he had begun a relationship with a non-Jewish woman named Charlotte Kaletta, but they were not allowed to marry due to the 1935 Nuremberg Laws. As mentioned above, the pair moved to Amsterdam following Kristallnacht in 1939. Fritz's son Werner accompanied them to the Netherlands. It is unclear when Werner went to the United Kingdom on the Kindertransports, but it is likely some time between 1939 and 1942. Fritz also lived with Charlotte Kaletta during this time.¹⁴⁶ Perhaps being a loner bachelor was a way for Goodrich and Hackett to justify the behavior that Anne found so annoying when she lived with him, and making him curmudgeonly would make it easier for the audience to sympathize with her annoyance. However, there has been no evidence to support this, or any statements, for that matter, to explain why Pfeffer's character was so dreadfully written.

Scene Four begins with all of the members of the Secret Annex asleep. It is dated for September 1942, with Dussel already in hiding, even though he didn't arrive until November of 1942, as stated above. In this portion of the play, Anne wakes from a nightmare in which the Nazis came and took her away, presumably because in Scene Three, Dussel gives the family the news that most of their friends have been arrested. And although it is a common assumption that many people had no idea what was happening to the Jews Anne wrote in her diary on November 19, 1942, after Dussel's arrival:

Mr. Dussel has told us much about the outside world we've missed for so long. He had sad news. Countless friends and acquaintances have been

¹⁴⁵ Goodrich, F. *et al.* 1995 (as n.20 above). p. 54.

¹⁴⁶ The Anne Frank House. (n.d.). *Fritz Pfeffer*. Retrieved from <http://www.annefrank.org/en/Anne-Frank/All-people/Fritz-Pfeffer/> 15 Dec. 2014.

taken off to a dreadful fate. Night after night, green and grey military vehicles cruise the streets. They knock on every door, asking whether any Jews live there. If so, the whole family is immediately taken away. If not, they proceed to the next house. It's impossible to escape their clutches unless you go into hiding. They often go around with lists, knocking only on those doors where they know there's a big haul to be made. They frequently offer a bounty, so much per head. It's like the slave hunts of the olden days. I don't mean to make light of this; it's much too tragic for that. In the evenings when it's dark, I often see long lines of good, innocent people, accompanied by crying children, walking on and on, ordered about by a handful of men who bully and beat them until they nearly drop. No one is spared. The sick, the elderly, children, babies and pregnant women—all are marched to their death.¹⁴⁷

The nightmare that Anne experiences (although she only describes that she dreamed she was taken away like her friend Jopie de Waal, a pseudonym for her friend Jacqueline van Maarsen in the play and original diary), although a bit of a trope, is presumably used to convey to the audience both the terror that the members of the Secret Annex felt and that they knew quite a bit about what their fates would be if they were found. This, clearly, ups the dramatic stakes and heightens the tension surrounding the main characters. Although Anne did experience nightmares while in hiding, this scene does not occur in the diary.

During the scene, Edith comes in to comfort her daughter, who in turn tells her that she would rather speak to her father. Anne pulls away when Edith tries to kiss her, further attempting to illustrate the discord between mother and daughter. Anne confides to her father in the aftermath of her nightmare that her mother simply doesn't understand her, a sentiment echoed in diary entries mentioned above.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁷ Frank, A. *et al.* 2002 (as n.23 above). p. 69.

¹⁴⁸ Goodrich, F. *et al.* 1995 (as n.20 above). pp. 53-54.

The very last scene in Act One is the controversial Hanukkah scene, mostly criticized because, although it is written as the Act I Finale of sorts, it never really took place. Anne writes in her diary on December 7, 1942 that the members of the Secret Annex celebrated Hanukkah, but only in passing. She says, "We didn't make much of a fuss with Hanukkah, merely exchanging a few small gifts and lighting the candles. Since candles are in short supply, we lit them for only ten minutes, but as long as we sing the song, that doesn't matter St. Nicholas' Day on Saturday was much more fun." Anne goes on to describe that they exchanged "better" presents on St. Nicholas' Day, and that she received a doll for the occasion.¹⁴⁹ Hanukkah, generally speaking, is not a very important holiday in the Jewish calendar and has only been recognized as such because of its proximity to Christmas. Although the members of the Secret Annex would have used it as a reason to celebrate, it would not have had the significance the play seems to put on it.

In the Hanukkah scene of the Goodrich and Hackett play, Mrs. Frank reads Psalm 121 ("I lift my eyes to the mountains—where does my help come from?") in English (clearly to make the scene more accessible and relatable to the non-Jewish audience). Psalm 121 can be related to Hanukkah, but typically it is not used during the eight-day festival, making it an odd choice for inclusion in the play.

It is clear that Goodrich and Hackett were looking for an entry point for the audience in order to help them understand what was happening during this "foreign" Jewish festival. For whatever reason, they settled on Dussel as their conduit. The characters explain what is happening in an almost punitive manner, and it is as though Dussel has never celebrated a Jewish festival in his life. On page 69, the scene plays out:

ANNE: (*to DUSSEL*) There's lots more, songs and presents.

DUSSEL: Presents?

¹⁴⁹ Frank, A. *et al.* 2002 (as n.23 above). p. 73.

MRS FRANK: Not this year, unfortunately. (*She distributes the plates around the table.*)

MRS. VAN DAAN: But always on Hanukkah everyone gives presents—everyone.

DUSSEL: Like our St. Nicholas' Day.

(*There is a chorus of 'no's' from the others.*)

MRS. VAN DAAN: No! Not like St. Nicholas. What kind of Jew are you that you don't know Hanukkah?¹⁵⁰

It is very bizarre that Dussel refers to St. Nicholas' Day as "our," and there is no basis in any research to support this choice for Dussel's character. In fact, Fritz Pfeffer was a very religious Jew and was raised as such. In actuality, although the play portrays him as the least religious, he was likely the most religious in the Secret Annex. Due to this, it is unlikely that he would both be unaware of Hanukkah traditions and have grown up celebrating St. Nicholas' Day, much less a tradition that he would have continued into his adulthood.¹⁵¹

Later in the scene, Anne passes out Hanukkah presents to everyone, which she has made herself, an event never recorded in her diary. Levin, although he included a Hanukkah scene in his version of the play, criticized this scene for being too much like Christmas,¹⁵² however as mentioned in the diary entry for November 7, 1942 above, the families did exchange presents for St. Nicholas' Day. While many of the critiques about the censoring the Jewish aspects of the lives of the characters rings true, one must not also forget that both families (save Dussel/Pfeffer) were quite secular. Therefore, having a scene that mimics Christmas is not particularly

¹⁵⁰ Goodrich, F. *et al.* 1995 (as n.20 above). p 69.

¹⁵¹ The Anne Frank House. (n.d.). *Fritz Pfeffer*. Retrieved from <http://www.annefrank.org/en/Anne-Frank/All-people/Fritz-Pfeffer/> 15 Dec. 2014.

¹⁵² Levin, M. 1973. (as n.3 above), p. 121.

unwarranted. However, the Christianisation of the Jewish rituals (i.e. the prayers in English by Otto and Edith, the girls singing a Hanukkah song completely in English and not discussing what is being celebrated with the festival Hanukkah) is a fair critique. Likely, this was done so as not to further alienate the audience, who would presumably be mostly non-Jewish, but it comes off as insincere to Jewish people reading or performing the text.

The climax of Act I occurs when the members of the Secret Annex hear someone breaking into the office downstairs. Although the first in a series of break-ins to the Secret Annex didn't actually occur until March 24, 1943 (which may have been a false break-in, as Anne writes that it may have been chalked up to the noise of someone working late in the office next door)¹⁵³, Goodrich and Hackett have placed it in the Hanukkah scene for added tension. Again, during this portion of the play when the members of the Secret Annex are certain they are to be caught, Edith begins to pray in English, again reciting Psalm 121. It should be noted that while some Jews may speak "directly to God" in their own language or have a translation of the Hebrew into their own language, Jews do not typically recite scripture as a prayer, or formulaic prayers, in any language but Hebrew.¹⁵⁴ Having had a religious upbringing, it is unlikely Edith would have recited a Psalm in either Dutch or German.

Otto Frank is the only one to go downstairs to check on the situation in Act I, whereas in the diary, Otto, Mr. van Daan and Peter all go together to investigate the first break-in.¹⁵⁵ The second break-in, which is described in Anne's July 16, 1943 entry, is the one that Goodrich and Hackett seem to be describing in the play (with the thief taking similar items). However, in the July break-in, Peter was the one who noticed it first, then reporting it to Otto. This is another portion of the play wherein Otto Frank is described somewhat as the caretaker and almost father-like figure of the members of the Secret Annex. It is interesting to note that in the diary,

¹⁵³ Frank, A. *et al.* 2002 (as n.23 above). p. 92.

¹⁵⁴ Chabad. (June 2014) *Must I Pray in Hebrew?* Retrieved from http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/806311/jewish/Must-I-pray-in-Hebrew.htm 17 Dec. 2014.

¹⁵⁵ Frank, A. *et al.* 2002 (as n.23 above). p. 92.

Anne describes him as such, often making him out to be the authoritarian of the house. She states in her March 19, 1943 entry in her complaints about Dussel:

Dussel is terribly lax when it comes to obeying the rules of the house. Not only does he write letters to his Charlotte, he's also carrying on a chatty correspondence with various other people. Margot, the Annexe's Dutch teacher, has been correcting these letters for him. Father has forbidden him to keep up the practice and Margot has stopped correcting the letters, but I think it won't be long before he starts up again.¹⁵⁶

As Anne viewed her father as the "master of the house," so to speak, it is no wonder that he is portrayed this way in the play. However, it is certainly odd given his humble characteristics that he would allow himself to be portrayed in such a manner, downplaying the bravery of both Peter and Mr. van Daan in those instances.

At the end of Act I, Otto Frank, yet again, is the guiding light of the Secret Annex with his line:

MR FRANK: Have we lost all faith? All courage? A moment ago we thought that they'd come for us. We were sure it was the end. But it wasn't the end. We're alive, safe. (*He prays.*) We thank Thee, Oh Lord our God, that in Thy infinite mercy Thou has seen fit to spare us.¹⁵⁷

The first act finishes with both Margot and Anne singing "Oh Hanukkah" in English. "Oh Hanukkah" is based on a Yiddish folk melody titled "Khanike Oh Khanike"¹⁵⁸ and is extremely popular in English speaking countries, thus the reason Goodrich and Hackett likely chose it as the song for the girls to sing. However, the song never reached much popularity in non-English speaking countries, so the girls

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid*, p. 90.

¹⁵⁷ Goodrich, F. *et al.* 1995 (as n.20 above). p 86.

¹⁵⁸ University of Pennsylvania. (n.d.) *Khanike*. Retrieved from <http://digital.library.upenn.edu/webbin/freedman/searchwords?MyData=Oy%2C+khanike> 17 December 2014.

would have likely sung it in Yiddish or not at all. However, since there is no indication that the Frank family knew any Yiddish, it is more likely that they would have sung an alternate song.

After the interval, Act II begins with Anne's voiceover as she reads from her diary. It is now January 1944, and for whatever reason, Goodrich and Hackett omitted the entirety of 1943. Anne says that their life is the same as before, pointing out the things that have not changed since Act I, such as the van Daan's arguments and that she and her mother still are no closer to understanding one another. This conveys the sense of monotony that the members of the Secret Annex felt, but it does not give the audience a sense of time. An interval swapped for a year is hardly an effective way of showing the audience that life seems to have moved on uneventfully. In the opening monologue, Anne also mentions that she has had her period three times already, which she does mention in her diary, although the date is conflicted between the 5th¹⁵⁹ and 6th¹⁶⁰ of January 1944 in original and 2002 editions.

What follows is a New Year's party in which Miep brings the members of the Secret Annex a cake with the words "Peace in 1944." Subsequently, Kraler tells Mr. van Daan and Otto that someone who works in the office is suspicious of the Annex and has asked for a raise. Otto suggests Kraler give him the raise in case he is offering it as blackmail. At the end of Scene One, Mr. van Daan tells Kraler that he would like to sell his wife's fur coat in order to help settle their finances. Again, this is an amalgamation of several diary entries. Instead of New Year's cake, however, Miep made a Christmas cake for Christmas 1943 with the words "Peace in 1944" on it. Anne also enthusiastically writes about receiving her very first Christmas present that year,¹⁶¹ which is not mentioned in the play.

Although the play isn't specific about the worker who is blackmailing Kraler, it likely is an allusion to Willem van Maaren, whom Anne refers to on September 16,

¹⁵⁹ Frank, A. *et al.* 1952. (as n.19 above), p. 117.

¹⁶⁰ Frank, A. *et al.* 2002 (as n.23 above). p. 161.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid*, 155.

1943. Increasingly suspicious of the Annex, Anne writes that Mr. Kugler advised van Maaren that the Annex was part of another office building. Anne also writes that van Maaren was “known to be unreliable and to possess a high degree of curiosity.”¹⁶² In the 1952 version of Anne’s diary, his name is redacted.¹⁶³ His anonymity in the original edition of the diary and in the play could be because he was formally investigated in 1948 as a suspect for betraying the members of the Secret Annex. No conclusive proof was found, even though he was also brought up as a suspect again in 1963 where again, no conclusive evidence was found. The Anne Frank House reports that they believe he even went as far as to set a trap in the warehouse to try and “catch” the Jews in hiding.¹⁶⁴

On the 17th of October 1943, Anne discusses the van Daans’ need to sell Mrs. van Daan’s fur coat. Although it was a point of contention in the diary, the play continues to make Mr. van Daan a rather unsympathetic character by exaggerating the argument between the two and highlighting the sentimental value of the coat. The play also alludes to the fact that Mr. van Daan is asking for the coat to be sold so that he can purchase more cigarettes:

MIEP (*to PETER*): What’s wrong?

PETER (*his sympathy with his mother*): Father says he’s going to sell her fur coat. She’s crazy about that old fur coat.

DUSSEL: Is it possible? Is it possible that anyone is so silly as to worry about a fur coat in times like this?

(*PETER advances on DUSSEL but is restrained by MR FRANK.*)

¹⁶² *Ibid*, p. 134.

¹⁶³ Frank, A. *et al.* 1952. (as n.19 above), p. 98.

¹⁶⁴ The Anne Frank House. (n.d.). *Willem van Maaren*. Retrieved from <http://www.annefrank.org/en/Anne-Frank/All-people/Willem-van-Maaren/> 18 Dec. 2014.

PETER (*to DUSSEL*): It is none of your darn business—and if you say one more thing—I’ll—I’ll take you and I’ll...I mean it—I’ll...

(Suddenly there is a piercing scream from MRS VAN DAAN in the attic room. She grabs at the fur coat as MR VAN DAAN passes her to go downstairs with it.)

MRS VAN DAAN: No! No! No! Don’t you dare take that. You hear? It’s mine.

(PETER, embarrassed and miserable, goes to the stairs but can do nothing.)

My father gave me that. You didn’t give it to me. You have no right. Let go of it—you hear?

(MR VAN DAAN pulls the coat from her hands and hurries down the attic stairs. As he comes into the centre room the others look away, embarrassed for him. MRS VAN DAAN, sobbing, sinks to the attic floor.)

MR VAN DAAN (*to KRALER*): Just a little—discussion over the advisability of selling this coat. As I have often reminded Mrs. van Daan, it’s very selfish of her to keep it when people outside are in such desperate need of clothing. *(He gives the coat to MIEP.)* So if you will please to sell it for us? It should fetch a good price.

(MIEP turns to go. With an afterthought.)

And by the way, will you get me cigarettes? I don’t care what kind they are—get all you can.¹⁶⁵

This furthers the notion that Mr. van Daan is portrayed as a very unsympathetic character, as Anne’s diary entry portrays the event much less dramatically in her October 17, 1943 entry:

¹⁶⁵ Goodrich, F. *et al.* 1995 (as n.20 above). p. 97.

The disagreeable fact is that Mr. van Daan has run out of money. He lost his last hundred guilders in the warehouse (during the robbery)...Mrs. van D. has piles of dresses, coats and shoes, none of which she feels she can do without. Mr. van D.'s suit is difficult to shift, and Peter's bike was put up for sale but is back again, since nobody wanted it. But the story doesn't end there. You see, Mrs. van D. is going to have to part with her fur coat. In her opinion, the firm should pay for our upkeep, but that's ridiculous. They just had a flaming row about it....¹⁶⁶

The real drama, Anne writes, occurred after Mr. van Daan received 325 guilders for the coat. Mrs. van Daan wanted to keep the money for herself for a new post-war wardrobe. The fight between the two is what Anne describes as "terrifying." Although she asserts that Mrs. van Daan had the coat for seventeen years, she appears to be less of the sympathetic character in the diary as opposed to her husband, whereas it is the other way around in the play. There is no mention in the diary that this coat was given to her by her father.¹⁶⁷

And while the Hanukkah scene and the potato-stealing scene, which will be discussed later in this chapter, are criticized for not having actually taken place, Scene One is also saddled with such a scene-within-a-scene. However, as this scene seems like a made-up and condensed version of reality as written in Anne's diary, it does not seem to particularly perturb scholars and critics. As the members of the Secret Annex take the task of cutting the cake Miep made for the New Year, the imagined scenario begins.

DUSSEL: And please, Mrs. Frank should cut the cake.

MR VAN DAAN: What's the difference?

MRS VAN DAAN: It's not Mrs. Frank's cake, is it, Miep? It's for all of us.

¹⁶⁶ Frank, A. *et al.* 2002 (as n.23 above). p. 137.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid*, p. 138.

DUSSEL: Mrs. Frank divides things better.

MRS VAN DAAN: What are you trying to say?

MR VAN DAAN: Oh, come on. Stop wasting time.

MRS VAN DAAN (*confronting DUSSEL*) Don't I always give everybody exactly the same? Don't I?

MR VAN DAAN: Forget it, Kerli.

MRS VAN DAAN: No. I want an answer. (*To DUSSEL.*) Don't I?

DUSSEL: Yes. Yes. Everybody gets the exact same- (*MRS. VAN DAAN, satisfied, turns away to the cake.*) –except Mr. van Daan always gets a little bit more.

(The VAN DAANS whirl and come back at DUSSEL, MR VAN DAAN holding the knife. DUSSEL retreats before their onslaught to the WC steps. MRS. FRANK returns to the table, picks up a cup of tea and hands it to MIEP.)

MR VAN DAAN: That's a lie. She always cuts the same.

MR FRANK: Please, please. (*He moves to MIEP. Apologetically.*) You see what a little sugar cake does to us? It goes right to our heads.¹⁶⁸

The last line is particularly pertinent, as it portrays Otto as the peacekeeper, a role Anne describes him playing often. For example, on October 17, 1943, after the description of Mr. and Mrs. van Daan's fight over the fur coat, Anne writes, "Father walks around with his lips pressed together, and whenever he hears his name, he

¹⁶⁸ Goodrich, F. *et al.* 1995 (as n.20 above). pp. 93-94.

looks up in alarm, as if he's afraid he'll be called upon to resolve another delicate problem."¹⁶⁹

And while the cake-cutting scene did not actually take place, it represents a multitude of small arguments, some of which the Frank family did take part in, even though they do not take place in play. On September 29, 1943, Anne writes that Otto is furious at the van Daans for holding back meat.¹⁷⁰ The entry earlier, Anne states "relationships here in the Annexe are getting worse all of the time."¹⁷¹ On August 9, 1943, Anne writes a rather lengthy entry citing all of Mrs. van Daan's faults, including her remarks about the Frank's child rearing skills (or lack thereof) over dinner.¹⁷² These petty arguments, which amount to enormous tension around the household, do not exempt the Franks in the diary. Yet, the play often portrays them as much more sympathetic characters than either the van Daans or the Dussels, typically able to stay out of the petty drama. Anne writes on October 29, 1943, that the "bickering, tears and nervous tension have become such a stress and strain that I fall into my bed at night crying."¹⁷³

Scene Two, the Romance scene, focuses on Peter and Anne's blossoming infatuation with one another, which begins January and February of 1944. According to Anne's diary, she sees Peter more of a friend at first, but it slowly develops into a romantic affection, likely due to the fact that there are no other boys her age for her to connect with. In this scene, Goodrich and Hackett very briefly give some characterization to Margot in the following exchange:

ANNE: I mean, every time I go into Peter's room, I have a feeling I may be hurting you.

(MARGOT shakes her head. ANNE rises then sits at the foot of the bed with MARGOT.)

¹⁶⁹ Frank, A. *et al.* 2002 (as n.23 above). p. 137.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid*, p. 136.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid*, p. 134.

¹⁷² *Ibid*, p. 124.

¹⁷³ *Ibid*, p. 138.

I know if it were me, I'd be wild. I'd be desperately jealous if it were me.

MARGOT: Well, I'm not.

ANNE: You don't feel badly? Really? Truly? You're not jealous?

MARGOT: Of course I'm jealous—jealous that you've got something to get up in the morning for—but jealous of you and Peter? No.¹⁷⁴

This tiny exchange between the sisters is almost all of the characterization Margot gets and the only illumination into the relationship of the sisters, which is heavily downplayed in the theatrical production. This exchange is, in fact, based on several letters written between the sisters in March of 1944, which emphasize the importance Anne placed on their relationship. In the letters they wrote to one another, the pair speaks candidly about their longings for male companionship and suggest a close relationship,¹⁷⁵ which is completely glossed over in the play.

Anne and Peter's relationship in the play is brief, developing only toward the midpoint of Act II. In her diary the romance is also short-lived. Anne professed that she may be in love with Peter on the 28th of March 1944,¹⁷⁶ but by her June 13 entry of the same year, she says she now sees Peter as more of a good friend.¹⁷⁷ She bemoans the qualities that she dislikes in him which are qualities that she could not tolerate in a boyfriend. Although the romance is also very short in the play, it does not fizzle out and there is no indication that Anne's feelings for Peter have cooled as they had in her diary.

The climax of the play, or Act Two Scene Three, is another made up scenario, which paints Mr. van Daan in a particularly unflattering light. Although it is clear in Anne's diary that there were many, many quarrels over the dwindling food

¹⁷⁴ Goodrich, F. *et al.* 1995 (as n.20 above). pp. 110-111.

¹⁷⁵ Frank, A. *et al.* 2002 (as n.23 above). pp. 228-232.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid*, p. 242.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid*, p. 316.

supplies, no one was ever caught stealing food from another person. In this scene, Mrs. Frank wakes up in the middle of the night to discover Mr. van Daan stealing their bread. This causes a stir in the household where the characters begin to reach their breaking point and Dussel decides to ration out the rest of the potatoes. Mrs. Frank expresses that she wants the van Daans gone as soon as possible and to have another hiding place arranged for them. The crisis is resolved in a couple of pages, after Miep delivers the news that The Allies have begun to invade Europe (D-Day). By the end of Scene Three, the members of the Secret Annex apologize to one another for their desperate actions and begin to look toward the future when they are finally able to leave the attic. The relationships are, seemingly mended and on better terms until the end of the play.¹⁷⁸

Although the bread-stealing scene is completely fabricated and often criticized for its harsh portrayal of Mr. van Daan, D-Day actually did occur following one of many petty fights over food in the Annex. Anne writes on June 5, 1944, "New problems in the Annexe. A quarrel between Dussel and the Franks over the division of butter....The van Daans don't see why we should bake a spice cake for Mr. Kugler's birthday when we can't have one ourselves. All very petty. Mood upstairs: bad."¹⁷⁹ Anne's diary confirms that the invasion did bring about better spirits in the Secret Annex, but it did not last until the end, as the play suggests, nor did it suddenly mend all of the relationships. Instead, the mood returned to desolate by June 16, in which Anne writes that Mrs. van Daan had suddenly become obsessed with her own death and is now dreadfully jealous that Peter confides in Anne instead of her.¹⁸⁰

Scene Four in Act Two is the final scene in the attic. It begins with tension as the members of the Secret Annex hear the phone ring continuously in the office with no answer. Mrs. van Daan begins to break down with worry. This is perhaps the theatrical answer to Mrs. van Daan's outbursts that Anne describes on June 16, 1944.

¹⁷⁸ Goodrich, F. *et al.* 1995 (as n.20 above). pp. 128-132.

¹⁷⁹ Frank, A. *et al.* 2002 (as n.23 above), p. 309.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid*, p. 319.

Although there was no phone ringing downstairs, Anne says on June 16 that things are shaken up for the members of the Secret Annex when both Mr. Kleiman and Mr. Kugler are called for work detail. She writes that both men hope to use their ill-health as an excuse to stay at home.¹⁸¹ The sense of safety in the Annex was also compromised at the end of May when a friend was arrested for hiding Jews.¹⁸² However, both of these events occur before D-Day.

We are then transported to the attic room, where Anne and Peter often had their conversations with one another. Although the pair had cooled toward one another by July of 1944, they remained very close friends. The play does not differentiate. This short scene is an amalgamation of several of Anne's diary entries in which she discusses her thoughts on herself, religion, the future and her new found love of nature. Also in this scene is the express sense of universality that Goodrich and Hackett were instructed to present in the play.

After Anne tells Peter she wished he had religion, she says, "We're not the only people that've had to suffer. There've always been people that've had to—sometimes one race—sometimes another—and yet..."¹⁸³ This is particularly problematic because it does not differentiate the Holocaust from any other human tragedy. While this is not to say that the Holocaust is more special than any other racial persecution, the backdrop of the diary is that Anne and the other members of the Secret Annex are suffering because, and only because, they are Jewish.

Anne then continues, in which she utters one of the most critiqued and problematic lines in the play:

ANNE: I know it's terrible, trying to have any faith—when people are doing such horrible....*(She gently lifts his face)* But you know what I sometimes think? I think the world may be going through a phase, the way I was with

¹⁸¹ *Ibid*, p. 320.

¹⁸² *Ibid*, p. 304.

¹⁸³ Goodrich, F. *et al.* 1995 (as n.20 above). p. 137.

mother. It'll pass, maybe not for hundreds of years, but some day. I still believe in spite of everything, that people are good at heart.¹⁸⁴

Anne then utters an unfinished thought about what she is going to do when she gets out, only to be interrupted by the Nazis coming to take the families away. The two last lines of the play take place back where the play began in the empty Annex in 1945 with Otto Frank and Miep. Anne's voice is echoed through the theater in a voiceover, repeating that she still believes people are good at heart. Otto then says, "She puts me to shame," before a blackout and the end of the play.¹⁸⁵

This is problematic for several reasons. Firstly, it alludes to this line being the very last line of Anne's diary, which is not so. Instead, the last sentence of Anne's diary was written on August 1, 1944, three days before her arrest, and explores her desire to be what she would like to be, free of other people's comments and criticisms of her character.¹⁸⁶

Although Anne did write that she thought, "despite everything, people are still good at heart," it is often taken out of context. In fact, right after she writes this line, she foreshadows her own death and bemuses that she does not think the members of the Secret Annex will make it through the war. Anne writes on the 15th of July 1944:

It's a wonder I haven't abandoned all of my ideals, they seem so absurd and impractical. Yet I cling to them because I still believe, in spite of everything, that people are truly good at heart.

It's utterly impossible for me to build my life on a foundation of chaos, suffering and death. I see the world being slowly transformed into a

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid*

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid*, p. 142.

¹⁸⁶ Frank, A. *et al.* 2002 (as n.23 above), p. 336.

wilderness, I hear the approaching thunder that, one day, will destroy us too, I feel the suffering of millions.¹⁸⁷

Lastly, this line was written before Anne experienced the horrors of Westerbork, Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen. In the play, Otto is reading the words as a broken man, who has just survived Auschwitz and lost his entire immediate family. Understandably, his optimism and belief in the general good of people have waned. Knowing what we know about Anne's final desperate days in Belsen, it is unfair to pin such optimism on Anne in contrast to Otto's suffering. Had Anne also survived, she may have felt that her former self was being childish or absurd in light of what she had survived. Or it is possible that she would have retained her optimism, as some survivors were able to do. It is impossible to tell, yet it is clear it is an inaccurate portrayal and that the quote is used completely out of context. However, since Otto was desperate to keep the memories of his family alive, it makes perfect sense that he would have been happy to keep this portrayal of Anne. Like anyone who has lost people close to them, Otto likely wanted to remember the vivacious and optimistic Anne; not the desperate, naked, starving, bald, lice-ridden Anne as she was weeks before her death.

Another fascinating line in the very last scene is one of Kraler's. He states very plainly that "the thief" (although from Anne's diary, it is hard to say if there was just one) betrayed the members of the Secret Annex.¹⁸⁸ This strangely contradicts fact, as a formal investigation did not take place until 1948. And although the investigation recorded by the Anne Frank House is described "shoddy," it did not return any conclusions as to who betrayed the members of the Secret Annex.¹⁸⁹

One portion of the diary that is never mentioned in the play included the entries amongst the last one-fourth of it. As evidenced many times over, Anne had always had a very close relationship with her father. However, things begin to change

¹⁸⁷ Frank, A. *et al.* 2002 (as n.23 above), p. 332.

¹⁸⁸ Goodrich, F. *et al.* 1995 (as n.20 above). p. 141.

¹⁸⁹ The Anne Frank House. (n.d.). *The First Investigation*. Retrieved from <http://www.annefrank.org/en/Anne-Frank/Discovery-and-arrest/The-betrayal-has-never-been-solved/The-first-investigation/> 19 Dec. 2014.

when her relationship with Peter deepens in May of 1944. Anne writes that she delivered a letter to her father, which made him cry and he stated that the letter was the worst one he had ever received from anyone.¹⁹⁰ The relationship continues to be strained through the end of the diary, when she confesses that he often annoys her and feels his affection seems forced.¹⁹¹ Although important in Anne's interpersonal growth, this may have been redacted from the final version of the play because it would be shown specifically to Otto. Goodrich and Hackett may have perceived recalling and portraying the turmoil in their relationship as insulting or hurtful.

Despite the many and major shortcomings of the play, and its major lack of historical accuracy, it was originally a critical and commercial success. This will be discussed at further length in the next chapter.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 284.

¹⁹¹ Frank, A. *et al.* 2002 (as n.23 above), p. 330.



Figure 1: Susan Strasberg and Josef Schildkraut as Anne and Otto Frank in the original 1955 version¹⁹²

¹⁹² The Anne Frank House. (n.d.). *A Play and On Film*. Retrieved from <http://www.annefrank.org/en/Anne-Frank/The-diary-of-Anne-Frank/A-play-and-on-film/>. 30 July 2016.



Figure 2: The cast of the 1955 theatrical version in the Hanukkah scene.¹⁹³



Figure 3: Susan Strasberg as Anne gets ready for her “date” with Peter while the others look on.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹³ The Anne Frank House. (n.d.). *Temporary Exhibitions: This Play is Part of My Life*. Retrieved from <http://www.annefrank.org/en/Museum/Exhibitions/Temporary-Exhibitions/This-play-is-a-part-of-my-life/This-play--is-a-part-of-my-life/>. 30 July 2016.

Chapter Three: 1955 *The Diary of Anne Frank* vs the 1997 *The Diary of Anne Frank*

In 1997, a new reworked version of the 1955 *The Diary of Anne Frank* appeared on Broadway. This new script, which essentially follows the same structure as the original, sought to respond to the criticisms of the original play. Although the play is still “sanctioned” within the Anne Frank Fonds and continues to highlight Anne’s optimistic spirit, it also attempts to emphasize Anne’s Jewishness. However, it still lacks in some historical authenticity—one glaringly obvious oversight is leaving out Bep Voskuijl again and the continued amalgamation of Victor Kugler and Johannes Kleiman into the Mr. Kraler character. Also, the 1997 version is not divided into scenes, merely Act I and Act II. Scenes are delineated by voice-overs that are supposed to be excerpts from Anne’s diary, even though, as in the original, they are not exact quotes of full entries.

This version of Anne’s diary debuted on December 4, 1997 and starred a young Natalie Portman as Anne and was directed by Broadway heavyweight and Tony Award winner James Lapine, known for his frequent collaborations with famed composer Stephen Sondheim. It also starred Tony award winner Linda Lavin, known for her work in over twenty Broadway productions, as Mrs. van Daan.¹⁹⁵ Although Natalie Portman was young and relatively unknown at the time, her casting also illustrates the continued tradition of using young women of exceptional beauty in the role of Anne. In this way, it is also somewhat of a sexualization of Anne that seems to support the idea of remembering her as both more optimistic and prettier than she was.

Wendy Kesselman’s new version of the play strove to capture a more nuanced picture of Anne, but by 1997, the Holocaust was already a part of public discourse. When the play premiered in 1955, the narrative of the Holocaust was not as well-

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid*

¹⁹⁵ Nahshon, E. 2012: Anne Frank from Page to Stage. In B. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett and J. Shandler, (eds.), *Anne Frank Unbound: Media, Imagination and Memory*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, p. 90.

known in non-Jewish circles. By 1997, popular films like *Schindler's List*, *Life is Beautiful* and *Sophie's Choice* had already brought the genocide into the forefront of the American mind. Edna Nahshon writes of the revival for its new audience:

In addition, the revival presented Anne Frank to a very different audience from that of the mid-1950s. Factors that shaped the original production—Cold War politics, idealizing a normative family life, American Jewish concerns of appearing too particularist in mainstream culture—no longer informed public discussion as they once did. By 1997, Annes' diary was required reading in many American schools. Moreover, she had become one of the most widely recognized figures associated with the Holocaust, now a prominent landmark in the moral landscape of the United States.¹⁹⁶

While this thesis will speak about the ways in which the cultural landscape of the 1990s influenced the somewhat negative reception of this play, it is also important to understand a few things about why Kesselman, and society at large, decided that then was the time in history to produce a play that was more historically nuanced.

As I have referenced Hank Greenspan's essay several times through this thesis on the feelings of survivor guilt and shame, the 1980s and 1990s saw a marked cultural shift in the interest of hearing survivor stories. Dr. Paula David, a social worker who focuses on the interests of aging Holocaust survivors, wrote in 2010 that many survivors were silent about their experiences until the 1970s. It was then that they saw a marked shift in survivors coming together for support against a backdrop of inappropriate psychological help that they had been receiving for decades.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid*

¹⁹⁷David, P. The Claims Conference: Kavod Honoring Aging Holocaust Survivors: A Journal for Caregivers and Their Families. 21 September 2010. *Aging Holocaust Survivors: An Evolution of Understanding*. Retrieved from <http://kavod.claimscon.org/2010/09/aging-holocaust-survivors-an-evolution-of-understanding/>. 25 March 2017.

During this time period, and into the 1980s and 1990s, survivors began to share their stories with their families and publicly. And with the resurgence of interest in the lives of survivors came the realization by society at large that survivors were now reaching old age and we soon would have no one left to continue the story. As such, it was likely this urgency that spurred many to create Holocaust theatre and film that felt as accurate as possible. This version of *The Diary of Anne Frank* falls squarely within that framework.

In 1994, Steven Spielberg also created the USC Shoah Foundation. It is dedicated almost solely to providing testimony about the Holocaust in addition to recording survivor testimonies, which are available for the public to watch at a variety of Holocaust museums worldwide. The creation of the USC Shoah Foundation is important for in the scope of the rework of *The Diary of Anne Frank*, as it marks a spurring cultural interest in recording the words of survivors before their passing, as well as ensuring that survivor stories are recorded. As such, the idea of historical accuracy is clearly of grave societal importance at this time.

The original production ran for 21 months, for a total of 717 performances on Broadway.¹⁹⁸ The revival ran for seven months, and a total of 221 performances.¹⁹⁹ The decline in ticket sales was likely due to the fact that Anne's story was no longer new or novel, and that many other readily available plays, films and books were now shedding light on this horrific time in history. This notion will be explored further in subsequent chapters.

The 1997 version of the play, which used the outline of the original Goodrich and Hackett, has been given what I can only describe as a "face-lift" by playwright Wendy Kesselman. Although the same major dynamics are there, there are different aspects and scenes that almost feel as though they have been tacked on or awkwardly stuck into the original script. Those with particular familiarity with the original piece or Anne's story itself will find that some parts of the play feel almost

¹⁹⁸ Plunka, G. 2009: *Holocaust Drama: The Theater of Atrocity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 104.

¹⁹⁹ Nahshon *et al.* 2012 (as n.1 above). p. 90.

misplaced and its flow is somewhat disrupted by these new additions. Arguably, it would have been better to simply rewrite the play from scratch, however there is no information informing the decision to instead work within the framework of the existing material. However, there was an obvious pull to make this play much more authentic than the first version. Likely, this has to do with factors that will be discussed in subsequent chapters—but also has to do with growing awareness of the Holocaust in society as well as growing identity politics.

Likewise, as demonstrated by the dates of scholarly articles identified in this thesis, there was an increase in scholarly sources that point toward the Holocaust in the 1990s. Although it was an academic and scholarly point of study prior to the 1990s, it seems that during this time, not only did it boom in popular culture, but also scholarly literature. As such, the cry for authenticity and to maximize Anne's Jewishness was likely a response to all of the aforementioned factors, in addition to the boom in identity politics of the time.

Additionally, identity politics began to take center stage in the United States and Canada in the 1970s, squarely in between both drafts of the play. While in the 1950s, the order of the day was for immigrants, non-whites and non-Christians to assimilate to American culture as much as possible, the idea of recognition of non-white and non-Christian groups firmly took hold in an attempt at decolonization of the sordid history of many of these countries. For this first time, oppressed groups sought to have their needs addressed and validated, and it became less shameful to be considered something other than a white Christian. As such, the stigma of being a Jew in the public sphere had melted away by the 1990s, and children of the era were learning to take pride in their backgrounds rather than to hide them.²⁰⁰ As such, Anne's Jewishness became part of the script, rather than brushed under the rug.

²⁰⁰ Stanford University: Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. 23 March 2016. *Identity Politics*. Retrieved from <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/identity-politics/#RaceEthnMult>. 25 March 2017.

Participation in organized religion and church attendance had also slowed by the 1990s, further reducing the stigma around Jewishness in general. This will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter.

Without the burden of Otto Frank, Kesselman is also able to speak about the concentration camps in a more candid way, though Anne's deterioration is still downplayed in order to continue her narrative as a optimistic teen. Gone was the stigma of survivors to be quiet about their experience or feel ashamed of what they had done to stay alive, and as such, Kesselman was freer to speak about such subjects.

Kesselman's version does not begin with Otto Frank returning from the camps to discover Anne's diary, in fact there is no prologue at all. In contrast, the Frank family is onstage from the beginning in the new version, as a voiceover of the same fictional diary entry from the original play²⁰¹ (the play dates this entry as July 6, 1942, when in fact Anne wrote in her diary on July 5 and again on July 8²⁰², but not on that date) summarizes the events that lead up to the Franks going into hiding, they unpack and get used to their surroundings. Differentiated from the original play and in alignment with history, the Franks arrived first in the Secret Annex instead of the van Daan family.

Interestingly, in the new version of the play, Kesselman acknowledges that the Franks are already acquainted with the van Daans, which is grounded in reality. In Anne's diary, she wrote, "Mr. van Daan is father's business partner and a good friend."²⁰³ In the 1955 version, Otto Frank introduces the families as though they had never met before,²⁰⁴ which is an odd falsification. The 1955 version pits the two families as though they were put on some hiding "blind date," when this is a contradiction of historical accuracy. On page 15 of the 1997 version, Otto Frank

²⁰¹ Goodrich, F. and A. Hackett. 1995: *The Diary of Anne Frank Play*. Oxford: Heinemann Educational Publishers. p. 5.

²⁰² Frank, A. 2002: *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl*. O. Frank and M. Pressler, eds. S. Massotty trans. London: Puffin Books. pp. 17-19.

²⁰³ *Ibid*, p 19.

²⁰⁴ Goodrich, F. *et al.* 1995 (as n.5 above). p. 8.

has the following line, “Ah, you don’t know how your husband helped me when I first came to Amsterdam, knowing no one, unable to speak the language. I can never repay him for that. Besides, he’s been an excellent business partner.”

Another contradiction in the Kesselman version to both the original and reality is Anne’s line in the opening voice over. Anne says, “Margot was ordered to report for work in Germany, to the Westerbork transit camp. A call-up: Everyone knows what that means!”²⁰⁵ While Margot’s call-up was, indeed, the reason for the Frank family expediting their plans to go into hiding, this was omitted from the 1955 play. The children remained unaware of Margot’s call-up notice. In order to spare them the upset or worry, the Franks told Anne and Margot that Otto had, instead, received the call-up notice.²⁰⁶

Although the 1997 version still excludes Bep and continues to fuse both of the male helpers (Kugler and Kleiman) together, it does, however, utilize several of the real names of those Anne wrote about in her diary. For example, Jan Gies is referred to as Jan instead of Dirk (as he is referred to in the 1955 play). Anne also mentions her friendship with Hanneli Goslar immediately in this version, using her real name instead of the pseudonym Anne bestowed on her of Lies Goosens. Later on in the play, when Mr. Dussel arrives, Anne asks him if he knows the Goslar family and bemoans the possible death of Hanneli. However, some pseudonyms seem to still be arbitrarily used in this version. For example, in the first scene, Anne asks Peter if he knew her friend Jopie de Waal, the name assigned to her real life friend Jacqueline van Maarsen.²⁰⁷

In an interview with Jacqueline for *The Washington Times*, she stated she originally did not want anyone to know her name because of the sexual nature in which Anne wrote about her.²⁰⁸ However, by the time the play was performed, her identity was no secret. In fact, in the 2001 miniseries *Anne Frank: The Whole Story*, an actress

²⁰⁵ Kesselman, W., F. Goodrich and A. Hackett. 2001: *The Diary of Anne Frank Play*. New York: Dramatists Play Service, Inc., p. 11.

²⁰⁶ Goodrich, F. *et al.* 1995 (as n.6 above). p. 19.

²⁰⁷ Kesselman, W. *et al.* 2001 (as n.9 above). p. 8.

²⁰⁸ A Holocaust survivor’s Frank story. *The Washington Times*. August 7, 2004.

portrays van Maarsen and her character is called by her real name.²⁰⁹ There seems to be no information as to why her name is shielded in this production.

The Kesselman version also seems to respond to the criticism that Margot's character falls flat. In an effort to round out Margot as a character, there are several snippets in the first few scenes of the production that give her a little more to do than in the original. For example, on page 18, Margot discusses how scared she was to possibly be taken away by the Nazis and tells Anne that she is still shaking from fear after they have arrived in the Annex. On page 20, just a few more minutes into the play, she acquiesces to Anne's insistence that the two dance together, instead of hurrying off and preparing dinner with their mother.²¹⁰

In addition to Margot's character becoming slightly more dynamic, there are bits of information about Dussel's life infused into this version that were previously neglected. Although his son, Werner, is still never mentioned, Charlotte Kaletta, his non-Jewish girlfriend, is spoken about. Instead of being portrayed as a stodgy old man who has never lived with anyone, Miep tells the families on page 26 that Dussel has been living "with a Christian woman."²¹¹ This is likely because by the 1990s, the idea of nonmarried couples living together or implying sexual relations was no longer a taboo subject, thus he could be represented a bit more fully.

There is also the omission of the line that his family has been in Holland for generations, though there is no specific mention of his being German.

The choice words Anne has for her mother, which were redacted in the 1952 version of her diary, are highlighted in the Kesselman version. In August of 1942, Anne wrote a diary entry (as mentioned in the previous chapter) stating that she did not love her mother and could imagine her dying someday, whilst her father's

²⁰⁹ *Anne Frank: The Whole Story* [DVD Film], dir. by Robert Dornhelm (Touchstone Television, Milk & Honey, Dorothy Pictures, 2001, DVD distributed by Walt Disney Home Video, 2003).

²¹⁰ Kesselman, W. *et al.* 2001 (as n.9 above). p. 18-20.

²¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 28.

death seemed inconceivable.²¹² These words, redacted by Otto in the original published version of the diary,²¹³ do not appear in the 1955 play in accordance with Otto's wishes. However, in the Kesselman version, after Anne and her mother argue over Anne having to sleep in the same room as Dussel toward the middle of Act I, Anne says:

ANNE (*Voiceover*) As far as I'm concerned, Mother can go jump in a lake! I don't know why I've taken such a terrible dislike to her. (*She looks out, speaks directly to us.*) but I can imagine her dying someday, while Daddy's death seems inconceivable to me. It's very mean of me, I know, but that's how I feel. I hope Mother will *never* read this or anything else I've written. She's not a mother to me—I have to mother myself.²¹⁴

Likewise, in this version, Anne's maternal grandmother is mentioned—although she is completely overlooked in the original. Although the relationship between Anne and her grandmother is not explored at length, Anne says (after an argument with her mother), "If only Nana were here! She always stuck up for me."²¹⁵ Anne's relationship to her maternal grandmother is explored in greater detail in the 2001 film, *Anne Frank: The Whole Story*, though it functions almost as part of the exposition or lead-in to Anne's time in hiding. Although it is clear Anne had a close relationship with her grandmother from the 2001 film, it is still not explored much more than having an actress portray her in a couple of scenes and Anne express her grief over her death briefly whilst on a date with childhood paramour Hello Silberberg.²¹⁶

The scene in which Anne has her nightmare differs considerably from the 1955 version. After a brief radio broadcast from Colin Reese Parker of the BBC detailing

²¹² Frank, A. *et al.* 2002 (as n.6 above). pp. 50-51.

²¹³ Frank, A. 1952: *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl*. O. Fran, ed. B.M. Mooyaart trans. New York: Simon & Schuster, p. 34.

²¹⁴ Kesselman, W. *et al.* 2001 (as n.9 above). p. 29.

²¹⁵ *Ibid*

²¹⁶ *Anne Frank: The Whole Story* [DVD Film], dir. by Robert Dornhelm (Touchstone Television, Milk & Honey, Dorothy Pictures, 2001, DVD distributed by Walt Disney Home Video, 2003).

the up-to-date information on the front (BBC Radio Free Europe broadcasts are used in addition to Anne's voiceovers in this version to break up the scenes and establish the date), Anne details more of what is happening to the Jews than she does in the 1955 version of the play. Immediately after the broadcast, Anne says:

I couldn't sleep tonight, even after Father tucked me in and said my prayers with me. I feel wicked sleeping in a warm bed when my friends are at the mercy of the cruellest monsters to ever walk the earth. And all because they're Jews. We assume most of them are murdered. The BBC says they're being gassed. Perhaps that's the quickest way to die. Fine specimens of humanity, those Germans, and to think I'm actually one of them! No, that's not true, Hitler took our nationality away a long time ago. No matter what I'm doing, I can't help but think about those who are gone. All we can do is wait for the war to end. The whole world is waiting, and many are waiting for death. *(She lies down, goes to sleep as, from a distance, marching feet approach. Close, closer. From the street, the Nazi "Horst-Wessel-Song": "Die Fahne hoch!/Die Reihen fest geschlossen!/SA, marschier mit ruhig festem Schritt!....." builds to a crescendo. The ear-splitting sound of a train whistle. A train rushing by.)*

ANNE *(screaming in her sleep)*: No! No! Don't take me! Is it Tuesday? I don't want to go!²¹⁷

The 1955 version has Anne telling her father that she dreamt someone came in and took them away, but she does not go into detail about what the Jews in hiding knew or did not know about the camps and gas chambers. Perhaps in 1955, such graphic detail was still too shocking for many, or it was assumed that the Frank family could not imagine such horrors in 1942. Anne continues further in the scene, still stating that they knew about everything that would occur in the Holocaust before it happened. On page 35, she tells her father she dreamt she was on a train headed East. Presumably, she garners this information from Dussel, who

²¹⁷ Kesselman, W. *et al.* 2001 (as n.9 above). p. 33-34.

says just a few lines before this scene when describing what has happened to their family and friends “outside”:

MR DUSSEL: You have five minutes to get ready. Bring only what you can carry in a rucksack. Herded into the Jewish theatre for days, sometimes weeks, and then...Westerbork. The transit camp. From there, like clockwork, every Tuesday a train leaves for...The East. (*There is a moment of stunned silence.*)²¹⁸

Although what is happening to the Jews is much more extrapolated on in the Kesselman version of Anne’s nightmare, it is unclear by Anne’s diary if those in the Annex were actually aware of the Jews being sent to concentration camps in Poland, especially as early as 1942. As stated in Chapter Two, Anne’s November 19, 1942 entry, she was aware that Jews were being murdered.²¹⁹ On October 9, 1942, she states that she knows Jews are being sent to Westerbork and from there an unspecified location where the “English radio says they are being gassed.”²²⁰ However, unlikely that she would have known about Aktion Reinhard camps or Auschwitz-Birkenau, as is suggested in the play by the continued reference of “going East” or Mrs. van Daan’s later reference in Act Two of “going to Poland.” It could have been possible the families learned about the camps through the Gies’ involvement in the Dutch resistance or perhaps on the BBC radio, but Anne never mentions in her diary that she was aware of concentration camps specifically.

The Anne Frank House reports that the BBC stated that Jews were being murdered in Poland as early as July of 1942.²²¹

²¹⁸ Ibid, p. 31.

²¹⁹ Frank, A. *et al.* 2002 (as n.6 above). p. 69.

²²⁰ Ibid, p. 54

²²¹ Anne Frank House (n.d.). *Anne Frank-‘The English Radio Says They’re Being Gassed.’* Retrieved from <http://www.annefrank.org/en/Subsites/Annes-Amsterdam/Timeline/Occupation/1942/1942/Anne-Frank---The-English-radio-says-theyre-being-gassed/#!/en/Subsites/Annes-Amsterdam/Timeline/Occupation/1942/1942/Anne-Frank---The-English-radio-says-theyre-being-gassed/>. 20 July 2016.

As mentioned above, BBC Radio Free Europe broadcasts are used in addition to Anne's diary entries to establish the date of the preceding scene and serve as a transition between the action. The BBC Radio Free Europe broadcasts are paraphrases or fictionalized versions of actual radio broadcasts. The script itself, as licensed through Dramatists Play Service, Inc. in New York suggests that those performing the Kesselman version of the play order a CD with the sound effects used in the play. These sound effects, in addition to run-of-the-mill effects like doors slamming and planes overhead include a speech by Hitler, as well as one by General Eisenhower, who was at the time the Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces, that are used as broadcasts over the radio which the actors are listening to. The BBC Radio Free Europe broadcasts, however, are to be pre-recorded ahead of the performance by the actors.²²²

Anne's nightmare gives way to the controversial and criticized Hanukkah scene. Already, Kesselman has attempted to add a much more authentic hand to this version, transitioning into the scene by having Dussel wearing a prayer shawl and davening. Davening, the Jewish practice of swaying back and forth whilst praying, however, is not called by its actual name in the script. Instead, it just states in the stage directions that Dussel will "sway back and forth."²²³

Gone is the Dussel who had no idea what Hanukkah was from the 1955 version. Instead, he is replaced by one that ushers the audience into the next scene by praying the Sim Shalom prayer, showing the audience that he is much more religious than portrayed in previous incarnations. Though, it is curious that he prays the Sim Shalom before Hanukkah, as this prayer has nothing to do with the festival. It is, in fact, a blessing used during traditional Shabbat (the Jewish Sabbath) Morning Prayer and is said every week.²²⁴

²²² Kesselman, W. *et al.* 2001 (as n.9 above). p. 72.

²²³ *Ibid*, p. 36.

²²⁴ ReformJudaism.org. (n.d.). *Shabbat Morning Worship Service: Sim Shalom*. Retrieved from <http://www.reformjudaism.org/practice/prayers-blessings/shabbat-morning-worship-service-sim-shalom>. 2 Feb. 2015.

Before the Hanukkah scene commences, the characters heighten their sense of confinement; particularly during the holidays by expressing to the audience what they miss most about the outside world. This scene is not included in the 1955 version. Each takes turns telling the audience the one simple wish they have for life after liberation. Although these wishes are not described in Anne's diary, they are similar to the things Anne often expresses. For example, Anne states that she simply wants to be a teenager again and laugh and ride her bike, whilst the other state similar desires. These include eating sweets with real sugar, seeing a movie, hot baths, coffee, going out together as a family and dancing. Dussel again brings up Charlotte, who is missing from the entire 1955 version, stating that he would love to just spend time with her and "look at her."²²⁵

Before the Hanukkah festivities begin, on page 37, Margot comments on the lovely menorah that Mr. van Daan has made. Anne mentions in her December 7, 1942 entry that Mr. van Daan carved a menorah for their Hanukkah festivities. As both Peter and Hermann van Pels (the van Daan's real name) were woodworking hobbyists, this adds a touch of dimension to their characters that is missing in the 1955 version.

Instead of prayers in English, the women recite the traditional Hanukkah blessing in Hebrew in the 1997 version, which is likely what would have been done in real life (though Anne never mentions prayers associated with Hanukkah, it is assumed those in the Secret Annex would have known enough Hebrew for these short prayers). It is also mentioned in the 1997 version that the men are wearing yarmulkes instead of just the stage direction of "hats" as in the previous version. It is likely that Dr. Pfeffer (known as Dussel in the play) would have packed a yarmulke with him given his religious convictions. Although it is the custom in Judaism for men to cover their heads in a space of worship,²²⁶ Anne never mentions if her father, Mr. van Daan or Peter brought yarmulkes with them into hiding.

²²⁵ Kesselman, W. *et al.* 2001 (as n.9 above). pp. 36-37.

²²⁶ My Jewish Learning (n.d.). *Kippot (Head Coverings) in Synagogue*. A. Millgram. Retrieved from http://www.myjewishlearning.com/practices/Ritual/Prayer/Ritual_Garb/Head_Coverings.shtml. 6 Feb. 2015.

Anne hands out the same presents in Kesselman's version as the original, although the one difference is that Otto Frank gives his wife a music box. When Edith opens it, it plays the Maoz Tzur, the Rock of Ages, a song traditionally sung on Hanukkah. She tells the girls that the music box goes all the way back to her great-grandmother. This part of the scene is completely fictional as Anne never wrote about her mother receiving a music box, much less a music box that had special familial attachment. It is possible that the Maoz Tzur, and a music box featuring the song, was chosen in order to highlight the symbolism of the song. The Maoz Tzur, traditionally sung on Hanukkah, not only tells the story of the festival, but repeatedly sings the praises of a God who has delivered the Jews from extinction again and again.²²⁷ During the Holocaust, the Jews once again found themselves facing extinction, which is likely why this melody was chosen.

Instead of singing the English "Hanukkah O Hanukkah" as in the original version, Margot and Anne sing the Maoz Tzur, to coincide with the music in the music box. Again, although it is never recorded in the diary what was sung on Hanukkah in 1942 (Anne mentions that only the candles were lit and gifts were exchanged, but no singing is discussed²²⁸), it is much more likely that if there was singing, it would have been in Hebrew or Yiddish. As English was not the first language of anyone in the Secret Annex, it is almost impossible to imagine that they would have opted to sing a song in English.

The girls sing the Maoz Tzur, but only one stanza, which is written as the following in the script:

Maw os tzur yes-shu-a-si
Lecha naw-eh lisha bayah
Ti-kon beis te-fi-la-si

²²⁷ Chabad (n.d.). *Maoz Tzur*. Retrieved from http://www.chabad.org/multimedia/media_cdo/aid/104615/jewish/Maoz-Tzur.htm. 6 Feb. 2015.

²²⁸ Frank, A. *et al.* 2002 (as n.6 above). p. 73.

*Ve-shum to-daw*²²⁹

This is simply the first stanza in the song. Chabad.org translates it as:

O mighty stronghold of my salvation,
To praise You is a delight.
Restore my House of Prayer
And there will be a thanksgiving offering.²³⁰

Due to the symbolism of the song and its discussion of Jewish persecution throughout history, it is interesting that Kesselman simply went with the first line of the song. Although it is more “realistic” that the girls would have started at the beginning, there are already aspects of the play that have been molded and changed to fit the needs and flow of the dramatic narrative. In fact, the second verse might have served a better choice for the need of the play, which is sung by the same simple tune. Chabad.org translates this as (which would have encompassed the same amount of time and melody within the play):

My soul has been sated with troubles,
My strength has been consumed with grief.
They had embittered my life with hardship,
With calf-like kingdom’s bondage.²³¹

Perhaps to make it a more dramatic moment, the break-in occurs in the midst of the festivities, as the Frank girls are joyously singing the Maoz Tzur. And just as occurred in the original, Otto Frank is the one to save the day by going downstairs and determining that it was a thief who had broken into the office. But instead of saying a prayer of thanksgiving for their safety as he does in the 1955 version, Otto Frank says to the families in order to calm them down after their panic: “No one’s

²²⁹ Kesselman, W. *et al.* 2001 (as n.9 above). pp. 41.

²³⁰ Chabad (n.d.). *Maoz Tzur*. Retrieved from http://www.chabad.org/multimedia/media_cdo/aid/104615/jewish/Maoz-Tzur.htm. 6 Feb. 2015.

²³¹ Ibid

leaving. We can't panic. If we panic, we're lost. We've survived here for six months together. We're going on."²³²

Act One ends not with the joyous Hanukkah singing in order to override the general fear connected with the burglary, but with a monologue by Anne. This is a great example of new material being shoehorned into the existing piece. Although Anne's sentiments and desperation concerning being cooped up in her hiding place fit into the piece as a whole, it seems to be an odd point in the play in which to add this particular monologue. Perhaps the monologue being put into the piece at this point was to amplify how helpless the members of the Secret Annex felt in that moment, but it seems to simply highlight only Anne's desire to be free from her captivity. And although it is clear that those in Annex felt desperate in that moment, their despair had not quite reached its pinnacle. Because of this, it feels as though this monologue is almost a false Act One crescendo in order to find what Kesselman determined a better way to close the first act in a way that wasn't as sweet and saccharine as the families singing together to overcome their fear.

Before the monologue, Otto asks the girls to continue singing Maoz Tzur, to which all of the characters join in. Margot breaks down and begins to cry, while Edith comforts her daughter. It is then that Anne addresses the audience:

ANNE: Sometimes I see myself alone in a dungeon, without Father and Mother, or I'm roaming the streets, or the Annex is on fire, or they come in the middle of the night to take us away, and I know it could all happen soon. *(Anne continues in voice-over as the members of the Annex linger together, shaking hands, embracing. Mr. Dussel slips into the WC, the families go to their separate rooms.)* I see the eight of us in the Annex as if we were a patch of blue sky surrounded by menacing black clouds. The perfectly round spot on which we stand is still safe, but the clouds are moving in on us, and the ring between us and the approaching danger is being pulled tighter and tighter. We're surrounded by darkness and danger, and in our desperate search for a way out we keep bumping into each other. We look at the

²³² Kesselman, W. *et al.* 2001 (as n.9 above). pp. 43.

fighting down below and the peace and beauty above, but we're cut off by the dark mass of clouds and can neither go up nor down. It looms before us, an impenetrable wall, trying to crush us, but not yet able to. I can only cry out and implore, "Oh ring, ring, open wide and let us out!" (*The last to leave, Mr. Frank holds Anne close. There is a sob from Margot. Anne rushes to her. The two families cling to each other. The house lights come up, as the light on the stage slowly dims.*)

THE END OF ACT ONE²³³

The quote used at the end of Act One is taken verbatim from Anne's November 8, 1943 entry when discussing the depression she is feeling. As with the original play, the entirety of 1943 is skipped, so events in the theatrical versions are jumbled together. On November 8, Anne writes that she is incredibly afraid by every noise she hears. She also continues by saying that Miep is envious of the members of the Secret Annex because they live in a peaceful environment, but Anne says Miep is not thinking about the fear they experience on a day-to-day basis. The monologue that is used in the play is described in the diary as a metaphor for how Anne sees the world through her depression. Right before she begins to discuss seeing the members of the Secret Annex in a patch of blue sky surrounded by menacing clouds, she writes, "I simply can't imagine the world will ever be normal again for us. I do talk about 'after the war,' but it's as if I were talking about a castle in the air, something that will never come true."²³⁴ In this entry, although Anne is on edge, the passage does not refer to the break-ins which occurred earlier that year. Instead, most of the preceding passages deal with the relationships and the tensions developing within the Secret Annex.

Act Two opens in January of 1944 with Anne sitting at her desk revealing to the audience what has happened in the last year. In this version, Anne discusses the hunger and medical problems that ravage the Secret Annex, creating a fuller picture for the audience of life in wartime. In the 1955 version Anne simply states

²³³ Kesselman, W. *et al.* 2001 (as n.9 above). pp. 43-44.

²³⁴ Frank, A. *et al.* 2002 (as n.6 above). p. 144-145.

that life is “at a standstill.”²³⁵ Also in the 1955 version, Anne briefly talks about getting her period, describing it as a “sweet secret” inside of herself that she longs for each month.²³⁶

Anne’s sexual awakening, which was somewhat redacted from the original publication of her diary, is explored within Kesselman’s version. In Anne’s Act Two opening monologue, it begins to differ from the original 1955 version when Anne goes into a bit more detail about her sexual feelings:

ANNE: ...Sometimes, when I lie in bed at night, I feel a terrible urge to touch my breasts and listen to the steady beating of my heart. Once when I was spending the night at Jopie’s, I could no longer restrain my curiosity about her body, which she always kept hidden from me. I asked her whether, as proof of our friendship, we could touch each other’s breasts. She refused. I also had a terrible desire to kiss her, which I did. Every time I see a female nude, such as the Venus in my art history book, I go into ecstasy. Sometimes I find them so exquisite I have to struggle to hold back my tears. (*A pause.*) And there’s something else. Peter...Whenever he looks at me with those eyes, I get this feeling—(*The sound of the buzzer at the door.*)²³⁷

Although much of Anne’s talk about her sexuality was redacted in the original publication of her diary, this monologue was actually part of a diary entry that was published with Otto Frank’s edits. On January 5 and 6, 1944, Anne expresses everything she has told the audience in the above monologue in a diary entry.²³⁸ It seems odd that Otto would have allowed a passage of such a sexual nature to remain intact when publishing the diary, however this was the case. But, it was left out of the 1955 version of the play, likely because sexual content that is “graphic” to that level would have been considered pornographic by an audience in the 1950s. By the 1990s, popular culture had veered a bit more toward a liberal

²³⁵ Goodrich, F. *et al.* 1995 (as n.5 above). p. 88-89.

²³⁶ *Ibid*

²³⁷ Kesselman, W. *et al.* 2001 (as n.9 above). pp. 46.

²³⁸ Frank, A. *et al.* 1952 (as n.17 above). pp. 116-119.

attitude, meaning Kesselman's addition of the January 5th and 6th passages were not scandalous.

The scene following depicts the members of the Secret Annex celebrating the New Year with the arrival of Miep who comes bearing a cake she has made. In the Kesselman version, we also see the special relationship Anne and Miep shared which is all but completely ignored in the 1955 version. In addition to the cake she has made, Miep gives Anne a pair of high-heeled red shoes, which Anne adores. In Anne's diary, however, Anne writes of the shoes that Miep "managed to snap up for 27.50 guilders" on August 10, 1943 instead of the New Year.²³⁹ But no matter when the shoes were actually delivered to Anne, this little scene helps round out the relationship between Anne and Miep, which is completely ignored in the first version of the play.

Edith Frank's character takes a bit more shape beyond Anne's critique of her in the Kesselman version, with an added scene with Miep showing how despondent and helpless Edith felt when it came to protecting her family. It also clearly illustrates the lack of hope Edith felt going into their last year in hiding. What is very interesting is that Edith begins to blame the Dutch government and the allies for their non-involvement in halting the genocide. She says to Miep:

MRS. FRANK: There is no hope to be had. I know that...I knew it the night Hitler came to power, when that voice came screaming out of the radio. I sat there paralyzed. And now in London, what is the Dutch Queen doing? What are they all doing? Nothing. They're not even mentioning the word Jew. The trains are still leaving. Why don't they bomb the tracks? (*Miep is silent.*)²⁴⁰

Although there is significant tension between the members of the Secret Annex in the 1955 version of the play, it is added to in the Kesselman version, conveying to the audience in a bit more realistic tones how difficult it was to be cooped up with the same group of people day in and day out. This additional scene is sandwiched

²³⁹ Frank, A. *et al.* 2002 (as n.6 above). p. 126.

²⁴⁰ Kesselman, W. *et al.* 2001 (as n.9 above). pp. 49.

between Anne and Peter's first heart-to-heart and Kraler revealing that someone working in the store room has become interested in the Annex and has asked for a sum of blackmail money in order to keep quiet about the possibility of the office hiding Jews. This new scene, however, doesn't feel quite so shoehorned in as many others, as Anne begins the scene by discussing the lack of food in the Secret Annex. She prefaces the scene as taking place on March 29, 1944, although in her diary she has been discussing the rising tension in the household for several entries prior. On March 29, there is no mention of an argument between the families, but there is mention of the depleting food supply.²⁴¹ But having a huge argument between the families demonstrates the human qualities of those in hiding, something that is sometimes missed in the 1955 version. This scene shows the exasperation of the residents with one another before it reaches a critical point in the climax. In the entries preceding March 29, Anne often talked about the arguments growing increasingly political, with undertones of annoyance toward one another, which is missing entirely from the first version of the play. This scene adds that dimension.

ANNE: (Voiceover) On top of it all, every meal there's been a political discussion ending in some terrible fight. But last night something even more terrible happened.

MR. DUSSEL: My God, I can't eat this again!

MR. VAN DAAN: Something wrong, Mr. Dussel? You try cooking for a change, instead of insulting my wife.

MR. FRANK: I think you prepared the kale very well, Mrs. van Daan. I don't know how you do it.

MRS. VAN DAAN: Mr. Frank. Always the soul of politeness.

MR. FRANK: Every night another miracle. (*Mr. Dussel hastily gets up from the table, lurches toward the WC.*)

²⁴¹ Frank, A. *et al.* 2002 (as n.6 above). p.245.

MR. VAN DAAN: Careful, Mr. Dussel! We don't want to clog the pipes like last week.

MRS. VAN DAAN: Putti, please.

MRS. FRANK: What's wrong, Margot? You're not eating. Eat. You have to eat.

MARGOT: I'm not hungry.

MR. VAN DAAN: If she doesn't want it, Peter will eat it.

MR. FRANK: Come, Margot. Just take a bite.

MARGOT: *(Giving Peter her plate.)* I can't. I just can't.

MRS. VAN DAAN: She eats like a bird. Look at her. Every day a smaller bird. Margot, I'm doing the best I can.

MARGOT: I'm sorry Mrs. van Daan. I just...

MRS. VAN DAAN: Anne's eating. Peter's eating.

MARGOT: How do you do it, Anne?

ANNE: I pretend it's delicious, don't look at it, and before I know it, it's gone.

MR. FRANK: Very wise, Anneke.

PETER: I eat because I'm hungry. *(Silence. Anne laughs—a tender flirtatious laugh. Mrs. van Daan looks from her to Peter.)*

MR. FRANK: Margot, you've got to force yourself. You're too thin.

MR. VAN DAAN: She's not the only one. We're all famished.

MARGOT: Will this war ever be over?

MRS. VAN DAAN: This war would be over a lot sooner if the goddamned British would finally start the invasion.

MR. VAN DAAN: Please. Not tonight.

MR. FRANK: The British are fighting for their lives.

MR. VAN DAAN: They'll do something when the time is right.

MRS. VAN DAAN: When we're dead and buried, you mean. It's amazing how strong those Germans are.

MR. VAN DAAN: Oh, it's amazing. Those Germans are so strong they're going to win the war. Is that what you mean?

MRS. VAN DAAN: They might. They very well might—if the British don't get moving.

MR. VAN DAAN: They're moving, for crying out loud! Aren't three thousand tons of bombs dropped on Hamburg last Sunday enough for you?

MRS. VAN DAAN: No.

MR. VAN DAAN: Well, how many bombs do you need?

MRS. VAN DAAN: Enough so we don't have to worry about going to Poland!
(Margot, gagging, leaps up, rushes to the WC.)

MRS. FRANK: *(Following her.)* Hurry up, Mr. Dussel! Margot's waiting!

MR. FRANK: (*Overlapping*) Mr. Dussel!

PETER: (*Overlapping*) Hurry up in there! She can't wait any longer!

ANNE: (*Overlapping*) Please, Mr. Dussel! Come on!

MR. VAN DAAN: Mr. Dussel, a line is forming *again*.

MR. DUSSEL: (*Emerging from the WC*) You think I like spending my life in there?²⁴²

As mentioned previously, the Kesselman version utilizes both real and imagined radio broadcasts, though they are based in reality, to shift between scenes and to add a historical basis for the audience, who may not be versed in the background of the story. On page 56, just before the romance between Anne and Peter reaches its climax, a broadcast (which is voiced by an actor) of Gerrit Bolkestein, Prime Minister of Dutch Education is heard. The voice of Bolkestein, based on a real broadcast, tells the Dutch people that he would like to collect diaries and letters chronicling the Dutch wartime experience.²⁴³ This broadcast was heard by Anne Frank in real life and on March 29, 1944, she wrote in her diary that she would love to publish a novel based on her writings and time in hiding entitled *The Secret Annexe*.²⁴⁴ This spurred Anne to begin editing her diary for others to read eventually, an aspect somehow neglected in the original 1955 version.

The Bolkestein Broadcast is a filler for the scene between the aforementioned fight and Anne and Peter's first kiss. The relationship between the pair isn't much different between the two versions. It is still an awkward romance born out of sexual frustration and close proximity, in which the two share their first kiss. Anne and Peter discuss their hopes for the future, or rather Peter's lack there of, but this

²⁴² Kesselman, W. *et al.* 2001 (as n.9 above). pp. 53-54.

²⁴³ *Ibid*, p. 56.

²⁴⁴ Frank, A. *et al.* 2002 (as n.6 above). p.244.

talk of the future seems to be the only discernable difference between the versions.²⁴⁵

In order to heighten the sense of danger outside of the Annex, another radio broadcast between Anne and Peter's first kiss and the climax of the play (Mr. van Daan stealing the bread) of Johann Rauter (the highest ranking SS officer in the Occupied Netherlands) is heard. It is unclear if this is supposed to be over the radio, or simply an artistic choice to symbolize the terror that awaits those outside the protection of the Annex. His voice tells of the German's plan to make the Netherlands *Judenfrei*, or free of the Jews.²⁴⁶

The climax of the play has the same structure to it as in the original, in which Mr. van Daan is caught stealing from the communal stash of potatoes, which causes an uproar between the members of the Secret Annex. Although this scene has been proved problematic for those who feel that it does not accurately portray Mr. van Daan, and the many criticisms of it in the previous chapters, it prevailed through to this next incarnation of the play. It is curious that the scene stayed in and another climax was not written in, one that would have portrayed Mr. van Daan in a more sensitive light. However, in order to soften the blow and paint the van Daans in a more favourable way, Mrs. van Daan has quite a touching monologue that she delivers to Mr. van Daan, who is seemingly inconsolable over his sins as D-Day is announced. He is so inconsolable that he cannot celebrate with the others. Although what is in the monologue is fictional, as not much is known about the van Daan's lives outside of their connection with the Franks, it shows both Mr. and Mrs. van Daan as much more vulnerable and sympathetic characters, despite their obnoxious fighting earlier in the play. Mrs. van Daan says to her weeping husband:

MRS. VAN DAAN: Putti? (*A pause.*) You know what I was just thinking? You won't believe this, but I was thinking about that first day we met, when you were buzzing around with the rest of the boys in Bremerhaven. I picked you out right away, you know. You were the one who made me laugh. And

²⁴⁵ Kesselman, W. *et al.* 2001 (as n.9 above). pp. 60.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

laugh....(*She laughs, full-throated, deep.*) That afternoon you took me out on the ferry, first you made me laugh and then you started to kiss me. And kiss me...And the kisses were even better than the laughter—remember? You gave me so many, the ferryman kept watching us and the ferry went off course, and then you made me laugh even more. When we got back, you had such a ravenous appetite you made that little restaurant pen its doors and you ordered almost everything on the menu. “What an appetite!” the waiter kept saying. “The man can really eat!” (*She stands up, moves toward him.*) We’ll go back on that ferry one day, Putti. I promise. It won’t be long now. And soon I’ll be cooking your old favorites—sauerbraten with red cabbage, potato pancakes with your cherished applesauce. We’ll even go to Berkhof’s for cream cakes! In the meantime, Putti, if you’re hungry, hold onto me. Oh, Putti, please. Just hold onto me. (*They embrace. Darkness.*)²⁴⁷

Also in this section of the play, Margot’s character is rounded out a bit more when she reveals to Anne that she wants to be a nurse for newborns in Palestine—training she is hoping to begin when the war ends. Although D-Day occurred on June 6, 1944, Anne wrote in her diary of Margot’s future plans on May 8, 1944.²⁴⁸ As Margot’s character falls flat in both versions of the play, she is at least a little more developed in Kesselman’s version and the audience is given a little more insight into her character and nature.

In order to add an air of realism into the scene, General Dwight D. Eisenhower’s broadcast from June 6, 1944 is heard during the D-Day scene. Those doing a performance of the play are encouraged to use the real broadcast containing the famous line, “...the hour of your liberation is at hand.”²⁴⁹ The inclusion of this line is all the more tragic when contrasted with the fate of the Frank family, which by 1997, the majority of audience members would have already been made aware of through either reading the diary or having seen one of the several film adaptations. Edna Nahshon states that the public awareness of Anne’s fate by the late 1990s

²⁴⁷ Kesselman, W. *et al.* 2001 (as n.9 above). pp. 60.

²⁴⁸ Frank, A. *et al.* 2002 (as n.6 above). p. 286.

²⁴⁹ Kesselman, W. *et al.* 2001 (as n.9 above). pp. 63.

may have been a contributing factor to the play not having achieved the same commercial success as its predecessor.²⁵⁰

The very last scene of the play before the capture of the members of the Secret Annex differs dramatically from the original version. In the original, the oft criticized line that Anne utters in her last heart-to-heart with Peter with, "We're not the only people that've had to suffer...sometimes one race, sometimes another"²⁵¹ is omitted completely. Instead of a scene just between Anne and Peter, the children sit in the attic whilst the adults are sitting together below. The mood is light as they munch on fresh strawberries, optimistic about the D-Day announcement in the last scene. Although Margot, Anne and Peter briefly discuss religion in the Kesselman version, it is less Anne telling Peter she wished he believed in something, as would have been more acceptable to a more synagogue and church-going audience of the 1950s. Instead it is more of a question of Jewish identity. Peter tells the girls that he isn't sure he wants to be Jewish after the war, whilst Anne states it is part of his identity no matter what he decides to do. In this version, Anne does not tell Peter she still believes people are good at heart, but rather, it is saved for a voice-over for later in the scene.²⁵²

As the children and adults laugh over the strawberries, the Nazis make their way into the Annex. It is then that Anne's voiceover says, "It's a wonder I haven't abandoned all of my ideals, they seem so absurd and so impractical. Yet, I cling to them because I still believe, in spite of everything, that people are really good at heart."²⁵³

The Kesselman version proves to be rawer in her treatment of the arrest of the members of the Secret Annex. Instead of a bang on the door and the members of the Secret Annex resigning to their fate, they are shown packing for their arrest as a Nazi officer and two Dutch collaborators rifle through their belongings, breaking

²⁵⁰ Nahshon *et al.* 2012 (as n.1 above). p. 90.

²⁵¹ Goodrich, F. *et al.* 1995 (as n.5 above). p. 137.

²⁵² Kesselman, W. *et al.* 2001 (as n.9 above). pp. 67.

²⁵³ *Ibid*

things and leaving a trail of their papers all over the Annex. As this occurs, Anne's voice is heard once more:

ANNE (voiceover): It's utterly impossible for me to build my life on a foundation of chaos, suffering and death. I see the world slowly being transformed into a wilderness, I hearing the approaching thunder which will destroy us too, I feel the suffering of millions.²⁵⁴

This is the quote that occurs after Anne says she feels people are still good at heart in her diary, in an entry she penned on July 15, 1944. As the "people are still good at heart" line is often criticized for being taken out of context, Kesselman has added the context so that although the audience can see Anne is optimistic, it is not unrealistic given her situation.

The last moments of the play are incredibly different from the Goodrich and Hackett version, and arguably much more powerful. Instead of sandwiching the play with the return of Otto Frank to speak with Miep, Otto comes onstage to deliver an epilogue as the sole survivor of the group. He tells the story of their time in concentration camps much more accurately (in the Goodrich and Hackett version, it is incorrectly stated that the women were never sent to Auschwitz²⁵⁵) and curiously, tells of Anne's state before her death. This is something that the Anne Frank Foundation has always seemed to shy away from, instead focusing on Otto's wishes to portray his daughter as optimistic until her very last moments. It is possible, however, that the brevity of the monologue and the fact that Anne is not seen in this state, is the reason why this was approved.

The final lines of Kesselman's version read:

MR. FRANK (voiceover): Westerbork. A barren heath. Wooden towers where our jailers stand guard. Walls covered with thousands of flies. The eight of us crammed into Prison Barrack 67—betrayed. We never know by

²⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p.68

²⁵⁵ Goodrich, F. *et al.* 1995 (as n.5 above). p. 141.

whom. Our last month together. (*Light comes up on Mr. Frank's face as he appears in Anne's darkened room in a tattered coat. Now overlapping his voiceover.*)

Our last month together. Anne and Peter walking hand in hand between the barracks and barbed wire. Edith worrying about the children, washing underclothing in murky water, numb. Margot, silent, staring at nothing. Our last days on Dutch soil. (*Pause.*) Late August, Paris freed. Brussels. Antwerp. But for us it is too late. Tuesday September third, 1944, a thousand of us herded into cattle cars, the last transport to leave Westerbork for the extermination camps. (*He pauses.*)

The train. Three days, three nights. In the middle of the third night...Auschwitz. Separation. Men from women. Edith. Margot. Anne. My family. Never again. Selection. Half of our transport killed in the gas chambers. One day Peter and I see a group of men march away, his father among them. Gassed. Peter on the "death march" to Mauthausen. Dead three days before the British arrive. His mother—Auschwitz, Bergen-Belsen, Buchenwald, Theresienstadt—date of death unknown. Mr. Dussel dies in Neuengamme. (*Pause.*)

January twenty-seventh, 1945. I am freed from Auschwitz. I know nothing of Edith and the children. And I learn....Edith died in Birkenau of grief, hunger, exhaustion. (*Pause.*)

The winter of '45, typhus breaks out in Bergen-Belsen, killing thousands of prisoners, among them Margot. Anne's friend, Hanneli, sees Anne through the barbed wire, naked, her head shaved, covered with lice. "I don't have anybody anymore." She weeps. A few days later, Anne dies. My daughters' bodies dumped into mass graves, just before the camp is liberated. (*Mr. Frank bends down, picks up Anne's diary lying on the floor. He steps forward, the diary in his hands.*) All that remains. (*Slowly he opens the diary. The image of Anne's words fill the stage. Darkness.*)

THE END OF THE PLAY²⁵⁶

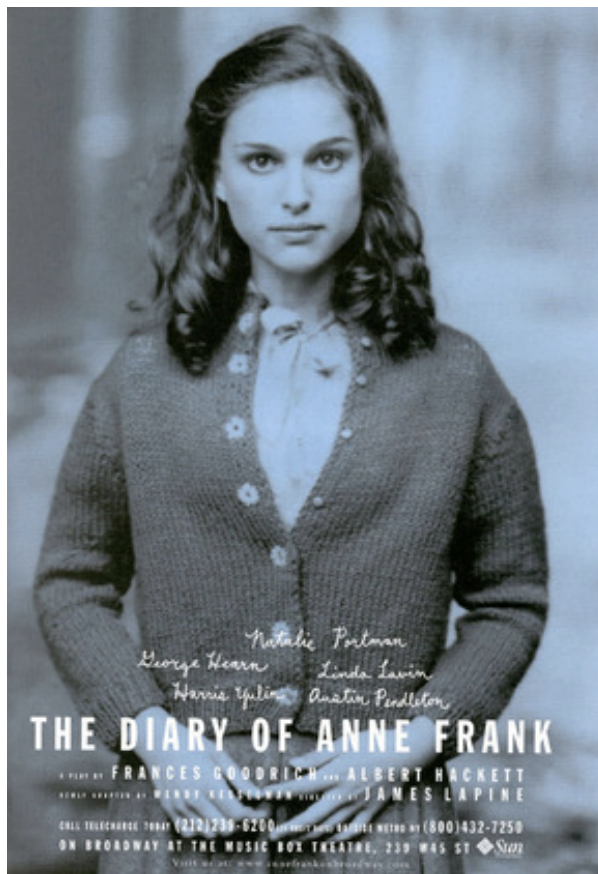
Although there are some inaccuracies (i.e. the romance between Anne and Peter had cooled by the time of their arrest, as noted in previous chapters and the fact that although it is thought Peter died near the time of liberation, his exact date of death is unknown), it presents a much fuller picture of the fate of those in the Secret Annex. Perhaps because of the world's familiarity with the Holocaust by the late 1990s, this information was easier for audiences to digest.

Though Kesselman's version is much more historically accurate, it still faces many problems, as discussed in this chapter. Namely, the unflattering and troublesome portrayal of the van Daans and still offering a somewhat limited picture into Anne as a whole person. Likewise, although it does make a concerted effort to round out the characters, Margot, Peter and Edith, especially, still seem to fall a bit flat and one-dimensional and does not keep up with the demands of accuracy audience members would have had by the 1990s. Although it is a significant improvement from the original, a completely rewritten version of the script, from scratch, without the previous scripts as framework, to bring the story into modernity and the utilizing most recent research into Anne's life is necessary.

²⁵⁶ Kesselman, W. *et al.* 2001 (as n.9 above). pp. 68-69.



Figure 4: Millie Perkins in the 1959 version of *The Diary of Anne Frank*²⁵⁷



²⁵⁷Internet Movie Database. 14 Nov. 2010. *Millie Perkins: Photos from The Diary of Anne Frank*. Retrieved from <http://www.imdb.com/media/rm559122176/nm0674012>. 30 July 2016.

Figure 6: Publicity poster of Natalie Portman as Anne Frank²⁵⁸

²⁵⁸ Coolspotters. (n.d.) *The Diary of Anne Frank*. Retrieved from <http://coolspotters.com/plays/the-diary-of-anne-frank>. 30 July 2016.

Chapter Four: Two Broadway Incarnations of Anne:

Criticism of the Play in 1955 vs. 1997

Although Goodrich and Hackett's 1955 *Diary of Anne Frank* was not the first Broadway play about the Holocaust, it was one of the first real narratives to grace the stage to a largely uninitiated audience. While the 1946 production of *A Flag is Born*, a play chronicling the lives of two Treblinka survivors, achieved major success in the United States, its purpose was mainly political. *A Flag is Born* was written for one purpose: to advocate for the mass immigration of Jews to Israel to create a new Jewish state.²⁵⁹ *The Diary of Anne Frank* differs in that, although there are political undertones in relation to the time, the play itself is not a political piece. Edna Nahshon states in her chapter in *Anne Frank Unbound* that, "In this respect, the play is an early landmark of efforts to situate the Holocaust as having particular meaning for the American public, despite the fact that few Americans had any direct involvement in this event."²⁶⁰

In this way, the play, and the original edition of the diary, were the first glimpses the uninitiated American public were given on this time in history—and one of the first ways in which they were able to connect so personally to one human being's story. Because Anne's time in hiding has such universal appeal to many, in that despite her untimely and tragic end, she experienced the ups and downs of growing up that most of us have felt, the show was a way for audience members to connect. It was perhaps easier to relate to the story of a young girl going through puberty who met her end in a concentration camp than hearing the painful words of Holocaust survivors and their day-to-day journey in the camps. It was a way to face this time in history without having to face it directly.

²⁵⁹ Medoff, Rafael. April 2004. David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies. *Ben Hecht's "A Flag is Born": A Play That Changed History*. Retrieved from <http://www.wymaninstitute.org/articles/2004-04-flagisborn.php>. 26 May 2015.

²⁶⁰ Nahshon, E. 2012: Anne Frank from Page to Stage. In B. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett and J. Shandler, (eds.). *Anne Frank Unbound: Media, Imagination and Memory*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, p. 75.

The Diary of Anne Frank opened on Broadway on October 5, 1955 at the Cort Theater in Midtown Manhattan and ran for almost two years of performances. In February of 1957, the play transferred to the Ambassador Theater, where it ran until mid-June of 1957.²⁶¹ Although the play would see three young women tackle the role of Anne, the first was 16-year-old Susan Strasberg, the daughter of Paula Miller and Lee Strasberg (famous for his role in founding the Actors Studio).²⁶² Thus began an odd tradition that lasted throughout the 1950s and 1960s of casting exceptionally beautiful actresses, who had little resemblance to the real Anne to portray her. The play also featured Joseph Schildkraut, who bore a striking resemblance to Otto Frank (and would later go on to play the role in the film version of the play). Schildkraut, an Austrian-born actor, had been in the entertainment world since 1919, making him an incredibly seasoned actor.²⁶³

The play's critical success during its first mounting is clear, not only by the number of performances, but by the awards and accolades it received. In 1955, it was nominated for five Tony Awards, including Best Direction, Best Actress (Susan Strasberg) and Best Play. It won only the latter award. Best Play is arguably one of the most significant and sought after at the Tony's. The play was much more decorated than Arthur Miller's offering that season: *A View from the Bridge*. While Susan Strasberg was certainly praised for her role as Anne (aside from the Tony nomination nod, Strasberg also won a Theatre World Award for her work in the play), the real star of the show seemed to be the script itself. Along with the Tony Award for Best Play, the show also garnered an Outer Critics Award, a New York Drama Critics' Circle Award for "Best American Play" in addition to the prestigious Pulitzer Prize for Drama.²⁶⁴ Though the Pulitzer Prize aims at recognizing works that depict American life, this is not necessarily a criterion. However, it is clear *The*

²⁶¹ Internet Broadway Database. *The Diary of Anne Frank (1955-1957)*. 2001. Retrieved from <http://www.ibdb.com/production.php?id=2533>. 26 May 2015.

²⁶² Nahshon, E. *et al.* 2012 (as n.2 above), p. 73.

²⁶³ Internet Movie Database. (n.d.) *Joseph Schildkraut*. Retrieved from <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0771584/>. 26 May 2015.

²⁶⁴ Playbill Vault. (n.d.) *The Diary of Anne Frank*. Retrieved from <http://www.playbillvault.com/Show/Detail/3548/The-Diary-of-Anne-Frank>. 26 May 2015.

Diary of Anne Frank captured the attention American public enough in that year that the fact that it did not take place in the United States was not a deterrent for receiving the award.

It was not just those doling out awards that gave this production such high accolades. It was, indeed, the darling of the season, with many theatre critics enthralled with this new material, as it was unlike anything they had seen before.

Before *The Diary of Anne Frank's* triumphant Broadway debut, it held a pre-Broadway try-out in Philadelphia at the famous Walnut Street Theatre. The Walnut Street Theatre is one of a few theatres in the United States that typically has Broadway bound productions run for local audiences to gauge what the public might think of the show. An unsuccessful try-out may mean that the show never makes it to Broadway, but this was not the case for *The Diary of Anne Frank*. In fact, the show earned its first rave review in Philadelphia in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*,²⁶⁵ with theatre critic Henry T. Murdock amongst its first fans. He wrote, "There are

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A word about the reviews for the 1955 production (and other subsequent productions in the 1950s) of The Diary of Anne Frank: The majority of the quotes from these reviews were pulled from the archives at the Anne Frank House. They are in a digitized scrapbook, meaning that in some cases the names of the newspapers or the titles of the reviews are clipped or ripped off. In almost all cases, there is no page number as the reviews in the scrapbook sit in traditional scrapbook style with only the article on The Diary of Anne Frank clipped. In some cases, the title of the newspaper or the title of the review may be handwritten or clipped and pasted beside it. This is why some of the footnotes do not contain the full information. As many of these archives are not digitized, difficult to obtain access to or the newspapers now simply cease to exist, it is near impossible to footnote correctly and in their entirety.

Additionally, it can be difficult for myself, as the author, to make statements about the original production values and acting choices, as no archive recording of the 1955 version exists.

times when the theatre reaches a higher plane of entertainment that lifts the spectator's eyes, not just in appreciation, but in something close to awe. Such is the case with the Diary of Anne Frank, an overwhelming bit of human documentation which held its audience in intense communion at the Walnut last night."²⁶⁶

It is interesting to note that although it had not even made its way to Broadway yet, it was already being compared to a religious-like experience. Murdock's use of the words "awe" and "communion" both seem to evoke Christian religious symbols, setting the tone for the later notion that seeing a production of *The Diary of Anne Frank* is akin to attending a church service. Murdock's review reminds the audience that they are not merely seeing a play or a production of *The Diary of Anne Frank*, but are "reaching a higher plane" together; perhaps one that allows them to forget about the Holocaust and human tragedy their daily lives, as long as they have come together to "worship at the altar of Anne Frank."

When the play opened on Broadway just three weeks later, the reviews were almost unanimously positive. In the *New York Times*, famed theatre critic Brooks Atkinson called the play a "lovely, tender drama."²⁶⁷ In his Atkinson's review, he likens Anne almost to a deity or saint, writing, "Everyone associated with the production has caught some of her spirit and has preserved her innocence and faith."²⁶⁸ Famous columnist and radio host Walter Winchell stated, "Your heart will never forget it." However, in May 1956, Winchell claimed in his Broadway Beat column that although *The Diary of Anne Frank* was an excellent play, the Pulitzer Prize should have been awarded to Michael V. Gazzo's *A Hatful of Rain*.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁶ Murdock, Henry T. 1955 September 16: The Diary of Anne Frank Opens at Walnut Theater. *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. (n.p.) Archives at the Anne Frank Stichting.

²⁶⁷ Atkinson, Brooks. 1955 October 6: Theatre: The Diary of Anne Frank. *The New York Times*. (n.p.) Archives at the Anne Frank Stichting.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid*

²⁶⁹ Winchell, Walter. 1956 May 24: Walter Winchell's Broadway Beat. *Sarasota Journal*. p. 2.

The New York World Telegram and Sun produced a review titled “Faith under stress revealed in diary”²⁷⁰ when discussing the play, even though the play has very little to do with Jewish themes, elements or faith. Again, such a title suggests a religious element and experience to the play, that faith remains still and stagnant, even in the face of adversity. The theme of faith, whether it be faith in a God in the Judeo-Christian manner or faith in humanity, seems to be a common thread throughout the reviews.

The tremendous success of the play catapulted it onto a world stage, opening up subsequent productions on the West End in November of 1956 in addition to productions all over the world throughout the late 1950s and 1960s. These productions were performed in South Africa, Australia, Poland, Sweden, Finland, Italy, Japan, Israel and the Netherlands, to name a few. Most notably, the play opened in Germany on October 1, 1956 as a simultaneous nation-wide event, playing in seven German cities at once, though oddly, not in Frankfurt, Anne’s birthplace. In the years that followed, *The Diary of Anne Frank* would become one of the most popularly performed plays of 1958, having been performed, according to Edna Nahshon, 3,400 times in 122 theatres across Germany.²⁷¹

In South Africa, the theme of Anne’s story as a religious experience continued throughout many of the reviews. In the wake of such racial prejudice and tension in the country, many felt *The Diary’s* message was especially pertinent and it was referred to as a religious experience in one South African newspaper. *The Cape Times* interviewed two clergymen after they watched the production in Cape Town in the February 20, 1957 issue. Reverend JB Mirrilees of the Mowbray Presbyterian Church stated, “This is the finest sermon I have ever listened to. The moral for South Africa is profound and compelling.” Similarly, Chief Rabbi Professor I. Abrahams stated, “It is the elemental issue joined in every human heart; the battle between good and evil; And the victory is with God, with faith,

²⁷⁰ Hawkins, William. 1955 October 6: Faith Under Stress Revealed in Diary. *New York World Telegram and Sun*. (n.p.) Archives at the Anne Frank Stichting.

²⁷¹ Nahshon, E. *et al.* 2012 (as n.2 above), p. 85.

with love.”²⁷² It is interesting to note that the Chief Rabbi claims that the victory is with God and love, when in reality it is made quite clear that Anne and almost all of the members of the Secret Annex were quite brutally tortured before their ultimate deaths in various concentration camps. However, this is a valuable testament of the audiences’ responses to Anne’s optimistic character, a trait Otto very clearly wanted highlighted in the dramatic adaptation, as discussed in previous chapters.

Lawrence L. Langer in his essay “The Americanization of the Holocaust,” likewise muses on the almost religious nature of the play, comparing the final scene in the 1955 version to that of the end of a mass or church service and ponders on the inappropriateness of such an ending for a play essentially about genocide. He states, “The line that concludes her play, floating over the audience like a benediction assuring grace after momentary gloom, is the least appropriate epitaph conceivable for the millions of victims and thousands of survivors of Nazi genocide: “in spite of everything, I still believe that people are really good at heart.”²⁷³

Similarly, when the production was produced in Sydney, Australia, Milton Shulman of the *Sydney Morning Herald* made it clear that happiness and familial warmth dominated the script far more than any horror of the Holocaust. He titled his review “I’ll Remember These Moments of Joy” and stated, “But it is not terror that dominates this play. It is the moments of joy and gratitude that are the most poignant and memorable.”²⁷⁴

In the United Kingdom, the play opened on November 29, 1956 at the Phoenix Theatre with Perlita Neilson in the title role. In her early 20s at the time of the play’s opening, Perlita was a bit older than the role’s creator, Susan Strasberg (who

²⁷² 1957 February 20: Clergymen’s Views on *Anne Frank*. *Cape Times*. (n.p.) Archives at the Anne Frank Stichting.

²⁷³ Langer, L. 1999: The Americanization of the Holocaust. In H. Bloom, (ed.). *A Scholarly Look at the Diary of Anne Frank*. Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, p. 19.

²⁷⁴ Shulman, Milton. (n.d.) I’ll Remember These Moments of Joy. *The Sydney Morning Herald*. (n.p.) Archives at the Anne Frank Stichting.

was 16 at the time of the opening on Broadway). However, it was soon very clear that audiences in London were just as enamoured with *The Diary of Anne Frank* as they had been in the United States and elsewhere. The critics were struck both by Anne's bravery and the theatricality of the Nazis coming to take their victims to their ultimate deaths and the end of the play.

JC Trewin of the *Illustrated London News* compared *The Diary of Anne Frank* to theatrical mainstay and legend William Shakespeare and the classic literary piece, *Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson. Trewin said of the production, "There are certain moments, great or small, in literature that we remember, chilled: at random, the knocking on the door in *Macbeth*, and the tapping of Blind Pew's [reference to *Treasure Island*] stick upon the frosty road. I shall remember, too, the shattering blows of the Gestapo that at last break down the door in Prinsengracht."²⁷⁵

Elizabeth Frank of the *News Chronicle* in London wrote in her review, "Her last smile of hope as the Gestapo hammers on the door of the little sanctuary will remain as one of the unforgettable moments in theatre."²⁷⁶ Again, in the United Kingdom as with the United States, the critics emphasize Anne's optimistic spirit and bravery, despite the fact that the play itself ends several months before Anne's eventual death.

However, not all reviews in the United Kingdom were unanimously positive. Even though the play was successful, there were still critics who were not as enamored with the script. Two London theatre critics cited the play itself as the problem, stating that it was too difficult to create a play out of an episodic piece of material like a diary. They claimed that Goodrich and Hackett had failed to weave together a coherent piece of drama, a critique well before its time. This observation, at least in the English-speaking world, is unique to the critics in London as all others give it a favorable review.

²⁷⁵ Trewin, JC. 15 December 1956: Haunted Days and Nights. *Illustrated London News: The World of Theatre*. (n.p.) Archives at the Anne Frank Stichting.

²⁷⁶ Frank, Elizabeth. (n.d.) *News Chronicle*. (n.p.) Archives at the Anne Frank Stichting.

Cecil Wilson of the *Daily Mail* felt that the play was clunky, and expressed so in his review dated November 30, 1956: "I was ashamed the play did not move me more....Despite [Perlita's role] and despite the warm-hearted acting of, among others, George Voskovec (as Anne's father, Otto, the one survivor of them all) something was missing last night. The fault, I feel, lay mainly with the play. Diaries—even diaries as well-written as this one—lend themselves uneasily to the stage, and it seemed to me a clumsy expedient to plunge us in darkness every time Anne read a passage to link the scenes together."²⁷⁷

Derek Granger of the *Financial Times* wrote a similar review on the same day, possibly after an unusually clunky performance the night before. However unusual these statements were in the 1950s, the sentiment was then echoed fairly heavily in the 1990s, which we will discuss further on in the chapter. He stated, "Inevitably, the transcription from real-life chronicle to stage-play makes for episodic treatment and also for some occasional awkwardness; the device of Anne's voice reading aloud her diary over the amplifier as the stage-picture dims is an unhappy one that makes for longueurs and dispels illusion."²⁷⁸

Despite a few fair criticisms of the clumsy nature of the way the play was written, it is clear that no matter where *The Diary of Anne Frank* was performed in the world during the early years, it was met with a reverence and awe. As this was the first time many people were confronted with the Holocaust and what it actually represented, it is no wonder that many connected so fiercely with Anne and were shocked every time by her premature death.

Although this thesis does not focus on film versions of *The Diary of Anne Frank*, it is still necessary to mention the 1959 film of the same name. A film version of any stage play is an enduring testament to its success and connection with its audience,

²⁷⁷ Wilson, Cecil. 30 November 1956: Theatre Review of *The Diary of Anne Frank*. *The Daily Mail*. (n.p.) Archives at the Anne Frank Stichting.

²⁷⁸ Granger, Derek. 30 November 1956: Theatre Review of *The Diary of Anne Frank*. *The Financial Times*. (n.p.) Archives at the Anne Frank Stichting.

especially if the film continues on to be a box office success and an enduring classic. Thus, it is paramount to mention it here.

Several adaptations of *The Diary of Anne Frank* would grace the screen over the course of the 20th and 21st century (and no doubt, after the publishing of this thesis there will be many more to come), but the 1959 version is the first and arguably most well known. It was also written by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett and starred the celebrated Shelley Winters as Mrs. van Daan and Ed Wynn as Dr. Dussel. The film also included several cast members from the Broadway production in the forms of Gusti Huber, an Austrian actress reprising her role as Mrs. Frank, Lou Jacobi reprising his role as Mr. van Daan and Joseph Schildkraut famously reprising his role as Otto Frank. The film also included Diane Baker as Margot Frank in her film debut and Richard Beymer as Peter van Daan. He would later go on to play Tony in the epic film adaption of the Broadway musical *West Side Story*. Following in the tradition of casting exceptionally good looking actresses with little resemblance to the real Anne, 20-something Millie Perkins was cast as Anne in what would be her film debut. Previously, Perkins had worked quite extensively as a model.

The almost three-hour film adaption was widely well received and given eight Oscar nominations in 1960, including Best Picture. It won three of them, including Best Actress for Shelley Winters in the role of Mrs. van Daan. The Oscar currently resides at the Anne Frank House, in a specially built case near the café and toilets. The film also received five Golden Globe nominations, winning in the category of Best Film Promoting International Understanding. At the Cannes Film Festival, it was nominated for, but did not win, the Palme d'Or.²⁷⁹ The accolades showered upon the film serve to show how incredibly moving the public felt the film adaption was, despite the later criticism it would face by scholars. The film, however, still resonates today as evidenced by its high score by both film critics and audience members on Rotten Tomatoes, a film review website. Out of seventeen critics, 76 percent have given the film a positive review. Out of 27,808

²⁷⁹ Internet Movie Database. (n.d.) *The Diary of Anne Frank Awards*. Retrieved from http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0052738/awards?ref=ttexrv_sa_1. 29 May 2015.

users of the website, 77 percent have given the film high marks.²⁸⁰ Such reviews are a testament to the connection the American, or at least English speaking, public felt with this adaption of the diary, despite any of its short-comings, which are almost identical in nature to the play.

Although many amateur and professional theatre companies extensively performed the Goodrich and Hackett version of *The Diary of Anne Frank*, in 1997, a new production with updated material was mounted (see previous chapter for comparison of texts). The new play was drafted, perhaps somewhat in response to critics like Lawrence L. Langer, who said of the original play:

[Anne's] strong sentimental strain, which only part of her nature, dominates the drama, and ultimately diverts the audience's attention from the sanguinary to the sanguine, causing them to forget that the roots are identical, and that during the Holocaust man's hope was stained by a blood more indelible than the imaginary spot so distressing to Lady MacBeth. By sparing us the imaginative ordeal of such consanguinity, the drama of *The Diary of Anne Frank* cannot begin to evoke the doom that eventually denied the annex's victims the dignity of human choice.²⁸¹

The 1997 production sought to "update" Anne for a more modern audience. As discussed at length in the previous chapter, this included redacted portions of the diary on her sexuality and feelings about her mother, in addition to a more realistic portrayal of Dussel. This "new" Anne Frank would also include more references to Judaism to counter the claims that the original play was far too universal in attempting to appeal to audiences of a widely Christian background.

Carol Tucker writes in her essay, *The 1950s-- Powerful Years for Religion* that church attendance was up during this time period partly in a quest for normalcy

²⁸⁰ Rotten Tomatoes. (n.d.) *The Diary of Anne Frank (1959)*. Retrieved from http://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/diary_of_anne_frank/. 29 May 2015.

²⁸¹ Langer, L. *et al.* 1999 (as n.14 above), p. 19.

after the upset of World War II. She states that “soaring birth rates, economic good times and the focus of normalcy and the family” is what created this religious underpinning of the decade.²⁸²

By the 1990s, the idea of the one way to be an American, a white Christian, had largely faded and given way to celebration of national and religious identity. It is likely this play also attempted to respond to that cultural shift.

Pew Research shows that although religion and church was still relatively popular in the 1990s (though much less than the 1950s), from 1987 onwards, there was a push toward acceptance of females outside the home and homosexuality. The attitudes of acceptances increased a little bit each year. The research also shows that church attendance amongst less political conservatives such as democrats declined, while it increased amongst the republican set. The survey also showed that by the late 1990s, only 53 percent of people described themselves as having “traditional family values.” The play espouses traditional family values of the 1950s quite clearly, which may have contributed to its less than stellar receipt.²⁸³

By 1997, the landscape of Holocaust in art had changed considerably from that of 1955 when the play originally debuted. In 1955, speaking about the horrors of the Holocaust, or even referencing it, was still a relatively new concept. Up to that point, there had not been a narrative about a Holocaust victim or survivor that was so widely published or received.

By the 1990s, the concept of Holocaust remembrance and the slogan, “Never again!” had become etched in the memories of the American public. As Edna Nahshon stated in her essay (and as quoted in the previous chapter), *The Diary of Anne Frank* had already become required reading in most schools across the

²⁸² Tucker, C. USC News. 16 June 1997. *The 1950s—Powerful Years for Religion*. Retrieved from <https://news.usc.edu/25835/The-1950s-Powerful-Years-for-Religion/>. 26 July 2016.

²⁸³ Pew Research Center. 15 October 2007. *Trends in Attitudes Toward Religion and Social Issues 1987-2007*. Retrieved from <http://www.pewresearch.org/2007/10/15/trends-in-attitudes-toward-religion-and-social-issues-19872007/>. 26 July 2016.

United States (and in the English speaking world).²⁸⁴ Additionally by 1997, a wide range of Holocaust films had already entered the American and international psyche, such as *Schindler's List*, *Sophie's Choice*, *Life is Beautiful*, *Judgment at Nuremberg*, *Europa Europa*, *Shoah*, *The Trial of Adolf Eichmann*, *The Shop on Main Street*, *The Pawn Broker* and the landmark mini-series of the 1970s: *Holocaust*. In addition to the 1959 adaption of *The Diary of Anne Frank*, several others had been made for television in America and abroad, including one in 1980 that starred Melissa Gilbert of *A Little House on the Prairie* fame in the starring role.

Additionally, many survivor accounts such as *Night* (published in English in 1960) by Elie Wiesel, *Auschwitz and After* by Charlotte Delbo (published in English in 1985) and the graphic novel *Maus* (published in 1980-1991) by Art Spiegelman (although written by the son of a survivor, it is heavily influenced by his father's experiences during the Holocaust) had already made their way into public consciousness, in addition to hundreds of other books, survivor accounts and films on the subject that were not as readily recognized by the public. The rise of memoirs like those of Charlotte Delbo's, a member of the French resistance sent to Auschwitz, also showed that the Jews were not the only victims of the Holocaust, which may have taken away the "uniqueness" of Anne's situation on stage.

The Holocaust Museum in Washington, DC, one of the premier institutions for Holocaust scholarship, research and a popular tourist destination was opened in 1980. In 1961, the world watched the first televised courtroom trial from Jerusalem of one of the major players of the Holocaust, Adolf Eichmann. By 1997, many books for children were also published about the Holocaust. In addition to survivor accounts that were written for the younger set (such as 1986's *I Am a Star: Child of the Holocaust* by Inge Auerbacher and 1992's *The Big Lie: A True Story* by Isabella and Irving A. Leitner), there was already a wide range of juvenile Holocaust fiction. Most popularly, the works in this canon included a fantasy novel set in a fictional concentration camp called *The Devil's Arithmetic* by Jane Yolen (1990) and *Number the Stars* (1990) by famed children's author Lois Lowry. The latter chronicled the rescue of several thousand Danish Jews to neutral Sweden through the eyes of a pair of young girls.

²⁸⁴Nahshon, E. *et al.* 2012 (as n.2 above), p. 90.

The extraordinary amount of Holocaust literature and films that had been made between *Anne's* two stints on Broadway meant that even using redacted portions of Anne's diary would hardly be enough to satisfy an audience already inundated with not only Anne's story, but other stories of the Holocaust. In 2000, just three years after the 1997 debut of *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *Time Magazine* ran an article in which Michael Blumenthal discussed a German family's "Holocaust fatigue," one of the first articles mentioning this concept. In the article, Blumenthal wrote of the family's adolescent son and his feelings toward learning about the Holocaust in school, "their sense of having the Holocaust perpetually rammed down their throats by teachers and administrators at every turn. He was tired, the son said, of hearing so much about the Holocaust, a period in Germany's history during which he was not even alive, and for which, by definition, he and his generation could shoulder no responsibility."²⁸⁵

In 2003, six years after the Broadway production's debut, *The New York Times* ran an article entitled "Holocaust Documentaries: Too Much of a Bad Thing?" Barry Gewen, the writer, spoke primarily of the idea of there being too many Holocaust films being made. He said, "But simply listing these new films raises a troubling question: Are too many Holocaust documentaries now being made? Has supply outstripped demand? It's a question that makes people uncomfortable. Who would want to appear callous in the face of such suffering, or, worse, anti-Semitic? Yet there are definite signs of Holocaust fatigue." Gewen went on to state that he felt this "oversaturation" of Holocaust material was largely a reflection on modern society in the United States, one in general obsessed with the Holocaust. He stated, "Why do filmmakers have such an abiding interest in the Holocaust? In part, they are simply reflecting the extraordinary phenomenon that the Holocaust has become in American life. Publishers churn out books on the subject in voluminous numbers, state governments legislate the teaching of the Holocaust in public

²⁸⁵ Blumenthal, Michael. 2000 February 28. *Time Magazine*. *Of Rest and the Weary*. Retrieved from <http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2050398,00.html>. 30 May 2015.

schools, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington greets millions of visitors each year.”²⁸⁶

In the same 2003 article, Gewen noted that films about the Holocaust are almost always box-office bombs with the exception of a few that seem to lock in the awards. “Sometimes, it seems that Holocaust documentaries have a lock on all the awards: they have won five Oscars over the last eight years. But their commercial prospects are generally slim, and rare is the investor willing to back a film almost guaranteed to be a box-office loser.”²⁸⁷

While Gewen was certainly not discussing the revival of *The Diary of Anne Frank*, it seems that there are parallels in its failure in comparison to its original run. Although the play was attached to a few big Broadway names, a beautiful new starlet in the form of Natalie Portman as Anne and new material to work with, it still garnered nowhere near the same commercial or critical success as its predecessor.

The play was not a complete failure, as it did run for over 200 performances. However, it was almost 500 performances less than its original. The show also did not win any awards during its season. It was nominated for two Tony’s in the category of Best Revival of a Play and Best Actress (Linda Lavin in the role of Mrs. van Daan). It was also nominated for six other awards in the form of Drama Desk, Drama League and Outer Critics Circle, none of which it was awarded.

The reviews for the performance were also mediocre. Much of the disappointment for this new version was directed toward the script, which had been revamped, but most critics felt like it had not been changed enough. The script was deemed a product of its time, a theatrical script that had not moved from its place in the 1950s. In fact, Vincent Canby of *The New York Times* titled his review, “A New

²⁸⁶ Gewen, Berry. 2003 June 15. *The New York Times*. *Holocaust Documentaries: Too Much of a Bad Thing?*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/06/15/movies/holocaust-documentaries-too-much-of-a-bad-thing.html>. 30 May 2015.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

'Anne Frank' Still Stuck in the '50s." In his review, dated December 21, 1997, he wrote of his disappointments with Kesselman's additions:

Much has been written about Ms. Kesselman's attempts to emphasize the story's Jewish ethnicity, which more recent critics have said the Hacketts downplayed for 1950s audiences, and about the restoration of some of the rougher edges to Anne's character, which Otto Frank deleted from her diary in the first published manuscript.

Yet in spite of the tinkering (and it seems just that for anyone who remembers the original stage production with respect), "The Diary of Anne Frank" can now be identified as an artefact of conventional Broadway play-making of the 1950s. It is decent enough for its time but, because it is so banally written, it fails to recreate today the sense of urgency, loss and surprise with which it was greeted in the 1950s.²⁸⁸

Canby also went on to discuss how shoehorned Kesselman's additions felt within the play, stating, "Ms. Kesselman's interpolations are very mild indeed. Anne's disagreements with her mother are something less than momentous. At one point she acknowledges her budding sexuality in a fervent, self-addressed admission of curiosity about her own body and her desire to touch another's. It is a good speech, but it seems to belong to a different character in another play."²⁸⁹

Additionally, Canby spoke of Portman's performance as less than ideal. In the role of Anne, despite the career she would later enjoy, Natalie Portman did not get the same critical acclaim as her predecessors in the role. It is difficult to tell if it is because of the direction or the way Portman interpreted the role, but it is played with the candour of a small child who is due her dose of Ritalin. Like Canby suggests in his review, Portman's performance does not seem to match up with the introspective words that Anne writes. Although there are two sides to Anne, and

²⁸⁸ Canby, Vincent. 1997 December 21. The New York Times. *A New 'Anne Frank' Still Stuck in the '50s*. Retrieved from <http://www.writing.upenn.edu/~afilreis/50s/anne-frank-per-canby.html>. 30 May 2015.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid*

her maturing is supposed to be shown in the transition from Act I to Act II, Portman fails to grasp it. Canby states, "The slightly new version of 'The Diary of Anne Frank' certainly isn't helped by the performance of Natalie Portman.... She is also earnestly artificial, having been directed to behave in a fashion that might have embarrassed even Sandra Dee's Gidget. Ms. Portman seems never to walk if she can skip; when she lies on the floor, tummy down, heels up, writing in her beloved diary, her little feet are forever kicking back and forth like a 4-year-old's. The girl we see has no relation to the thoughts she speaks, either in person or as pre-recorded narration."²⁹⁰

Greg Evans, of *Variety* magazine, had similar thoughts about both Portman and the plays text itself. Of Portman's Anne, Evans stated, "Portman, a likable, unaffected actress, can't manage to meld Anne's halves into a whole. It's hard to reconcile the contemporary cheekiness with the thoughtful young author scribbling in her notepad, and whether due to Portman's inexperience or Lapine's misguided direction, we never quite believe that the young girl skipping around the annex or flirting with her new beau has the inner life that produced one of the 20th century's most remarkable and enduring pieces of literature."²⁹¹

Evans also pointed out that the play failed to make the transition to a more nuanced portrait of Anne that the audiences of the 1990s now craved. His review echoed Canby's, stating that the play had not really moved forward in time as much as was necessary for audiences to connect. He wrote, "James Lapine's unexceptional direction rarely achieves the power the story demands, and textual revisions far more drastic than Kesselman's would be needed to vitalize a play that is often as creaky as an old attic."²⁹²

Although the character of Anne (and certainly Mr. Dussel, though it is not mentioned in this review) has been rounded out to create a multi-dimensional portrait of the author of the diary, Evans also complains that the rest of the

²⁹⁰ *Ibid*

²⁹¹ Evans, Greg. 1997 December 3. *Variety*. Review: *The Diary of Anne Frank*. Retrieved from <http://variety.com/1997/legit/reviews/the-diary-of-anne-frank-4-111732317/>. 31 May 2015.

²⁹² *Ibid*.

characters are still flat and one-note. “Nowhere are the shortcomings of Goodrich and Hackett more evident than in the play’s supporting characters, a collection of one-dimensional types: Otto Frank (George Hearn), Anne’s father, is the unconvincing embodiment of goodness, patience and wisdom; Margot (Missy Yager), Anne’s older sister, is shy and overshadowed by her more vibrant sibling, while young Peter is awkward and sweet; Mr. Dussel (Austin Pendleton) is a hypochondriac fussbudget.”²⁹³

Molly Magid Hoagland, in her essay “Anne Frank On and Off Broadway” which appeared in *A Scholarly Look at the Diary of Anne Frank* held similar sentiments. She also criticizes Portman’s lacklustre performance and inability to capture Anne’s spirit:

Actually, Portman onstage fails to convey Anne’s budding sexuality, to say nothing of her budding intellect. Skipping and twirling about, parading in too-big red high heels and trying on Mrs. van Daan’s mink coat, Portman succeeds only in exacting Anne as she was before going into hiding, the “terrible flirt, coquettish and amusing” (in Anne’s own later description of herself.) Whereas Anne in her diary often observes that her experiences in hiding have transformed her (she has “grown wise within these walls”), in the second act, Portman merely furrows her brow and wears a ragged sweater.²⁹⁴

Hoagland’s scholarly review also echoes that of most of the theatrical critics. However, her analysis is probably most poignant, as with her deep familiarity with the text, she pinpoints exactly where she feels Kesselman got it wrong, whereas other theatre critics can merely state why they felt Kesselman’s play was out-dated and no longer suited for a modern audience. Hoagland says:

But the whole of Kesselman’s revision amounts to far less than the sum of its parts. Despite the changes, this is still the same sentimental play about a luminous, flirtatious, idealistic Anne Frank that made the critics swoon 40

²⁹³ *Ibid*

²⁹⁴ Langer, L. *et al.* 1999 (as n.14 above), p. 79.

years ago. Ben Brantley, in his *Times* review, dubbed this Anne as a Proustian “girl in flower,” a “rosebud,” an “exquisite fawn,” her skin aglow “with the promise of miraculous transformations.” In the same language Susan Strasberg, the Broadway Anne of 1955 was hailed as a “flowering...youngster...pure in heart,” with the shining spirit of a young girl.” And if the established image of Anne as a frolicsome teenage saint were not already so potent, it was sealed definitively by the casting of the sixteen-year-old starlet Natalie Portman in the leading role. Pictures in the Playbill given to theatregoers, using soft-focus close-ups, capitalize on Portman’s jarring precocious, Lolita-like beauty as, lips parted, she gazes soulfully outward.....

Absent from this portrait is the girl who in the annex studied French, English, geography, biology, art history; who read Greek mythology, biographies of Galileo, Liszt, Charles V, and a book called *Palestine at the Crossroads*. No less absent is the Anne Frank, who, on one occasion in January 1943, recorded in her diary: “I’m seething with rage, yet I can’t show it...I’d like to scream,...’Leave me alone, let me have at least one night when I don’t cry myself to sleep with my eyes burning and my head pounding...’ But...I can’t let them see...the wounds they’ve inflicted on me.”

And absent above all is the Anne Frank whom Miep Gies would later recall coming upon bent over her diary, writing: “I’d seen Anne, like a chameleon, go from mood to mood, but always with friendliness...But I saw a look on her face at this moment that I’d never seen before. It was a look of dark concentration, as if she had a throbbing headache.

This look pierced me, and I was speechless. She was suddenly another person there writing at the table.”

These sides of Anne are nowhere to be seen in Portman’s portrayal, and are only glancingly alluded to in the revised text of the play.

It may seem curious that a team in possession of the definitive edition of the diary, and determined to use it to thwart the punitive will of Otto Frank by presenting the “unexpurgated” Anne, should fail so starkly at the task. But the truth is that editions of the diary have nothing to do with the matter; Anne’s complexity was every bit as evident in the “expurgate” edition of 1952 as it is in the full-dress edition of 1955. The failure is Broadway’s alone.²⁹⁵

New York Magazine’s John Simon felt the issue of the work was not that it wasn’t a very good play, but that Anne’s story is told far too often. In Simon’s review he stated, “What then is amiss?....The easy but not unfounded answer is that the story has been told too often.” He ended his review with, “Theatregoers able to curb their expectations will reap their modest rewards.”²⁹⁶

However, there were a handful of reviewers who did find the play to be a great piece. For example, Fintan O’Toole for the *Daily News* stated, “For its refusal to bury [the] truth in artful evasion, this production demands, and deserves, our attention.”²⁹⁷ A reviewer who wrote in to the main-stay theatrical website “Curtain Up,” but asked to remain anonymous said of the play, “The real ‘new’ explicitness is in that heightened terror and Anne’s awareness of what was happening in the concentration camps. Her much quoted optimistic statement “I still believe, in spite of everything, that people are truly good at heart” is still there, but it is not the sum up of her experiences. Her diary while no longer quite the symbol of hope in the midst of evil is instead her instrument for bearing witness. For arousing future generations.”²⁹⁸

Similarly, David Rothenberg’s titled “Anne Frank Reminds Us to Remember,” calls into question some of the critics, particularly Cynthia Ozick who rather scathingly

²⁹⁵ *Ibid*

²⁹⁶ Simon, John. 1997 December 22: The Diary of Anne Frank Review. *New York Magazine*. pp. 119-120.

²⁹⁷ O’Toole, Fintan. 1997 December 5: Frank Reappraisal Pays Off. *The Daily News*. p. 63.

²⁹⁸ Sommer, Elyse. 1997. Curtain Up. *A Curtain Up Review: The Diary of Anne Frank*. Retrieved from <http://www.curtainup.com/annfrank.html>. 30 May 2015.

said the diary should have been burned before it was made into an overly sentimental play and a film. She states, "*The Diary of a Young Girl* [as it was first published] has been bowdlerized, distorted, transmuted, traduced, reduced; it has been infantilized, Americanized, homogenized, sentimentalized, falsified, kitschified, and, in fact, blatantly and arrogantly denied."²⁹⁹ Rothenberg calls these comments "mean-spirited" and "opportunistic" citing his interest of the Holocaust coming about due to Anne's diary. His musing about the revival, however, is less review and more of a call to remember the Holocaust through a visit to the theatre.³⁰⁰

Much of the original play and film's success and its 1997 failings could be attributed to the fact that the play was written for the time period in which it was performed. The play had largely edited out the Holocaust, something that audiences in the 1990s would have come to expect. Tim Cole writes in his book, *Selling the Holocaust*, "Thus a diary in which the Holocaust provided the context rather than the central theme was made into a play and film which reflected the concerns of 1950s America much more than it reflected the Holocaust. It was not only the specifically Jewish references of the diary which were omitted from the play and film, but the relatively few specifically 'Holocaust' references."³⁰¹

Though the play was greeted as an amazing feat for its time in 1955, it is clear that by 1997, the average person's knowledge of the Holocaust had grown exponentially in the time between stagings. While Kesselman's rewrite did add more depth to Anne and the others who lived with her in the Secret Annex, it was not enough for audiences who now expected more. Although the 1997 rewrite is darker than its predecessor, there is still no mention of Anne's time in the camps aside from the fact that she and Margot perished together at Bergen-Belsen. Anne's pristine image as a saintly, optimistic-in-the-face-of tragedy squeaky-clean teen

²⁹⁹ Ozick, Cynthia. 1997 October 6. Who Owns Anne Frank? *The New Yorker*. p. 76.

³⁰⁰ Rothenberg, David. 1997 December 11: Anne Frank Reminds Us to Remember. *The Westsider*. P. 3.

³⁰¹ Cole, T. 1999: *Selling the Holocaust: From Auschwitz to Schindler How History is Bought Packaged and Sold*. New York: Routledge, p. 33.

that was once accepted in 1955 had already been called into question by 1997. Although some did like the production, it seemed that their positive reviews were more out of duty for the subject matter than out of criticism of the play itself. For these critics, it almost feels that to dislike a play about Anne Frank is akin to perjury or heresy, an idea I will explore further in future chapters.

Due to the failing of the 1997 play (though it is still frequently performed in professional and amateur venues), it is easy to see why artists who wish to have a full and nuanced portrait of Anne have turned to creating works about her without the expressed permission of the Anne Frank Fonds. In this way, they can explore all aspects of Anne's life and personality without feeling confined by their "rules" and "expectations." The notion of artists creating their own works about Anne will be explored in the subsequent chapters.

It is perhaps Nancy Franklin's review of the production that strikes at the heart of the issue of both the 1955 and 1997 incarnations of *The Diary of Anne Frank*, "Both the 1955 play and its new incarnation, while ostensibly honoring Anne Frank by attempting to re-create her world have, in fact, silenced her-not to mention the seven people who shared living quarters with her for some eight hundred days and nights."³⁰²

³⁰² Franklin, Nancy. 1997. The Dark at the Top of the Stairs. *The New Yorker*. p. 162.

Chapter Five: Other Plays About Anne Frank

After the 1997 version of *The Diary of Anne Frank*, a marked shift occurred in her theatrical representation. Post-1997 plays that deal with Anne seek to use Anne as a device or a symbol for another story altogether or as a way to relate to how she is remembered within the context of history. In some cases, she is a way for children of survivors or other tragedies to delve into their own family's past. She can, for some, act as a buffer so as not to explore the pain too deeply, and for some can be the catalyst for familial discovery.

Above all, the plays of this era, specifically those not sanctioned by the Anne Frank Fonds, deal with memory, and in some cases even ask the audience obviously and brashly how Anne would react if she could see the impact her diary has had on the world today. This era is an almost post-factual era, where the relationship to Anne's words, or the author's relationship to Anne, takes center stage over the mundane details of what actual happened in the Secret Annex.

The Anne Frank Fonds as Gatekeepers of the Holocaust

The new production of *Anne*, which will be discussed in the eighth chapter, not only represents an official acknowledgement of the lacking nature of the original theatrical adaptations, but also highlights the discord between the two foundations, of the Anne Frank House and Anne Frank Fonds. On a deeper level, it also highlights the fact that although those who knew Anne in the closest way have since passed away, the desire to hold on to Anne's image is particularly strong—and the will to create an image of Anne that is to be remembered, whether or not it is authentic.

The stronghold these organizations have on Anne's image is partially what brings so many writers to explore Anne in a new way, and that has created discord for writers who are attempting to work with the Fonds in order to create a new production.

Although both were begun by Otto Frank himself in order to further his daughter's legacy and continue education against prejudice, this production marks a pinnacle in their discord, proving how out of sync they are with one another. While they both have the same mission, to continue to educate young people about the Holocaust and Anne's life and writings, they are now seemingly in direct competition with one another. This ushers us into a new era, an era where survivors are ever dwindling and we are left with wondering who owns their legacy. And in this specific instance, who now owns Anne's words and memory? How will she be portrayed in the future, and who will take charge of her future portrayal?

Otto Frank was heavily involved in preserving what is now known as the Anne Frank House, the canal house that was home to his business, Opteka, before sheltering him and his family for a little over two years. By the 1950s, the house at Prinsengracht 263 was scheduled for demolition. Determined to preserve the memory of his time in the Secret Annex, as well as providing a place for those who connected with Anne's words to visit, Otto Frank and several others decided to buy the property. The purpose was to create a museum open to the public. The house began restoration in 1957 and officially opened on May 3, 1960. Otto Frank remained on the board and in close association with all decisions made by The House until his death in 1980. Otto Frank said of the house's importance in relation to his daughter's diary:

I think it is not only important that people go to the Anne Frank House to see the secret annexe, but also that they are helped to realise that people are also persecuted today because of their race, religion or political convictions.³⁰³

However, the founding of this establishment created an issue. In 1952, Otto Frank moved to Basel, Switzerland on a semi-permanent basis to be with his family.

³⁰³ Anne Frank House. n.d. *Anne Frank House and the Anne Frank Fonds*. Retrieved from <http://www.annefrank.org/en/Sitewide/Corporate-story/The-Anne-Frank-House-and-the-Anne-Frank-Fonds/>. 23 May 2016.

Although this was his “home base,” as it were, he travelled frequently to Amsterdam and to London, where his new wife’s daughter and her family lived. In 1963, he set up the Anne Frank Fonds, a foundation to protect the copyright of his daughter’s diaries and manuscripts.

But when Otto Frank died in 1980, his will further divided the foundations by whom he bequeathed rights and artefacts to. The Anne Frank Fonds was his primary inheritor, a badge they wear proudly on their website, calling themselves “Otto Frank’s universal heir.”³⁰⁴ However, his working archive went to the Anne Frank House, where they keep a considerable amount of documents and personal letters relating in all manners to Anne Frank. While the copyright of the diary sits with the Fonds, the physical diary was given to the Dutch state. It was given to the Netherlands Institute for War Documentation in conjunction with the University of Amsterdam, however, it is now on permanent loan to the Anne Frank House.³⁰⁵ The diary itself is sometimes on display for the public in the museum, sitting in an addition to the house at Prinsengracht 263.

On June 25, 2007, on the 60th anniversary of the publication of Anne’s diary, the Anne Frank Fonds transferred a large amount of material to the Anne Frank House for study and use. The files, which contained private letters and photographs of the Frank family, were only inventoried in 2005 and brought to Amsterdam to be studied. The Anne Frank House created a special scholarship to award to researchers or students to help sort through and discover all that these archives contained. Although the terms were never publicly specified, it was agreed that this would be a long-term loan of the documents.³⁰⁶

³⁰⁴ Anne Frank Fonds. n.d. *Anne Frank Fonds Founded by Otto Frank*. Retrieved from <http://www.annefrank.ch/>. 23 May 2016.

³⁰⁵ Anne Frank House. n.d. *Anne Frank House and the Anne Frank Fonds*. Retrieved from <http://www.annefrank.org/en/Sitewide/Corporate-story/The-Anne-Frank-House-and-the-Anne-Frank-Fonds/>. 23 May 2016.

³⁰⁶ Anne Frank House. 25 June 2007. *Archive of Anne Frank’s Family*. Retrieved from <http://www.annefrank.org/en/News/News/2009/Archive-of-Anne-Franks-family-/>. 23 May 2016.

Many of these documents came to the Anne Frank Fonds after the 1998 death of Otto Frank's new wife, Elfriede "Fritzi" Geiringer, an Auschwitz survivor herself and the mother of Auschwitz survivor and prominent speaker Eva Schloss. Having previously been holding all of this material in her possession, it was willed to the Fonds, despite some controversy over whether or not The Fonds was the appropriate place to keep it.

Eva Schloss, Fritzi's daughter and Anne's posthumous stepsister, spent much of her adult life involved in the legacy of Anne Frank via her relationship with Otto. Schloss is quoted in the New York Times in 2013 as saying that she felt the Anne Frank House should have kept all of the documents as the Anne Frank Fonds is not a museum with exhibits and does not attract visitors in the same way as the Secret Annex.³⁰⁷

In 2011, however, the Anne Frank Fonds decided that they wanted the documents returned to them, as the universal heir. The Fonds stated that they object to Anne's portrayal by the Anne Frank House as a "distorted and decontextualized child saint." Additionally, the Fonds cited tax reasons and the founding of the Frank Family Center in Frankfurt, where the archives would be kept, as reason for the immediate return.³⁰⁸

The Anne Frank House stated that they were under the impression the loan was permanent and were reluctant to return all of the items immediately, especially since they were still in the midst of studying them. The Anne Frank House agreed to return the items to the Anne Frank Fonds, but attempted to retain ownership of a few of the items. This was denied to them by a district court in Amsterdam who,

³⁰⁷ Sayare, S. The New York Times. 26 June 2013. *A Legal Defeat for the Anne Frank House*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/27/arts/design/a-legal-defeat-for-anne-frank-house.html?_r=1. 23 May 2016.

³⁰⁸ Sayare, S. The New York Times. 16 June 2013. *Two Groups Rekindle Fight Over Anne Frank*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/17/arts/two-groups-rekindle-fight-over-anne-frank.html?version=meter+at+7&module=meter-Links&pgtype=article&contentId=&mediaId=&referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fen.wikipedia.org%2F&priority=true&action=click&contentCollection=meter-links-click>. 23 May 2016.

after reviewing Otto and Fritzi's wills, determined the Anne Frank Fonds to be the full and rightful heir, and thus had the right to loan or demand back any and all of their archive at will. The Anne Frank House was ordered to return all items by January 1, 2014, the same year that *Anne* was to premier in Amsterdam.³⁰⁹

In regards to presenting the play, much of the money is being used for charity, and Yves Kugelmann states that the Fonds now has an obligation to present the material in a way they see fit, no matter what the Anne Frank House thinks of the issue at hand.³¹⁰

Furthermore, the grip on Anne's words tightened when her first cousin, Buddy Elias, passed away in 2015, marking Anne's last remaining relative to give creative input on her personality to be gone, leaving all of the responsibility to the "gatekeepers," as it were, of the Fonds.

Scholars on the subject, particularly Dr. David Barnouw and Melissa Mueller, both well respected for their extensive work on Anne Frank and her diary, feel that the controversy boils down to maintaining power and control over Anne's words. Barnouw writes, "In Basel they say, 'We are the real owner,' " and the play and other commercial activities "are about maintaining the power and the legacy of Anne Frank."³¹¹

Melissa Mueller states, "Both organizations want to own Anne Frank. Both want to impose a way for the world to see Anne Frank."³¹² And it seems Mueller is not

³⁰⁹ Sayare, S. The New York Times. 26 June 2013. *A Legal Defeat for the Anne Frank House*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/27/arts/design/a-legal-defeat-for-anne-frank-house.html?_r=1. 23 May 2016.

³¹⁰ Carvajal, D. The New York Times. 12 May 2014. *Amid Tensions, a New Portrayal of Anne Frank*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/13/theater/a-holocaust-play-in-amsterdam-opens-in-controversy.html?_r=0. 26 May 2016.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*

³¹² Sayare, S. The New York Times. 16 June 2013. *Two Groups Rekindle Fight Over Anne Frank*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/17/arts/two-groups-rekindle-fight-over-anne-frank.html?version=meter+at+7&module=meter-Links&pgtype=article&contentId=&mediaId=&referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fen.wiki>

incorrect. The main goal seems to be ownership, to spread the “correct” message, vetting it for the public who evidently cannot make connections themselves, and having sole control over Anne’s diary. However, it seems evident that the Anne Frank Fonds is now going above and beyond its duties at the copyright holders, simply to ensure that their image of Anne is the only one that endures.

Tim Cole briefly touches upon this subject in his book *Selling the Holocaust: From Auschwitz to Schindler*.

He states that the image of Anne Frank that we see today is one that is distorted, and perhaps done so by the Anne Frank Fonds and Anne Frank Huis itself. As such, those who stand as these so-called gatekeepers feel that the memory of Anne must be preserved in a certain way, so as to ensure that the Holocaust “Bible” that Anne Frank’s diary has become, continues its legacy in a very specific way.

He states:

Anne Frank’s ‘distorted’ diary stands at the end of the twentieth century as *the* ‘Holocaust bible,’ and ‘Anne Frank’ stands as *the* ‘Holocaust victim.’ Stripped of her burgeoning sexuality—through her father’s judicious editing – this ‘Anne Frank’ is the ideal symbol of the ‘innocent victim’ and the ideal symbol of potential snuffed out.³¹³

Although the Anne Frank Fonds makes it clear that they can approve or deny any script that uses Anne’s words verbatim, how they gate keep her words is less clear. From studying the plays sanctioned by them, and their denial of allowing her words in the 2001 film *Anne Frank: The Whole Story*, it is clear that there are two major factors at play: the omission of her story in Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen and keeping her forever asexual.

pedia.org%2F&priority=true&action=click&contentCollection=meter-links-click. 26 May 2016.

³¹³Cole, T. 1999: *Selling the Holocaust: From Auschwitz to Schindler How History is Bought Packaged and Sold*. New York: Routledge, p. 46.

While Anne is sometimes depicted in the camps, in approved plays, it is never in her actual state. Instead, she is portrayed as though she was continually optimistic about the world until the end, even when history (as seen in Chapter One), gives us a starkly different picture of Anne's final days.

Thus, the Anne that is kept by the Fonds is almost a false image, but one that they are fiercely concerned is authentic.

Selection of Plays

The following plays were chosen for two reasons: both because they are representative of this period of plays about Anne Frank and because they are all of the plays that I have been able to discover about Anne written in English. Because many are unpublished, it is not possible to find and catalogue every play ever written about Anne by an amateur dramatist, but this represents a concerted effort to do so.

Writing a Play About Anne Frank with the Permission of the Fonds: *Anne Frank Within and Without* by Bobby Box

As can deduced be from previous chapters, the so-called brand of Anne Frank has been fiercely protected, which extends to theatrical adaptations that must meet very specific requirements in order to receive the "blessing" of the Anne Frank Fonds. Because of the complex nature of the diary and its many incarnations and translations, the diary itself will not enter into public domain any time in the near future. The Anne Frank Fonds expressly states this on their website with the following quote:

It is wrong to assume that the copyrights from Anne Frank's Diaries would be due to expire in the near future, or that anyone would be free to use them and publish them without permission from the Anne Frank Fonds. In

most countries, the general rule for the period of protection, namely the author's (i.e. Anne Frank's) lifetime, plus 50 or 70 years does not apply. Instead, as a result of the complicated history of the original versions of the diary and its in-print texts versions, exceptions to the main rule apply. Therefore, Anne's original texts, as well as the in-print versions of the Diaries, remain protected for many more decades.

....The Fonds has granted rights for the use of Anne Frank's text in plays, ballets, textbooks, etc., sometimes free of charge, sometimes for a fee, depending on the type of project.³¹⁴

The Fonds also remarks on its official website that should text be taken without permission, they will make good faith efforts to rectify this matter. Should good faith efforts prove no progress, the Fonds will endeavour to take the offender to court.³¹⁵

The rights to Anne's diary will not expire any time in the near future because of a variety of factors. Because the original diary was compiled by Otto Frank from the A and B versions of Anne's diary, he has been given his own copyright to the compilation. Because Otto Frank passed away in 1980, the original publication remains protected for 50 or 70 years after Otto's death, depending on the country in question. As such, translated versions of the diary are also not eligible for public domain until 50 or 70 years after the death of the translator. Likewise, any new material or new editions of the diary are also subject to the same 50 or 70 years after the death of the translator or compiler rule.³¹⁶ Because Anne holds no copyright over her own diary, it becomes quite clear in a very stark way that the diary and Anne's image are held in the hands of many people aside from Anne herself. In a way, we are not seeing Anne as she would have wanted to be

³¹⁴ Anne Frank Fonds. 17 November 2014. *The Diaries of Anne Frank to Remain Copyright Protected for Many More Decades*. Retrieved from <http://www.annefrank.ch/234/items/the-diaries-of-anne-frank-to-remain-copyright-protected-for-many-more-decades.html>. 28 June 2015.

³¹⁵ Anne Frank Fonds. *Q&A About the Copyright to Anne's Diary*. Retrieved from <http://www.annefrank.ch/qa-en.html>. 28 June 2015.

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*

represented necessarily, but instead the Anne that is represented the way those around her have seen fit to do so—whether it would have aligned with her wishes or not.

Although the Fonds does state that it will give permission for the use of text for theatrical representations of Anne, the wording seems to make the process sound a lot more simple than it is. In reality, most writers who create a play about Anne find that their words are not suitable for the Fonds—or that they do not wish to seek the “blessing” of the Fonds. As it is not illegal to write a play about Anne without using her words directly, many artists have chosen to express Anne’s life and their connection with her in just that way.

While most plays about Anne are without the permission of the Fonds, during my research I spoke to Bobby Box, the writer of *Anne Frank: Within and Without*, a puppet show about Anne’s intrapersonal life during her time in the attic that was approved by the Fonds. Although Buddy Elias, Anne’s first cousin and the long-time head and consultant of the Anne Frank Fonds, was alive at the time Box’s show was written (he passed away in 2015), Box stated that he never actually corresponded with Elias except for a few short words of encouragement in a written letter. Instead, as Box was writing the material, he stated in an interview with me that each draft he wrote had to be approved by the Fonds. Although he regards their input as both helpful and kind, he said it did slow the process of writing the play down considerably. It is unclear from our interview if Elias was making notes about the play for the Fonds to send to Box, and it seems it was unclear to Box as well.³¹⁷

Because *Anne Frank: Within and Without* is under protection of the Fonds and not yet published, I was not allowed to be granted access to the full script, nor allowed to see a recording of the show unless I agreed to watch the show with a member of staff from the Center for Puppetry Arts where the show was originally performed. In an email with a member of staff, she stated, “With regard to our production of *Anne Frank: Within & Without*, there may be little information which we can

³¹⁷ Interview with Bobby Box. February 23, 2013.

share. We are unable to provide anyone with a copy of the performance due to copyright restrictions.”³¹⁸ When the script was enquired after, I received the same answer. As the Center for Puppetry Arts has been incredibly evasive and unwilling to share any information about their agreement with the Fonds, it makes it very difficult to understand exactly what it is the Fonds has requested of them.

It is also worth noting that some at Puppetry Arts were incredibly rude when asked about the production, almost giving off an air of a only a special club of people would be allowed to gain access or insight into the script or process of creation.

Without the script in hand, it is quite difficult to give a proper analysis of the play as it relates to the Anne Frank Fonds’ image for Anne. I was, however, allowed to watch the play on video in 2013 at the Center for Puppetry Arts, from which I did glean information on the production and facets of Anne’s character that were included.

As mentioned previously, the production did not include much about Anne’s relationships with others. While many plays about Anne Frank focus on the relationship dynamics inside of the Annex, this play is unique in that almost the entire focus was on Anne’s relationship with herself and the way she finds herself growing during her time sequestered in the Annex.

Box says of his script:

My goal was to show as many sides of Anne as I possibly could within the constraints of the play while still portraying her as a cohesive whole. My very strong desire was for the audience to know the real Anne Frank, as I understood her, and hopefully even better.

I started from the premise that a diary is not just recorded thoughts, but rather, a conversation that you have with yourself. And what are the two

³¹⁸ Email with Center for Puppetry Arts. December 4, 2012.

parts of an adolescent girl? One is the child that does not want to grow up. That part was represented by a young actress. And the other part of an adolescent girl is the woman struggling to grow up and out of the child, who was represented by an older actress. And therein lay the central conflict of the show, set against the backdrop of a horrific time of our history.³¹⁹

Box expressed that the idea for a puppet show dawned on him during a visit to the Anne Frank Huis/Anne Frank House during a European vacation. As per Otto Frank's request (and perhaps to also accommodate the high volume of tourists), the Annex is now devoid of furniture except for the skeletal remains of the stove. In order to illustrate the cramped conditions, in the old office is a model of the Annex with doll-sized furniture to represent where everything was once located. To Box, this seemed exactly like the set to a puppet show.³²⁰

As many artists who recreate Anne's story do so in order to express their own fascination or connection with Anne, Box's inspiration was no different. Although Anne never expressly discusses puppetry in her diary, Box states that some of his research shows that Anne and Buddy Elias played with Punch and Judy dolls whilst they were together on vacations.

In Box's production, however, the medium of puppetry allows for a more significant use of fantasy life and exploring Anne's imagination. In one scene, Anne imagines becoming fat and having to roll through the Annex, which is displayed through rotund doll versions of Anne. He states, "The real Anne took comfort from her tribulations by peeking out the back window and admiring the large tree in the rear of the Annex. In our show, a representation of the tree cradles her, and sings a Yiddish lullaby to her until she sleeps. Also, there is a fantasy sequence where she dances a ballet, but at the end, a glass jar covers the fragile ballerina over her protesting cries."³²¹

³¹⁹ Interview with Bobby Box. February 23, 2013.

³²⁰ *Ibid*

³²¹ *Ibid*

Also noted in the play is that during her courtship phase with Peter, there are hardly any words. Instead, it is portrayed as a “dance” between the two puppets to symbolize the unspoken desire and the fact there are often no words to express the heightened emotions one feels when falling for their very first love.

However, Box was very careful to ensure that despite the artistic license and fantasy sequences, the audience was well aware that those represented by the dolls were actual people. He states, “One of the obstacles that I faced was my concern that the audience would see the characters as puppets in a fictional, imaginary world. I addressed this issue by projecting photographs and pictures of the real people and places on giant screens on the upstage wall throughout the show.”³²²

The play also features a scene that was retracted from Anne’s diary, which features her dream about ice-skating with her cousin Buddy Elias. Bobby stated that Buddy did not know about this scene when he saw the performance, but was very delighted for it to be included in the production.

Although the play does mention Anne’s untimely death and the death of those in the Secret Annex, it is not a major focus. Anne’s line that she believes people are good at heart is said in the play, but there isn’t much analysis of it. Although there is more information about what happened to the members of the Secret Annex than takes place in the original Goodrich and Hackett version, *Anne Frank Within and Without* remains similar to any other Anne Frank portrayal in that her time in the camps is glossed over—almost an afterthought. The puppets are taken away in a miniature wagon with bars over it, similar to what is historically used to transport circus animals and are wheeled toward their death.

Aside from the problem of not discussing Anne’s demise in detail (as none of these plays seem to do), this representation of Anne is actually quite a solid one and shows an unexpected part of the story. It adds to the canon in that it isn’t the “same old” retelling of what occurred in the annex, but instead a completely new take on

³²² *Ibid*

Anne which focuses on the woman she became during her time in captivity. It leaves the audience with the feeling that if Anne were able to think so deeply during only her 15 years on earth, what would she have been able to accomplish had she grown up? What kind of contribution would she have made to the world, and in turn, what kind of contribution could any victim of genocide have contributed?

According to Bobby Box, however, the play has undergone significant rewrites since the production I was allowed to see. Since the Center for Puppetry Arts and the Anne Frank Fonds own the rights, even Box was not consulted on the changes and is not aware as to what has happened in regards to script changes.

Although *Anne Frank: Within and Without* seems to be the only full-length play approved by the Fonds, there are a few full-length plays dealing with Anne Frank that have been published and therefore are produced without consultation of the original director and playwright.

Anne's Inner Life

The Dreams of Anne Frank and *Anne Frank Within and Without* in a way belong in the same category. These two plays, although one shows the drama of working with the Anne Frank Fonds more clearly, both deal with Anne Frank's intrapersonal life and how she relates to herself as a changing woman. While the previous plays written about Anne have some focus on Anne's inner dialogue through diary entries, much of them focuses on the strained interpersonal relationships of the members of the Secret Annex that develop within the confines of being held virtual prisoners together for two years. However, both *Anne Frank Within and Without* and *The Dreams of Anne Frank* deal almost exclusively with Anne's inner world. While outer relationships are explored within the contexts of these plays, they are placed within a framework of Anne's point of view and imagination.

***The Dreams of Anne Frank* by Bernard Kops**

The Dreams of Anne Frank by Bernard Kops was originally written as a play for young people and commissioned by the Polka Theatre in London in 1992. Although the play wasn't written with the help of the Fonds, the way *Anne Frank Within and Without* was, the Anne Frank House has given somewhat of its blessing over the play by allowing it to tour with its exhibition "Anne Frank in the World." This, however, is not the organization that holds copyright, arguably still making the play an unsanctioned or unauthorized version of the diary. The playwright, Bernard Kops, took the play to Szeged, Hungary, where he performed it with Romany children as part of the touring exhibit to help combat racism and prejudice in Eastern Europe.³²³

Kops writes in the introduction to the play that his goal was not to write a play about her diary, but instead to write a play about her imagination. Similar to *Anne Frank Within and Without*, *The Dreams of Anne Frank* focuses heavily on fantasy sequences and music to deliver Kops' story. For him, the story is a personal one as many of his family members were Dutch Jews who perished during the Holocaust. He writes in the introduction to the piece:

Her background and spirit pervaded my dreams, invaded my life. *Dreams of Anne Frank* is not a dramatization of her diary. Rather, it is an original way of focusing upon the girl, to bring alive that unquenchable spirit and show how she managed to be creative in the darkest of times. To write the play, I went to the facts of her life for the spine of reality and to my imagination for the subjective matrix, the foundation of my drama.³²⁴

Although Kops' play, at its core, is a dramatization of Anne's time in the Secret Annex, it is more so an exploration into what he thinks might have been Anne's dreams and fantasies whilst she was captive. The play itself is not straightforward; in fact it plays almost a bit like an existentialist modern theatre piece or along the lines of experimental theatre, which makes an interesting choice for young

³²³ Kops, B. 1997: *Dreams of Anne Frank*. London: Methuen Drama. p. 4.

³²⁴ *Ibid*, p. 3.

people's theatre. The forward and references of the play says of Kops' choice to create a play solely based on Anne's dreams (though it is unclear as to who has written this as there is no attribution for this particular section in the script):

We know that Anne had a vivid imagination and the writer uses this element of her character to convey to us the frustrations, tensions and hopes that were part of the two years existence in the Annex. We see things that Anne was fond of (films, cartoons, dancing etc.) sometimes distorted in her imagination to frightening nightmares. The dreams portrayed in the play have within them a foretelling of the future and we can see depicted the daily roll call in the concentration camp ('no one is exempt'), the crematoria (the gingerbread house), the labour camp (Snow White), Hitler's death and Winston Churchill dispensing advice.³²⁵

Within Kops' play, inanimate objects speak to the characters, echoing human feelings about the situation occurring. Anne tearfully tells the house on Merwedeplein goodbye and it answers her. Likewise, Anne has conversations with her personified diary, who tells Anne that the secrets they will share are safe within its pages.

The play also includes singing, though there is no music included in the published version (perhaps it is available to theatre groups who have decided to do the entire play).

Kops' play invokes the use of rhyming, mnemonic devices and sing-song type delivery to engage with his young audience. In the introduction of Mrs. van Daan (who isn't cast in a very favorable light in this particular version), she lists her good qualities in a sing-song tone almost reminiscent of the classic film 1964 *Mary Poppins*:

Mrs. Van Daan: And you will find us equally nice and responsible. You will also find that I am a modest person. A modest, humble and quiet person.

³²⁵ *Ibid*, p. 28.

Humble and unassuming. Courteous. Gracious. Polite. Self-effacing. Nice. Decent. Pleasant. Gentle. Spick and span. Affable. And unpretentious. And harmless. Inoffensive. Well mannered. Conciliatory. Sociable. Friendly. Civil. Dignified. Unimposing. Shy. Retiring. Reserved. Almost bashful. In other words, I know my place and I never fuss.³²⁶

Within the play, the fantasy element extends from inanimate objects talking to Anne and encompasses Anne having conversations with people such as Winston Churchill. While the members of the Secret Annex are tuning in to the BBC to listen to a speech by Churchill, his voice comes out of the radio to speak with Anne.

Churchill: I believe you are writing a diary, Anne?

Anne: Yes, Mr. Churchill.

Churchill: Keep up the good work.

Anne: I shall.

Churchill: Take good care of yourself and don't catch cold.³²⁷

.However, this is not the first time that Anne is positioned to speak with other key historical figures in the imagination of the playwright. In fact, Anne is often paired anachronistic figures or those who may have lived in the same time period whose struggles or reasons for fame have nothing to do with Anne or the Holocaust. For example, Anne is paired with Martin Luther King, Jr. quite frequently as they are often held up as examples of fighting intolerance. This is a bit of a misnomer, as although they were born in the same year, Anne's life was cut short because of intolerance whilst Martin Luther King, Jr., although murdered due to racism and hate, had an actual career as a political activist. Theatrically, this pair is present in the Anne Frank Center USA's programs in New York where an actress portrays

³²⁶ *Ibid*, p. 49.

³²⁷ *Ibid*, p. 58.

Anne Frank and interacts with the audience. One of the shows they produced was an educational program called *Letters from Anne and Martin* that compares and contrasts Anne's writing with the letters Martin Luther King, Jr. sent from the Birmingham Jail.³²⁸ Anne is also featured in a theatrical production called *Anne and Emmett*, which features an imaginary conversation between Anne and Emmett Till, a young boy killed in Mississippi for the "crime" of looking at a white woman in 1955. This play will be discussed further in this chapter.

In Act Two, Anne's dreams become much more of a central focus as she invites Peter to "hop aboard her dream" where the pair are transported to what Anne calls "the forest of her brain." This "dream sequence," which as stated before feels very much like experimental theatre, takes place over the course of several scenes and seeks to use symbolism to express Anne's feelings about her captivity and the situation around them as the text weaves in and out between fantasy and reality. Anne and Peter take on the roles of Hansel and Gretel, with Mrs. van Daan as the witch as they begin to eat the Secret Annex, which has taken on the fairy tale context of being made of candy and gingerbread. This, in context, serves as a symbol for the Jews being taken to the slaughter, Mrs. van Daan as the witch stating that the oven "is where it all happens." She says to Anne and Peter:

Mrs. van Daan: Well, eat then. You couldn't have come to a better place. Nothing like a gingerbread house to clear up confusion. This oven solves everything. The best German firms tendered for it and it's very efficient. Eat! Eat! There's lots of Jews waiting to be admitted. Gingerbread and hard work makes free.³²⁹

Peter then leaves the stage and returns as "death," waiting to devour Anne before everything returns to normal and Anne confesses she had only had a bad dream. Anne speaks to her father, stressing the importance of her dreams to keep her sane during her time in captivity, another example of the playwright's intention to

³²⁸ Anne Frank Center USA. No date. *Letters from Anne and Martin*. Retrieved from <http://annefrank.com/community-programs/>. 10 July 2015.

³²⁹ Kops, B. 1997: *Dreams of Anne Frank*. London: Methuen Drama. p. 70.

stress Anne's childlike imaginative side, juxtaposing it with the horror of a lost childhood and a life cut tragically short. She says:

ANNE: I know. I was so afraid in that dream. I was looking everywhere for my lost childhood. I hate being shut up here. But I must write. And I must dream.³³⁰

In this section of the play and from the line above, it almost feels as if Anne is acutely aware of her fate. She says she "must" write and she "must" dream, not that she wants to or that these things provide a form of escapism to make her daily frustrations more tolerable, but that they are things she "must" do in order to cement her fate as the world's most famous, but also most optimistic and eternally good Holocaust victim.

As stated above in the forward section of the play, Anne and the members of the Secret Annex are transported into a scene from *Snow White* where Mrs. van Daan takes on the role of the Wicked Queen, but only for a just a moment, symbolizing the difficulty Anne always had with the relationship. But the dream continues on, with Anne and Peter, desperate for a happy ending, deciding to get married to one another within the Secret Annex.

The final three scenes in the play take place on August 4, 1944, the day in which the Franks are arrested. Anne imagines herself walking in front of Amsterdam's Royal Palace, needing to escape and get some fresh air. A man approaches Anne and asks her what she is doing outside, and Anne speaks to him of her regret for the way the world has turned out and her longing to move backward in time:

MAN: What are you doing in the streets, child? In the middle of the night?

ANNE: Looking for my childhood.

MAN: But surely you want to grow up?

³³⁰ *Ibid*, p. 74.

ANNE: Yes, but I am afraid. I want life to go backwards.³³¹

In the seventh scene, Anne's imagination takes full focus as she conjures up the image of Hitler dying. It is so real to Anne in her head that she tells the others who then celebrate the death of their enemy. It is soon discovered that the culprit is actually Anne's imagination, which leads the members of the Secret Annex to turn on her and Anne to retreat to her room.

As in life, the members of the Secret Annex are betrayed and they come on stage dressed in identical concentration camp uniforms, whilst Anne repeats over and over that, "Dreams are over. The nightmare starts."

And although this play is not a "Fonds approved" play, it does not neglect to show Anne as an optimistic and uplifting saint at the end of the play. In the tradition of most Anne Frank plays before it, it leaves the audience with a sense of sadness mixed with hopefulness for redemption of the human race in the future.

In the final scene, each member of the Secret Annex disappears one at a time, still wearing his or her camp garb. Anne is left alone on stage, stating a final soliloquy to her audience:

ANNE: "I believe that the Messiah will come. And even though he is a little late I will still believe." People of the World. Save us. Before it's too late. I'm trying to hear your voice, your protest. Children of the world, remember me. I was born. I lived for a while. I fell in love and then I went back into the dark. (*She dances.*) Life is the beautiful light in the entire darkness of time. I dance. Dance because I believe that I exist and I love and I will exist and love forever. Against all the odds. We are beautiful, and yes, we are loving. And we will all love one another. One day. All of us. Everywhere. You'll see. Before I go down into the dark, into the night and fog, please remember me. And peace will come. And a thousand centuries of leaves and wind and rain

³³¹ *Ibid*, p. 79.

and snow will cover the snow, again and again. And people will come and go. And fall in love. And peace will come. Goodbye, Diary.

ANNE kisses her diary and reluctantly discards it, putting it down upon the pile of clothes heaped on the stage, and she exits through the back door, following the others.

*Her diary seems to light up the darkness that now envelopes everything.*³³²

In many productions of plays about the Holocaust, the author or director makes it clear that they are attempting to prevent future genocides from occurring by “spreading the message” about the Holocaust. However, where this fails is that although it educates about a very important time in history, it does not highlight current situations that are in danger of turning into genocide, nor does it give the audience the tools to recognize or protest, as Anne’s character implores us to do.

Through Anne’s speech and in the “About the Play” foreword at the beginning of the play, it is clear that the prevention of genocide was a key motivation for the author in creating this play. He writes:

Anne Frank has to be more to us than a legend. She wanted to “go on living” after her death and her story can pose essential questions to young audiences now about the issues of racism, nationalism, war, genocide, human rights and individual responsibility—would we have stood by and watched...or would we have put our lives in danger to help such a family as the Franks? Do we stand by now and watch things happening we know to be wrong? The end of our play focuses very strongly on these subjects as contemporary questions. Otto Frank, Anne’s father and sole survivor of the family, felt strongly that Anne’s diary should be used in a way that would educate young people about these issues and open their eyes not only to the lessons of the past but also to the realities of the present. In 1992, 4,140 racial incidents were reported in London and in recent weeks a judge in

³³² *Ibid*, pp. 85-86.

Newcastle has said that the number of racist attacks last year had risen by 300 per cent. It is easy to be complacent about racism if you think it doesn't affect you personally, but the responsibility is shared by everyone of us.³³³

While there is nothing inherently wrong with this sentiment, one must ask whether the play itself gives audience members the tools to dig deeper into themselves and learn to stop genocide. The author cites incidents of a racist nature, but does not state in the ways these relate to the Holocaust. As such, from the author's statement, the play could even be diluted enough to encompass issues such as bullying.

Anne as a Symbol or Catalyst to Tell a Story of Another Survivor or Character

In the following plays, Anne Frank's story is not central to the play, yet her name is used in the title as a form of name recognition. In these works, Anne is simply a device, or a way to pique the interest of the audience due to her familiar name.

***Anne Frank & Me* by Cherie Bennett**

The most pedantic and problematic of these plays is *Anne Frank & Me* by Cherie Bennett. Meant to bring "the message" of the Holocaust to a younger generation, Bennett's play is instead fraught with historical inaccuracies in a desperate attempt to include Anne Frank's narrative within the story. This play was published by the Dramatic Publishing Company, which was commissioned by the Shalom Theatre in Nashville, Tennessee. Despite its strong inaccuracies and weak writing and narrative, it has been produced professionally and even won an award for Best Play of the Season in Nashville, Tennessee in 1995. At the time of the writing of this thesis, it is still being produced throughout the United States, typically at the middle school and high school levels.

³³³ *Ibid*, p. 23.

Despite its name, *Anne Frank & Me* has little to do with Anne Frank, though she does make an appearance. The story, which utilizes almost all of the theatrical tropes, reads as though it is written by a student in an amateur playwriting class, not a seasoned professional.

Anne Frank & Me begins in modern day America where a young girl named Nicole is discussing her school assignment to read *The Diary of Anne Frank*. The child of Holocaust-deniers, Nicole tells her friends that the diary may actually have been made-up or written by someone else entirely. Two of the other children in Nicole's class purport that Anne Frank never existed and one states that the idea that Jews were gassed at Auschwitz was a total myth.

As the play moves on, Nicole finds herself at the freshman dance with her crush (she purports to her friends in a scene that if she were more like Anne Frank, who was a hero, then perhaps her love interest would like her back³³⁴) where she loses consciousness and is transported into another time and place. When she wakes up, she has assumed the identity of another Nicole: this time a young Jewish girl her age living in Paris in 1942 on the eve of the Vel d'Hiv. The play continues to utilize the amnesia trope as Nicole thinks she is still an American girl living in modern times until those around her slowly convince her she is, in fact, a Parisian Jew (presumably her parents were born in France as although the Vel d'Hiv is mentioned, there is no reaction to it as though it is happening, instead it is an afterthought).

Presumably, Nicole lives out the "dream" for two whole years. In 1944, her "dream family" and Nicole go into hiding. By June, they are discovered and sent to Drancy, the transit camp that held French Jews awaiting their deportation. Nicole and her family are sent on the very last transport from Drancy to Auschwitz, which actually took place on July 31st (with an arrival date of August 3),³³⁵ though the play states

³³⁴ Bennett, C. 1995: *Anne Frank & Me*. Woodstock, Illinois: The Dramatic Publishing Company. p. 26.

³³⁵ Das Bundesarchiv. 3 February 2015. *Chronology of Deportations from France*. 3 Retrieved from

that they are on their way to Auschwitz on August 20th. The train then stops in Westerbork on September 3, 1944 to “pick up” those from the transit camp. Although trains may have slowed down considerably by the end of the war due to bombing of the tracks, records indicate that the train ride from Drancy to Auschwitz took two days in 1942 and extended to four days by 1944. There is no evidence of a train that took over two weeks (the character of Nicole states that it took them seventeen days to travel from Paris to Westerbork), or of a train that stopped somewhere else to pick up passengers.³³⁶

At Westerbork, predictably, Anne Frank boards the fateful train containing Nicole and her family. A flood of memories rush back to Nicole, who then tells Anne that she remembers having read her diary, which is news to Anne. The pair share a moment in which they dream of all of the unfulfilled wishes that Anne discussed in her diary: living abroad, dating a variety of men, traveling and even going to Palestine. The girls then hum the Hatikva, which is the national anthem of modern Israel and a historic Zionist song.

Although Anne is only in the play for a short amount of time and the play is not approved by The Fonds, Bennett still makes room to continue to portray Anne as the ultimate optimist, even after her days in Westerbork and on her way to Auschwitz. As the girls sit together in the cattle car, they have the following exchange:

NICOLE: Do you think God is watching us, right now?

ANNE: Yes.

NICOLE: Someone told me God must be on vacation. Maybe there is no God. Maybe we made Him up so we wouldn't all just go crazy.

<http://www.bundesarchiv.de/gedenkbuch/chronicles.html.en?page=3>. 3 July 2015.

³³⁶ *Ibid.*

ANNE: I don't believe that.

NICOLE: Then nothing makes any sense.....So I really want to know, where is God now?

ANNE: Right here, right beside us.

NICOLE (*bitterly*): We're in a cattle car.

ANNE: (*pointing up to the tiny window.*) But we can still see the stars.³³⁷

During the scene in the cattle car, Anne also tells Nicole as they dream of their lives after the war, "Everything is possible, don't you see?"³³⁸

When the girls and the other characters arrive in Auschwitz, they are immediately sentenced to death in the gas chambers, which is completely historically inaccurate. Before they die, the girls cling to one another singing the Shema Yisrael prayer, one of the cornerstones of Judaism that states that there is only one God. This seems particularly out of place considering that Anne was not very religious, though it is impossible to know what Anne truly spoke of in her very last moments.

When Nicole wakes up back in her modern life, she tells her friends and family, who are all gathered around her that Auschwitz and the Holocaust were real. She says she was in Auschwitz with Anne Frank and her friend incorrectly tells her that Anne was never at Auschwitz, but correctly states that Anne died from typhus at Bergen-Belsen.³³⁹ In her hospital bed, Nicole tells those around her that she is, indeed, a witness to the Holocaust and no one can tell her that it never happened. The play ends with her younger sister playing Hatikva on the recorder.³⁴⁰

³³⁷ Bennett, C. 1995: *Anne Frank & Me*. Woodstock, Illinois: The Dramatic Publishing Company. p. 76.

³³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 77.

³³⁹ *Ibid*, p. 81.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid*.

The play uses Anne Frank as a device in order to spread “the message” of the Holocaust in order to educate students, even though it is rife with historical errors. Despite Bennett’s aim to spread awareness about the Holocaust, her “historical notes” even contain errors. Bennett states that a convoy of Jews was sent to Auschwitz on August 17, 1944 (assumingly when her characters were supposed to be on the train), however there is no evidence to support this.³⁴¹ Instead, a convoy carrying 51 people left from Drancy to Buchenwald on that same date, significantly fewer than the past transports from Drancy that carried over a thousand people at a time.³⁴²

Bennett states in a portion at the end of the published version of the play, “For a play about history, accuracy is important. Insofar as possible, we tried to adhere to historical fact in creating this story....The dates of the final transport from Drancy and Anne Frank’s transport from Westerbork are accurate.”³⁴³ Bennett also correctly states that trains never made stops to pick up deportees in other countries and that Anne Frank did not die in Auschwitz.

Despite the contrived nature of this play, and its endless tropes, there is no real reason why Anne Frank needed to be included in it. It does not really explore much of Anne’s character and does not artistically express any facets of her situation and personality. Instead it plays into the trope of Anne’s eternal optimism and seemingly uses her as a “recognized name” so that more people would be interested in the play. The playwright seemed much more interested in the Holocaust as it took place in France, but evidently felt that adding Anne Frank’s name to the title and shoehorning her into the play would somehow add meaning for the audience. Instead, it comes across as sloppy and amateurish. This play adds very little to the canon on theatre about Anne Frank, but is none the less important as it shows the insistence of speaking about her and her memory.

³⁴¹ Bennett, C. 1995: *Anne Frank & Me*. Woodstock, Illinois: The Dramatic Publishing Company. p. 86.

³⁴² Das Bundesarchiv. 3 February 2015. *Chronology of Deportations from France*. 3 Retrieved from <http://www.bundesarchiv.de/gedenkbuch/chronicles.html.en?page=3>. 3 July 2015.

³⁴³ *Ibid*, p. 87.

And Then They Came For Me: Remembering the World of Anne Frank

Although *And Then They Came For Me: Remembering the World of Anne Frank* is not actually about Anne Frank, she is a looming figure in the production. Sometime after learning of his wife and daughters' fate, Otto Frank began to take comfort with another survivor by the name of Fritzi Geiringer. Before the war, Fritzi and Otto lived with their respective spouses and children on Merwedeplein, which was largely populated by middle-class Jewish refugees from Austria and Germany. Fritzi and Otto's relationship deepened over the shared loss of their immediate family (Fritzi had lost her son and husband in the Holocaust and was herself a survivor in Auschwitz) and in 1953, they wed.³⁴⁴

Fritzi's daughter, Eva, who was the same age as Anne, also survived the Holocaust. Although Eva and Anne were not extremely close, they did occasionally play together, attended school together and attended parties together for mutual friends. Before the war, Otto offered to help Eva adjust to life in Holland by inviting her over to the Frank's apartment to speak German. Eva states in her memoir *After Auschwitz* that she and Anne were very different and had the circumstances of their lives gone in a less tragic direction, their tenuous connection (mostly because they were both very good friends with a girl called Susanne Ledermann, whom Anne referred to as Sanne in her diary) would have been all but a distant memory. But because Eva's mother married Anne's father after the war, Anne became a constant shadow looming over Eva's life and the person often asked about when speaking about her own experiences in the Holocaust.³⁴⁵

³⁴⁴ Anne Frank Huis. 1953-1954. No Date. Retrieved from <http://www.annefrank.org/en/Subsites/Timeline/Postwar-period-1945--present-day/The-diary-is-published/1953/Otto-Frank-marries-former-neighbour-and-fellow-Auschwitz-survivor-Elfriede-Geiringer-in-Amsterdam-on-10-November-1953/#!/en/Subsites/Timeline/Postwar-period-1945--present-day/The-diary-is-published/1953/Otto-Frank-marries-former-neighbour-and-fellow-Auschwitz-survivor-Elfriede-Geiringer-in-Amsterdam-on-10-November-1953/>. 11 July 2015.

³⁴⁵ Schloss, E. and Bartlett, K. 2013: *After Auschwitz*. London: Hodder & Stoughton. pp. 61-65.

In the mid-90s, George Street Playhouse in New Jersey decided they would like to create a new piece of theatre to teach about the Holocaust. They settled on creating a play with a focus on Anne Frank, however this time they focused on those around her instead of Anne herself. *And Then They Came For Me: Remembering the World of Anne Frank* utilizes multi-media (interviews with Eva Schloss, Eva Geiringer's married name, and Ed Silverberg serve as narration which the actors play off of) and live actors to tell Eva's remarkable story of surviving the Holocaust along with the story of Ed "Hello" Silberberg (now Ed Silverberg). Hello Silberberg was a boy who had developed a crush on Anne and attempted to court her, which is mentioned in the early days of Anne's diary. Again, like *Anne Frank & Me*, Anne is portrayed in the play, but her involvement is minimal, despite the fact that the play utilizes her name in its title. While those portrayed in the production actually had more of a connection with Anne than the contrived connection in *Anne Frank & Me*, it almost takes away from their magnificent stories of survival that are not-so-vaguely overshadowed by the ghost of Anne's presence. It clearly shows that Anne's story is at least thought to be much more intriguing than that of her classmates or that people would not want to see the play without Anne's involvement, otherwise the play would not have added Anne's name in its title.

Eva speaks in her memoir about the ghost of Anne being forever present in their lives after the war and sometimes even taking precedent over her own relationship with her mother. When Eva's daughters were small, they felt the house Otto and Fritzi lived in was "spooky" and "haunted by Anne."³⁴⁶ Although *And Then They Came For Me* has been performed all over the world, often with Eva or Ed as the guest or guests of honor, it is still apparent that the play is another way in which Anne's ghost looms over Eva (and perhaps Ed to a lesser extent). In the mind of the public, Anne's story will always be the most fascinating, and the most important and therefore receives top billing in the title, leaving out the names of the two people in which the play actually chronicles.

³⁴⁶ *Ibid*, p. 245.

Plays About Meyer Levin's Work

Meyer Levin, who may be remembered from subsequent chapters, was a man obsessed with creating the “perfect” narrative about Anne Frank and even engaged in a legal battle with Otto Frank in order to create an “authentic” piece of theatre about Anne. His personal obsession, however, gives way to the cultural obsession that has pervaded Anne since the publication of her diary in the following plays. While these plays explore how Levin's obsession with Anne took over his life and ruined his marriage, they also explore how our public obsession with Anne as the “perfect Holocaust victim” and saint or martyr impacts the way she is seen in society at large. This is most apparent in Rinne Groff's piece.

***Compulsion or The House Behind* by Rinne Groff**

Compulsion or The House Behind by Rinne Groff was published in 2011 and follows the Meyer Levin saga and his desperate attempts to write the theatrical version of the diary. Although it may appear on the surface a peripheral play that includes Anne Frank, it is actually a rather poignant theatrical piece that deals with themes such as obsession, twisting the narratives of Holocaust survivors and victims for someone's own personal gain or expectations and the ultimate question that is asked again and again, “Who owns Anne Frank?”

The play follows a man named Mr. Silver, who is, no doubt, a representation of Meyer Levin (Groff confirms this in the production notes³⁴⁷). Whether coincidentally or purposeful (there is no cross mention of the productions), the play, like *Anne Frank: Within and Without*, presents Anne as a puppet, though she is specifically a marionette in *Compulsion*, which represents her constant presence in Silver's mind.

³⁴⁷ Groff, R. 2011: *Compulsion or The House Behind*. New York: Dramatists Play Service. p. 3.

The play begins with a marionette of Anne Frank writing in her diary while an actress paraphrases Anne Frank's most famous diary entry: the July 15, 1944 entry in which she states she believes people are still good at heart. After the actress finishes the mini-monologue, the puppet takes a beat and then looks at the audience before an actress says, "I shouldn't have told you that. I shouldn't tell you anything from my diary really because I don't hold copyright. Especially not when quoting material in a play. In the theatre! You've got to be very careful what you say in the theatre. It can lead to litigation."³⁴⁸ This quote, whether intended to or not, already begs the question to the audience, "Who owns Anne Frank?"

The play, based heavily on Levin's writing, skews in favour of Levin and portrays him as more or less a sympathetic character who has become caught up in his obsession with Anne's diary and spreading her "message" to the world. Although more from Levin (or his character Sid Silver)'s point of view, the play itself watches like several vignettes in Levin's fight with Otto Frank and his passion, persistence and desperation is absolutely palpable. While Levin (Silver) is portrayed as a sympathetic character, it is clear to the audience that his obsession with Anne has, at some point, impaired his ability to reason and destroyed many of his relationships, namely that of his working relationship with Otto Frank and his own marriage. The marionette of Anne onstage constantly represents her constant presence in Silver's mind and, at large, her constant presence in current Holocaust remembrance.

It can be argued that Levin's obsession with Anne Frank perhaps rivals the obsession many people feel with Holocaust remembrance. The sentiment that somehow educating about Anne Frank will contribute to the rhetoric that education makes it more likely for the Holocaust to never occur again.

Compulsion also explores, through Levin-cum-Silver's obsession the way Anne Frank speaks to each person through her diary and subsequent films and plays. It is clear through the dramatic success of the diary and the multitude of letters Otto Frank received about his daughter up to the time of his death that although he had

³⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p.7.

a specific vision for how Anne was to be portrayed, her words have touched everyone differently. This is partly why there are so many artistic projects devoted to Anne and her words, but it also means that without knowing Anne, some people (like Levin) feel that they understand Anne in a way that no one else does. Silver says in the play when speaking to an assistant at Doubleday who found herself getting emotional over the diary after reading it, "Think of Anne Frank. What in the world should we trust more than her true heart?"³⁴⁹

As previously discussed in this thesis, Levin was particularly concerned that his adaption of Anne's diary feature many central themes of Judaism despite the fact that Anne and her father were much more secular than Margot and Edith Frank. Believing his interpretation of Anne's voice was the right one, the character of Silver criticizes the universalizing of Anne's story and her ultimate message, which has been a point of contention for scholars studying the diary for a long time. Anne's diary, however, was not devoid of references to her Jewish identity, and in a monologue, Silver pleads with the young Doubleday assistant (Mermin) to see that his voice of Anne's is more authentic than her own father's changes and redactions he made to her diary or his involvement in the play in the following scene:

SILVER: Anne's words: "We will always remain Jews and we want to, too." I can quote it by heart: "Right through the ages there have been Jews, and through all the ages, we've had to suffer. But that is what has made us strong. And one day if we live through this, and if there are still Jews left when it is over, we will be held up as an example from which all other peoples will learn good." It's in the diary. Not in the play. They cut it when they made their play. Called it "an embarrassing piece of special pleading." They twisted her words and replaced them with talk about how everybody suffers sometimes. "Sometimes one race suffers, sometimes another." They wiped away her identification with the Jewish people. Her identity. They use the word "race." Insult to injury. It's the Nazis who called the Jews a race. Not Anne. Never Anne. But that revisionism is over now. Now the real

³⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p. 13.

Anne can live again on the stage and in this film they're planning. Live again.
Am Yisrael Chai.

MERMIN: Otto approved all the dialogue revisions that went into the stage play.

SILVER: He had no right to.

MERMIN: He had exactly the right to. The legal right.³⁵⁰

As Silver's marriage denigrates over the course of the play, largely due to his obsession with Anne Frank, Anne the marionette comes to visit Mrs. Silver. Anne speaks posthumously, with the awareness that she is already dead and discusses her legacy with Mrs. Silver. She muses over the fact perhaps more famous and successful in death than she could have ever been in life, despite the fact that people purport that they wish Anne had lived.

ANNE FRANK: I wish I was older.

MRS. SILVER: We all do.

ANNE FRANK: You wish you were older, too?

MRS. SILVER: No, you. That you had lived.

ANNE FRANK: Nah, everybody likes me better dead. It's depressing.³⁵¹

Groff is perhaps trying to assert that only in death, can Anne's words be twisted and manipulated in order to serve the reader in their own selfish interest. Anne's words have ceased to become hers, but rather are owned by a myriad of people who each take away something different from her text. Without a living Anne to

³⁵⁰ *Ibid*, p. 35

³⁵¹ *Ibid*, p. 44.

contextualize the diary, we are left to our own devices, which is perhaps more convenient for those who wish to mold her words for their own devices.

As the conversation continues, Anne tells Mrs. Silver that she can never really express the way she felt in those last days. Although in this following conversation, she says that she would rather keep it private, it symbolizes that after her diary ended, we cannot assume that it was the same Anne with the indomitable optimistic spirit who died at Bergen-Belsen. Since Anne did not live to tell the story of her last days, her private feelings are actually just that, now closed off and private. Groff asserts in Anne's dialogue that even though Levin perhaps thought he knew the true Anne, he was still unable to grasp some of Anne's most intimate and tragic moments.

(The first line of this conversation refers to the letters Meyer Levin sent to Otto Frank calling him a traitor and Levin's own personal Hitler in anger that he would not allow him to publish Anne's work as Levin saw fit, which is addressed earlier in the play:)

ANNE FRANK: But what about for me? And for my father, too. His pain. The things your husband said to him. So cruel. I see my father's dreams. To this day, torment.

MRS. SILVER: I can imagine.

ANNE FRANK: You can't imagine. How could you imagine? He made it home only to learn, one by one, how every person in his family had been murdered. He tracked someone down who had seen me in the camps. She told him what I looked like in the end: starving to death, naked, covered in lice. She told him what I said: "Everyone is dead. I'm all alone now." But Daddy wasn't dead. He was even at that moment trying with every part of his being to make it back to his little daughter. To find her and kiss her again. To hold her in his lap and kiss her. The smell of her hair. His precious

Anne, his firecracker. But he will never hold her again for all the days of his life. She is gone forever, and nothing can bring her back. (*Silence*)

MRS. SILVER: Why do you do that?

ANNE FRANK: What?

MRS. SILVER: Talk about what he felt. Not how you felt.

ANNE FRANK: Some things are private. Don't you know that? You will never know what I felt in those last days. Never.³⁵²

Groff also approaches the theme of Anne as a saint or martyr, an untouchable figure that no one can live up to. Although *Anne Frank & Me* clumsily does this when the characters refer to Anne Frank as a hero, Groff's *Compulsion* is much more poignant. In the climax of the play, Silver asserts that no matter what he accomplishes in life, it can never measure up to the influence and enormity of Anne's work. The character's breakdown of this realization negates the fact that Anne was a normal girl with a talent for writing who was placed in an extraordinary circumstance, and thus it is almost impossible for most people to achieve the same cultural influence that Anne Frank's legacy has garnered.

SILVER: My situation, meaning I'm nowhere near as good a writer as she was.

MRS. SILVER: She was a kid who kept a diary.

SILVER: And still nothing I've written approaches her accomplishment.

MRS. SILVER: You want me to say you're a better writer than Anne Frank? Or a better Jew? Who in the hell can be better than Anne Frank?³⁵³

³⁵² *Ibid*, pp. 45-46.

³⁵³ *Ibid*, p. 54.

Mrs. Silver's line, "Who in the hell can be better than Anne Frank?" epitomizes the cultural martyrdom Anne Frank has achieved not just in Levin/Silver's mind, but in the minds of many of her readers. No one can compete with a Holocaust victim, particularly one who has come to be a household name years after her premature death.

Although the play is slickly written with incredibly inventive devices to speak to Levin's obsession and Anne's legacy, it is problematic in one aspect. Despite Anne discussing with Mrs. Silver her last days and that no one can ever know how she felt, the play does end on the same note and in a similar manner to the Goodrich and Hackett version of *The Diary of Anne Frank*. Although this is likely done intentionally, it still perpetuates the problematic idea that Anne was eternally optimistic up until the end, and if she could speak now, her words would continue to be so.

In the last scene, Silver confesses to Anne that he has always been in love with her before the line is reiterated in the following dialogue:

ANNE FRANK: Do you think you're an example?

SILVER: An example of what?

ANNE FRANK: I'm surprised at you. You said before that you could quote it by heart. "If we live through this, and if there are still Jews left when it is over, we will be held up as an example from which all other peoples will learn good." Do you think you're an example?

SILVER: You put me to shame.

ANNE FRANK: Oh, that's what all the boys say. (*The Silver marionette reaches for the Anne marionette.*)

SILVER: Anne....

ANNE FRANK: (*Calming him.*) Shhhh. (*She sits by his side.*) You want to hear something really crazy? In spite of everything, I still believe that people are really good at heart.³⁵⁴

Of course, Silver's line mirrors Otto's final line in the original theatrical version in which he asserts that the optimism of his daughter puts him to shame. Although the play is based almost entirely on Levin's works, it still provides an insight into how Anne Frank is viewed, both in the 1950s and in a way, in today's view as the Rinne Groff's play was not published until 2011.

***The Idealist* by Jennifer Strome**

Jennifer Strome's play *The Idealist* is similar in nature to the play *Compulsion*, however it is far more straightforward. Based on Meyer Levin's struggle to protect the voice of Anne Frank, Strome worked closely with Levin's widow, his children and Buddy Elias to bring the story to life in the truest way possible. The play begins with Levin's time in Europe when as a soldier in the US army; he was one of the forces liberating the concentration camp of Buchenwald. This event cemented his feelings that he "knew" his play was the true voice of Anne Frank. While this play is worthwhile to discuss in the context of Meyer Levin, it is not as much so in the context of this thesis. The play simply reiterates Meyer's obsessive drive to make Anne's story his own, but does not add much to the conversation of how Anne is portrayed in the theatre. Whilst there are photos of Anne in the play at times and Otto Frank makes an appearance, Anne herself is only a character very briefly.³⁵⁵

³⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p. 59.

³⁵⁵ Playbill.com. 13 December 2010. *New Play The Idealist Promises Factual Account of Meyer Levin's Anne Frank Dream*. Retrieved from <http://www.playbill.com/news/article/new-play-the-idealist-promises-factual-account-of-meyer-levins-anne-frank-d-174402>. 12 July 2015.

Anne makes an appearance only in voice to Meyer during a dream sequence. Like most other plays that feature Anne not as a main character but a thematic element, Anne speaks with carefully chosen wise and sage words. She tells Levin that he cannot continue to seek “truth in an imperfect world” and chastises Levin and the Goodrich and Hackett team for their “inconsiderate” portrayal of Dussel/Dr. Pfeffer. She then tells him that neither he nor anyone else had the right to write about her life and the suffering she felt toward the end (which she categorizes as the same as millions of others) and implores Levin to instead write about the living. The living, she says, are the only people who can inspire change.³⁵⁶ While Anne speaks from the grave, once again, as a wise posthumous spirit, one of the major points of the play seems to be that Otto Frank was misguided in his attempts to create a play truthful to Anne’s diary and the character of Otto states that he was unhappy with the Goodrich and Hackett version, even though in reality, he worked closely with the pair as stated in the second chapter.³⁵⁷

It is clear that Anne Frank has captured the imaginations of playwrights and artists so incredibly that she continues to make appearances in production after production as they make attempts to understand the Holocaust. Anne, it seems, is rarely portrayed in these secondary productions as the carefree child or studious young woman that she was (apart from *Anne Frank: With and Without* and *The Dreams of Anne Frank*), but instead often appears with wise words from beyond the grave. Anne also comes with the task of teaching “us,” or the audience, a lesson about hatred and intolerance and often seems to challenge the audience to fight it after they have left the theatre.

This play’s script was also unavailable to read, even though a performance appears online in its entirety. Perhaps because of its close association with Buddy Elias, Jennifer Strome was also hesitant to give an interview on the piece, and only on the condition that she could approve her section before the publication. Because *The*

³⁵⁶ Livestream. February 2011. *The Idealist Reading Part II*. Retrieved from http://original.livestream.com/theidealist/video?clipId=pla_c6208010-5eee-4396-87b2-eccabc0fdc6b&utm_source=lslibrary&utm_medium=ui-thumb. 12 July 2015.

³⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

Idealist is neither published, performed often nor an influence in the public sphere (and not dealing directly with Anne Frank), I have made the decision not to interview Jennifer Strome.

Anne as a Symbol of Good in a World of Evil

Anne Frank is frequently seen in society as the ultimate victim, a voice of optimism or a light in the unending darkness of genocide. As such, and as discussed previously, her worlds are sometimes paired with that of Martin Luther King, jr., Gandhi or other Civil Rights Advocates. In the following play, however, Anne is used as a symbol of good squashed by evil, but juxtaposed with an American child who was murdered 10 years after Anne's death. Emmett Till, like Anne, remains forever a child whose eternal light was blown out by hate, but continues to shine on as a symbol of hope and resilience.

***Anne and Emmett* by Janet Langhart Cohen**

Anne and Emmett is a one-act play that takes place in Memory, a fictional place that exists after death. As mentioned previously in the chapter, the dialogue in the play is between Emmett Till, the 14-year-old boy whose brutal murder in 1955 helped spur the Civil Rights Movement in the United States, and Anne Frank. It is, in essence, a play about two young people whose lives were tragically cut short and have achieved posthumous fame—and who have both achieved a somewhat saint-like or martyr status.

Since 2007, the play has been performed over thirty times to date, mostly in the United States (on the East Coast, specifically), though it has also been performed in Jerusalem.

Like many of the plays before it about Anne, *Anne and Emmett* again makes it very clear that the production is meant to help stop racism and genocide. Written by Janet Langhart Cohen, who was once active in the Civil Rights Movement herself, the play is backed by many people of distinctly high profile. Cohen appeared on the

Mike Huckabee show to discuss *Anne and Emmett* in addition to appearing on C-SPAN and Fox to promote the show, two highly watched channels in the United States.

The trailer for the play is narrated by well-known actor Morgan Freeman, and in it, he discusses his hope for a better future with the following words:

The struggle between good and evil has been with us a long time, and it's not likely to be going away any time soon. But I like to think that if we remember the past, and some of the truly evil things we have failed to stop...well, maybe the good in us has a decent chance to survive.....Imagine Anne and Emmett meeting in a place called Memory. What might they say to each other? Would they have anything in common to share or have any lessons for us? What happens if we don't listen to their voices? Are we doomed simply to repeat the past? What if we don't even remember them?³⁵⁸

Again, the message of the play is given to the audience before they've even seen or read the text: that Anne's words or a conversation between two teenagers whose lives were abruptly ended, could somehow change the face of racism or stop genocide. When perusing the list of places Anne and Emmett has performed, including the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), it begs the question whether or not this play (or any play about the Holocaust with grand plans to help end genocide) is instead "preaching to the choir." Sadly, it is apparent from the YouTube page used to host the trailer with Morgan Freeman that it has become a target for commenters and online "trolls" for anti-Semitic and racist attacks.³⁵⁹ The play itself was also postponed when performed at the USHMM because of the shooting of a guard that took place there on June 10, 2009. At the time of publication of this thesis, a script was unavailable to the general public.

³⁵⁸ Anne and Emmett. *Media Center*. No Date. Retrieved from <http://anneandemmett.com/media-page>. 11 July 2015.

³⁵⁹ YouTube. 21 August 2011. *Anne and Emmett Trailer*. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S1fVs-Bj06k>. 12 July 2015.

Anne as a Conduit for the Author's Family Life

Although it may not seem apparent to put these two plays together, when speaking with both authors, it becomes rather easy to see why they belong in a category together. While Samuel Chang's *The Girl in the Window* deals with Anne's memory at large and in a wider societal construct and *After Anne Frank* deals with personal memories and an imaginary relationship to Anne through her words, both of these projects were spurred by the exploration of dark family pasts. During my interview with Samuel Chang, he revealed to me that his impetus for creating the play and his reasoning behind exploring the memory of Anne Frank was after hearing about the horrors his grandmother experienced in her childhood in Korea. While the play speaks to important questions of Anne's memory in society at large, the play was originally created due to the author's quest to deepen his understanding of family tragedy.

After Anne Frank, likewise, was created for many reasons, but notably because several of Carol Lempert's family members survived the Holocaust and were silent on the matter. Again, using Anne's words and her relationship with them helped her explore her own feelings about her family's past while utilizing Anne herself.

***The Girl in the Window* by Samuel Chang**

The Girl in the Window by Samuel Chang is a multimedia one-act play that was first performed at the Hamilton Fringe Festival in 2012 near Toronto, Canada. The title of the play is inspired by the only existing film footage of Anne Frank, a silent and brief clip dated July 22, 1941, a year before the Frank family went into hiding. In the clip, Anne leans out of the window of her flat at Merwedeplein 37 to get a look at a bride and groom, the bride having lived in the flat next door to the Franks. Although there are several onlookers to the festivities from the building, Anne is focused on for a few seconds as she smiles at the couple and then looks back at

someone in her house. This is believed to be the only surviving moving image of Anne.³⁶⁰

Chang's play, like *The Dreams of Anne Frank*, utilizes several theatrical devices such as dance, video, images and music to interweave fantasy and reality into the play. However, Chang's version is not simply a re-telling of Anne's story, nor is it a deeper look into Anne herself. Instead, Chang's script focuses on the modern memorialization begs the question, "What would Anne think if she could see her legacy as it stands now?" The question is posed to the audience not subtly, but directly, as thirty seconds into the trailer for the play, a narrator asks the viewer, "What would she think if she could see it now?"³⁶¹

The play follows a director named Hal who is directing a production of *The Diary of Anne Frank*. Frustrated with his lead actress' portrayal of Anne, Hal immediately makes it known to the audience that feels there is an authentic side to Anne that he has in his head (but we are not privy to why he feels the Anne in his head is the most authentic Anne), but the lead actress is unable to convey her in the way he sees fit.

After a brief first scene in which his lead actress, Michelle, is unable to deliver Anne's lines properly, Hal addresses the audience in the following monologue discussing his struggle to find Anne's authenticity:

HAL: What would she think, if she could see it now? Would she be angry? Would she go through every single minute of the show, go through every detail of the script? These things that I can't possibly imagine, her heart's thoughts from awakening until bedtime. Would she fill in the missing parts? Give me lines of dialogue, the really important conversations she overheard

³⁶⁰ YouTube-Anne Frank House. 23 September 2009. *Anne Frank: The only existing film images*. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4hvtXu05GzU>. 4 October 2015.

³⁶¹ YouTube-Cross Culture Productions. 3 July 2012. *The Girl in the Window—Official Trailer*. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HHC63lSLVpo>. 4 October 2015.

between her father and mother. Would she tell me how it really felt to trust a frail bookshelf hiding them and give them the only place of safety? This play goes on in less than a week. I've gotten into such a tangle of a creation that I don't even recognize what I've made anymore. It's fallen out of touch with me. I've fallen so far from my promise to put only the truth about Anne on stage. With every line, every direction I give, it's only taken me farther away from her. If I could, I would make a play that would last one second, if that second was the truest sight of Anne that anyone would ever see. And I started it, and it's only fair that I owe her that much. There has to be another way.³⁶²

This question, which Chang is imposing on the audience, although quite heavy-handedly, is one that all artists who have attempted to capture Anne's spirit have seemed to grapple with. In all writings about Anne, there seems to be a desire to capture her authentic spirit, an elusive and impossible task by those who know her only through her diaries. As such, what emerges is the artist's own interpretation of her authentic self, which changes with each artist. Although the Anne Frank Fonds has worked to secure one portrait of Anne, it is clear that this is not only not accepted, but is felt by other artists and scholars as not completely authentic. Thus, art works are continued to be made about Anne, and all seem to grapple with the core question of Chang's play.

Although the question of Chang's play is overt and heavy handed, the rest of the play lends itself to a much more nuanced and subtle piece. This is especially considering that Hal time travels to August 4, 1944 where he meets Anne in the Annex. She mistakes him for another member of the Secret Annex. Since August 4, 1944 is the day the Frank family is arrested, Hal decides to take Anne away so that she can avoid her fate. The two of them sit in a field in Holland while Anne begs to be taken back to her family. Finally, Hal acquiesces and tells Anne that if he takes her back, she will not survive the war, but that is the way things are supposed to be:

³⁶² Chang, S. 2012. *The Girl in the Window*. Unpublished.

ANNE: My family needs me. I need them. Just take me home.

HAL: Anne.

ANNE: Take me home. Please.

HAL: *(beat)* Okay. *(Hal closes his eyes and the field slowly transitions into Anne's room)*

HAL: I have something to confess.

ANNE: What is it?

HAL: *(beat)* They find you. And they take you... and-- *(overcome with grief)*

ANNE: But you said I live. You told me I live.

HAL: I thought I could change everything. I was wrong to put you through this.

ANNE: Am I alone when it all happens?

HAL: *(beat)* No, you're with Margot, right until the end.

ANNE: I don't want to be alone for that. What about my parents? *(beat)*

HAL: Your father gets it.

ANNE: Gets what? Gets what Hal!?

HAL: Kitty. And he gets it published not long after.

ANNE: And that's why you know so much about me.

HAL: I was fifteen years old the first time I read your book.

ANNE: Do people like it?

HAL: They love it.

ANNE: *(smiles) (The bookshelf violently opens.)*

HAL: There has to be something I can do–

ANNE: I want to dance.

HAL: What?

ANNE: I want to dance. Will you watch?

HAL: Okay.

ANNE: *(smiles) (Anne starts dancing – She stops while she is overcome with emotion - The two start dancing together – The Bookshelf opens and Anne realizes it is her time. She leaves Hal and goes through the bookshelf. The bookshelf closes and then the only existing footage of Anne Frank appears in the background. It fades to black.)*³⁶³

What sets this play apart from any other play that has been written about Anne so far (at least that I have been able to discover) is that it neither simply recounts Anne's story, nor spoon feeds the audience a "lesson in tolerance." Although it does, admittedly, ask the audience a question about the memorialization of Anne without much nuance, it is the only one that seems to ask these questions: Who is

³⁶³ *Ibid*

the authentic Anne? What would it be like if Anne had survived? Would her legacy be anywhere near the same had she lived? These are all questions that seem to pass through most people's minds as they read the diary or work on an art or theatrical piece about Anne, but it is rarely asked of an audience.

The Girl in the Window is worth a commentary in the thesis, not because it is a show that is produced all that often or even at well known stages (the Hamilton Fringe Festival in 2012 may well have been its only incarnation), but because it represents the fascination that still exists with capturing the "authentic" Anne Frank and portraying her story in the most "authentic" way possible. It also begs the question that many have wondered upon reading her diary, what would have happened if she had actually lived?

During the play, Hal has a vision of Anne as an adult woman in the form of a dancer, strong, beautiful and living to her full potential. As Hal tells Anne that she must die, despite having seen her as an accomplished full-grown woman in his dream, the audience must meditate on not only Anne's life having been ended far too soon, but all of the potential that was squashed during the Holocaust in children and teens like Anne.

Chang also answers the question of what Anne would think if she could see her legacy now as though Anne would find it positive. Although it may be fair to say that the teenage Anne who longed to be a famous writer or actress and live abroad would have likely been very pleased to hear that the book she had been furtively working on turned into the voice of her generation. However, like the famous "I believe people are good at heart," line, I believe we must also tread carefully when assigning Anne feelings on her legacy. If she had lived, her legacy might have been quite different. Because of her talent as a writer, she may have had her memoirs published and gone on to still be a voice of her generation, in a similar manner to Elie Wiesel, one of the most well-known memoirists to come out of the Holocaust. But like Wiesel, Anne would have had control over her narrative and both the theatrical and film adaptations, if there were to be any. The only way that the authentic Anne can be captured in an artistic expression is if she were somehow to

materialize. As that would never happen, artists are caught in the endless struggle of trying to portray Anne as accurately as possible, where there is no real answer to how to do that. Ultimately, those looking to do so will end up very artistically unsatisfied and feel that their work just doesn't live up to what it could be—similar to the feelings of Hal in *The Girl in the Window*.

Although the play seems not to have performed anywhere aside from the Fringe Festival in Hamilton, Ontario during the 2012 season, it did receive unanimously positive reviews, especially for its use of multimedia and combining music and dance to explore Anne's narrative. While the reviews were all positive, none really commented on the merit of the script or Chang's intention, but instead focused on things like the lighting, costumes and the actors' performances.³⁶⁴ Given the strength of the play and the positive reviews of the technical aspects of the show and the actors, it appears that the play was generally well received by those in attendance.

***After Anne Frank* by Carol Lempert**

After Anne Frank, like Salkind's work, is a smaller and less well known piece. Although it doesn't merit intense discussion, it is still worthy of note. The play was written in 2009 by actress Carol Lempert after reflecting on how many times she had portrayed a member of the Frank family in *The Diary of Anne Frank* on stage, and the number of roles she's taken in which her character is a Holocaust survivor. Inspired by this, and reflecting on the commercialization of the Holocaust, Lempert decided to pen this piece, which is written as a one woman show.

For Lempert, this piece is unapologetically one that seeks to "repair the world" through theatre. Although she doesn't necessarily state its intent to stop genocide from occurring in the future, she still considers it a necessary aspect of social action. Lempert writes of the play:

³⁶⁴ ArtWord. No date. *Hamilton Fringe Reviews 2012*. Retrieved from http://artword.net/Fringe_Reviews_2012/?cat=50. 5 October 2015.

I conceived of *After Anne Frank* in 2009 during the Jewish festival of Passover. There was intense discussion around my holiday table about the relationship between the story of the Exodus and the Holocaust.

The conversation then turned to the fact that I'd "played" many Holocaust survivors over the course of my acting career and we all realized, almost simultaneously, that this was a profound and disturbing way to make a living and that the 'Commercialization of the Holocaust' is a topic that should be further explored. As I began working on the play however, it took on a life of its own. I now see it as more than just a theatre piece. It's become my *Tikkun Olam*—the Jewish concept of healing the world.

My goal is for people to use the play as a jumping off point for audience discussion and reflection.³⁶⁵

The play doesn't just discuss Anne's story, however. Lempert's own uncle is a Holocaust survivor and his narrative is woven throughout the story as she discusses her experiences portraying survivors and rehearsing and performing in copious productions of *Anne Frank*. In this way, the story becomes much more personal for Lempert than simply recounting her time in various productions of *The Diary*. Although I would not consider this play as an important piece of literature about Anne Frank, I would consider it important in the context that it challenges the audience to think about the different issues our generation faces as we lose survivors, the commercialization of the Holocaust and the pitfalls and merits and using the story of Anne Frank as one of the most told and re-told Holocaust narratives.

Anne as Parody

There are many things that are thought of as taboo, and one of them is using the Holocaust as a conduit for comedy. However, a few have dared to do so, such as the popular television shows *South Park* and *Robot Chicken*. Betsy Salkind ventures to

³⁶⁵ Indie Theater Now. *After Anne Frank* by Carol Lempert: From the Author. Retrieved from <https://www.indietheaternow.com/Play/after-anne-frank>. 28 December 2015.

do so in her production, which seems to sit alone and away from any others who are perhaps afraid to touch this topic.

But while Salkind's work is meant to be a parody of Anne Frank and a comedy, she is more or less creating a biting satire of the way Anne is received in society, the way the Holocaust is memorialized and takes stabs at the way Hollywood portrays children and women. While on the surface the play might seem irreverent, it offers real insight into the way the Holocaust is remembered in a modern context, specifically in Jewish homes.

Anne Frank Superstar by Betsy Salkind

Anne Frank Superstar, by writer Betsy Salkind, brings an entirely new take on Anne. A one-woman comedy about the exploitation of Anne's image in the media, TheaterMania describes it as, "satire of a television industry that will go to any length for commercial success, even trivializing one of the most famous victims of the holocaust. Salkind imagines what would happen if the story of Anne Frank were to be developed as a sitcom, titled '*Let's Be Frank!*'"³⁶⁶

Salkind, who has been occasionally touring with the play for more than a decade, calls the play (in her own words) a "satire of Anne Franxploitation" and the lengths that the entertainment industry has gone to in order to use Anne Frank to further a personal, political or an entertainment agenda.³⁶⁷ The full name of the play is *Anne Frank Superstar: The Ethel Spiliotes Story*, as the play not only satirizes Anne Frank, but the entertainment industry in general, particularly the new phenomenon of finding talent through amateur YouTube videos.

Ten-year-old Ethel Spiliotes, awkward, irreverent and certainly far wiser than any other child her age, is "discovered" after making several successful vlog (video

³⁶⁶ TheaterMania. *Anne Frank Superstar*. No date. Retrieved from http://www.theatermania.com/off-off-broadway/shows/anne-frank-superstar_301152. 25 October 2015.

³⁶⁷ Betsy Salkind. *Anne Frank Superstar*. No date. Retrieved from <http://www.betsysalkind.com/anne-frank-superstar/>. 25 October 2015.

blogs) on YouTube. Assured of her success, NBC (the National Broadcasting Company, one of the biggest television networks in the United States) decides to develop a TV series around Esther. Fiona, the network exec, launches into a monologue about her ideas in creating the show:

FIONA: Anne Frank. Alright, hear me out. Anne Frank as a sitcom. She is one of the best brands out * there. The ultimate brand really... an Oscar-winning documentary, a two-episode arc on "Glee" - or was it "American Horror?" - anyway, one of those Ryan Murphy shows; there are even Anne Frank iPhone apps now, and a videogame in development. Get this, in her diary, Anne writes of her dream to go to Hollywood to become a movie star, only she spells it HOLY wood. So we would be giving Anne Frank her dream. Right, so the question is, "What is so funny about Anne Frank?" The situation. The set up. They're all locked in the same room. It's "Modern Family" meets "Big Brother." Well, it's really more like a younger "Seinfeld." The humor's about nothing. Just the little bullshit quirks of the day to day, background of the Holocaust... like seven people all sharing one bathroom, classic. And it's a totally relatable character; It's Elaine if she had been around during WWII. Anne Frank is the New Black!³⁶⁸

Ultimately, the pilot is written, starring a deaf comic as the wacky neighbor trope character, John Travolta as Otto Frank, an unnamed young looking actor in his mid-30s as Peter, brash American comic Rosie O'Donnell as Mrs. van Daan, Bobby Canavale, an Italian-American television actor far too young to play Dussel as Dussel, Georgia Engel, a very blonde American actress who is famous for her roles on television in the 1970s as Edith and Johnny Knoxville, a physical comedian known for his prank-style show, *Jackass*, as Kraler.

The network executives in question decide that they would like to set the sit-com in modern day, thus having the members of the Secret Annex hiding from squirrels instead of the Nazis. In what must be a satire of television networks in general (Salkind has a background writing for television), it is decided that advertisers like

³⁶⁸ Salkind, B. 2013 edition. *Anne Frank Superstar*. Unpublished. p. 8.

Volkswagen, with their Nazi past, would find a constant referral to the Nazis as both annoying and offensive.³⁶⁹

Instead of a diary, Anne uses a diary app on her iPad. The whole play is peppered with American sit-com style one-liners and sound effects of a laugh track. For example:

SFX: Sirens outside, then Mr. Dussel hocking a loogie.

ANNE: Mr. Dussel! This is such a nightmare!

MRS. FRANK: Oh, Annie. It's not so bad.

ANNE: Speak for yourself. I have to share my room with a DENTIST.

SFX: LAUGH TRACK

The play continues to satirize Hollywood's obsession with sexuality, which is often thrust on children, by Ethel stating that they dressed her up as a "JonBenet Ramsey/Honey Boo Boo type" and scheduled her for liposuction.

Anne Frank then appears to Ethel in a dream, which brings the comedic irreverence down a little and begins to spoon-feed the idea behind the play slightly to the audience. In the dream, Anne speaks to a Hollywood producer who tells her that although she has written the source material, she isn't the right "type" they were going for when it came to casting her in the role as herself. Because of this dream, Ethel launches into a monologue:

ETHEL: At first the nightmares were like that. Then Anne began to talk to me directly. She said she had been taken out of context, saying, "Despite everything I still believe people are good." She pointed out that she had written that before they killed her. And she was pissed about other things

³⁶⁹ *Ibid*, p. 9.

too: Like that horrible documentary, "Anne Frank Remembered," in which Glen Close did the voice of Anne. How could they possibly think that she might sound like a middle-aged Connecticut blue blood? And the ads for that movie said, "She was Hitler's most famous victim, but who was she really?" Gee, I don't know, maybe I should read her diary. Of course, even that was censored. So she touched another girl's breasts - big deal. Who hasn't? I begged them to stop production, but the show kept on, like the trains of Eastern Europe, hurtling toward a hideous end. I had to do something.³⁷⁰

Ethel then speaks very quickly of the destruction of young women in Hollywood under the pressure, such as Lindsay Lohan and Amanda Bynes, before finding herself in a bathroom doing drugs with Natalie Portman. Portman, who played Anne in the 1997 revival, becomes the embodiment of Anne for Ethel and tells her that something must be done to stop this bastardization of her memory. Although it isn't explicitly stated, it is possible that Natalie Portman substituting for Anne is an interpretation of the fact that history lessons are often replaced with television and movies and therefore to some, Portman may be the face of Anne Frank.

Ethen then decides to bomb Melrose, the iconic Los Angeles street. Although the bomb doesn't go off, she loses her deal and another show is put on in its place that she begrudgingly admits she is going to audition for. She finishes the show with a strange epilogue in which she dances in a squirrel costume, but not before saying to the audience:

ETHEL: But you know, despite everything, I still believe you people who came here tonight are good at heart.³⁷¹

The play not only satirizes the way Anne Frank is seemingly exploited or used as the poster child for genocide victims, but it also takes aim at Holocaust

³⁷⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 21-22.

³⁷¹ *Ibid*, p. 25.

remembrance in general. Ethel's character mocks the obsession modern Jews have on the Holocaust by telling the audience during her web series that because she studied at a Jewish Day School, she was subject to what she dubs "early childhood Holocaust education." Further criticizing this trend, she goes on to question whether it is appropriate to be teaching about the Holocaust to Jewish children when they are too young to fully understand the concept. As such, Ethel states that her education made her afraid of trains, showers and summer camp.³⁷²

Most Holocaust museums and memorial sites, including Auschwitz and relevantly, the Anne Frank House itself, have cafes that offer small plates of food to patrons. The morality of this is sometimes debated, and while some visitors may find it unsettling, it is clearly a trend that is the norm within the context of Holocaust Remembrance both in the United States and Europe. As such, the majority of these sites also boast gift shops that sell items ranging from jewellery to Judaica to academic books and memoirs on the Holocaust. Salkind pokes fun at both in one of Ethel's monologues about visiting the Holocaust Museum in DC:

ETHEL: I'm standing in line, and I'm right near the guards' desk, so I'm nervous enough, and people keep going up to the guard saying, "Excuse me, where's the cafe? Is the cafe open?" I'm like, "What the hell is your problem? This is the Holocaust Museum, you came here for a snack?!!" It turns out they do have a cafe. They take all your money at the door, and then let you fight over a piece of moldy schnitzel. And they have a gift shop too.³⁷³

Having visited Holocaust museums and memorials around the world, the satire of such a phenomenon is valid. However, when one looks at a place like Auschwitz or Westerbork, both of which have cafes and are both very far away from any other restaurants or facilities, it does make sense. People have likely come to make a day of the memorial and may find themselves hungry or thirsty. However, within places like the Los Angeles Museum of Tolerance, the Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York City or even the Anne Frank House itself, the purpose becomes less

³⁷² *Ibid*, pp. 3-4.

³⁷³ *Ibid*, p. 4.

clear. All three aforementioned are located in the middle of busy major cities; meaning guests may find refreshments very easily outside of the museum. When does it become about the well-being of the guests and cross over to capitalizing on the Holocaust?

Salkind further satirizes American culture in general, especially in regards to Anne Frank. Ethel discusses that someone named “Mrs. Horalek” wanted *The Diary of a Young Girl* to be banned when Ethel’s class was asked to read it. According to Ethel, Mrs. Horalek had asked for the banning of the book on the grounds that in the March 24, 1944 entry, Anne discusses the anatomy of her vagina in detail and the book is therefore, pornographic.³⁷⁴ This is part of a passage that was previously redacted by Otto Frank, but was placed back in the diary when all of its entries were restored.

This satire, however, isn’t too far from the truth, as in 2013 a Gail Horalek made headlines when she asked that the Detroit school her daughter attended pull the book from its curriculum on the grounds that it was sexually explicit material and therefore inappropriate for her 12-year-old daughter.³⁷⁵ Naturally, this created a media firestorm over the culture of the United States raising questions further reaching than Holocaust remembrance. For example, *The Guardian*’s Emer O’Toole questioned why the discussion of female anatomy must be deemed pornographic almost 70 years after the entry was written. O’Toole stated that this was clearly a reflection on the way society views females in general if the idea of simply describing a vagina was too “mature” for students who were close to the age Anne was herself when she wrote that entry.³⁷⁶ Additionally, it seems curious that those who oppose Anne Frank’s diary on the grounds of pornography do not object to their children learning about the Holocaust in general. The Holocaust itself, because of its extremely violent nature at the core, could be deemed unsuitable.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid*, p. 5.

³⁷⁵ O’Toole, Emer. 2 May 2013. *The Guardian*. *Anne Frank’s diary isn’t pornographic—it just reveals an uncomfortable truth*. Retrieved from <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/may/02/anne-franks-diary-pornographic-uncomfortable-truth>. 28 October 2015.

³⁷⁶ *Ibid*.

The violence the victims faced is not only much more offensive than the accurate description of a sexually maturing vagina, but it was also lethal—something a vagina surely is not.

Although the show toes the line in its offensiveness due to its satirical nature of Anne Frank, the reviews garnered of the show are not critical of the content, which Salkind states herself in an interview with *614 HBI eZine*, run by the Hadassah-Brandeis Institute. Although she states that she had warned people about the potential offensiveness of the show, no one had ever expressed that its contents made them angry. Salkind even joked that she would have loved to have had a protest outside the show for publicity, but the content, despite its irreverent humor, simply did not offend anyone enough to create public discord.³⁷⁷

However, the issue with Salkind's play may not be in its intent or irreverent humor, but perhaps because the show suffers from a lack of coherence. Although it touches on issues that are ever present in the dialogue of Anne Frank in film and theatre, it lacks a common thread to really pull it altogether. Instead, what is created, is a 45-minute whirlwind in which one overly mature preteen attempts to slap together and explain all of the ways in which Anne, and the Holocaust in general, has been exploited over the years.

The feeling of "too much at once" is also echoed by the *Vancouver Plays* reviewer Jerry Wasserman after a 2007 performance in Vancouver, Canada. Although this may be a response to an earlier incarnation of the play, the most current draft I have read seems fall along these lines. Wasserman says, "[Salkind] badly needs a dramaturg to help shape her shapeless material and trim the dross, and she desperately needs a new director...to help turn a ragged, intermittently funny sketch into a polished, potent, dangerous satire."³⁷⁸ There is certainly room for a

³⁷⁷ Salkind, Betsy. No Date. 614 HBI eZine. *Meet Stand Up Comic Betsy Salkind*. Retrieved from <http://614ezine.com/meet-stand-up-comic-betsy-salkind/>. 28 October 2015.

³⁷⁸ Wasserman, Jerry. February 2007. *Vancouver Plays*. *Anne Frank Superstar: The Ethel Spilotes Story*. Retrieved from

play like Salkind's within the canon of theatre about Anne Frank, as it certainly adds much needed dialogue. However, as Wasserman states, the play itself needs far more shaping up than Salkind has given it.

Going Forward: The Future of Anne Frank's Life on Stage

The aforementioned plays are only a small selection of theatre that exists about Anne Frank outside of the two "sanctioned" plays. If the discussion opened up to the mediums of film, dance and choral work, the list would be ever growing. Even just limiting ourselves to Anne in the theatre, the conversation is always continuing, as it is clear that Anne's story has been incredibly impactful upon many people. As such, there will continue to be artistic expressions of her diary, and it is expected that more plays will surface as time goes on. It seems that although Buddy Elias has now passed, battles with the Anne Frank Fonds in regard to creating plays about Anne Frank will be forever growing and forever fought.

It should be noted that the conclusion will deal with the most recent play approved by the Anne Frank Fonds. This play, entitled *Anne: The Diary of Anne Frank* written by Jessica Durlacher and Leon de Winter originally played from May 2014 through January 2016 in Amsterdam. It gathered enough media attention and controversy between the Anne Frank Fonds and Anne Frank House that it deserves to be covered much more extensively in a separate chapter. The conclusion of this thesis will discuss the most recent production and the future of Anne on stage in further detail.

http://www.vancouverplays.com/theatre/reviews_theatre/review_anne_frank_2007.shtml. 28 December 2015.



Figure 7: Puppets of Anne and Otto Frank in *Anne Frank: Within and Without*³⁷⁹

³⁷⁹ Allen, Nicola. Photosnack. 9 Feb. 2015. *Anne Frank Within and Without: Center for Puppetry Arts*. Retrieved from <http://www.photosnack.com/95DBE87D75E/anne-frank-within-without.html>. 31 July 2016.



Figure 8: Mandy Patinkin and the Anne marionette in 2010's *Compulsion*³⁸⁰

³⁸⁰ Yale Repertory Theatre. 29 Feb. 2010. *Compulsion* by Rinne Groff. Retrieved from http://www.yalerep.org/press/r_10/rep4/. 31 July 2016.



Figure 9: 2015 production of *Anne and Emmett*³⁸¹



Figure 10: 2014 production of *And Then They Came for Me: Remembering the World of Anne Frank*³⁸²

³⁸¹ Chen, W. Indy Star. 29 Aug. 2015. *Anne & Emmett is a Timely Play About Racism*. Retrieved from <http://www.indystar.com/story/life/2015/08/27/anne-emmett-timely-play-racism/32484931/>. 31 July 2016.



Figure 11: Stills from the trailer of *The Girl in the Window*³⁸³



³⁸²Rosing, Z. Nuvo: Indy's Alternative Voice. 21 January 2014. Retrieved from <http://www.nuvo.net/indianapolis/review-and-then-they-came-for-me-at-irt/Content?oid=2749056>. 31 July 2016.

³⁸³Cross Culture Productions. YouTube. 25 May 2012. *The Girl in the Window-Dancer in the Rain*. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xa-g471VDew>. 31 July 2016.

Figure 12: Betsy Salkind in *Anne Frank Superstar*³⁸⁴

³⁸⁴ Salkind, B. BetsySalkind.com. (n.d.) *About*. Retrieved from <http://www.betsysalkind.com/#about>. 31 July 2016.

Chapter Six: Case Studies on Productions of *The Diary of Anne Frank* by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett (and Wendy Kesselman)

The Diary of Anne Frank by Goodrich and Hackett is one of the most produced plays in the English language with regards to amateur and regional theatre. Since in the previous chapters, I have discussed all of the ways in which the academic community finds it incredibly problematic and the theatrical community finds it “stale” and “out-dated,” exploring why this play endures in popularity helps us further understand Anne’s legacy. In this chapter, I will be exploring four amateur productions of *The Diary of Anne Frank*, in the United Kingdom and the director and company’s motivation for choosing the work. I will also be exploring the perceived impact of the material on the cast members and those involved, as it is incredibly common for many to cite that the play profoundly impacted them.

The first analysis will likely be the longest, as many themes are repeated in the responses of cast members and directors alike.

In each analysis, I will not take much time commenting on the artistic merit of the production, as this has little impact on the results. Instead, I am interested in the impact this play, despite its obvious faults, has on cast and audience members and why the play is continually staged throughout the English speaking theatrical world.

One Off Productions—Portsmouth, United Kingdom Presented February 2013

One Off Productions presented their amateur production of *The Diary of Anne Frank* by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett updated by Wendy Kesselman in February of 2013 at the 1600 seat Kings Theatre in the Portsmouth city centre. Pam Lippiet directed the production, and her husband, David Lippiet, is the artistic

director of the company. David also portrayed the role of Otto Frank in the production.

When I first contacted David Lippiet about having One Off Productions participate in my thesis study, Lippiet was very enthusiastic, and proudly responded that the Anne Frank Trust UK was supportive of their production. Evidently, the Trust will send an official correspondence to anyone producing an official rendition of one of Anne's narratives giving the company their "blessing" for participating. The correspondence David received from the Anne Frank Trust was as follows (emphasis either David or the Trust, it is unclear from the correspondence):

The Anne Frank Trust UK is delighted to support this production of 'The Diary of Anne Frank' at the Kings Theatre, Portsmouth.

Anne Frank was one of 1.5 million Jewish children murdered by the Nazis during the Holocaust. With her life and inspirational message as our anchor, the Anne Frank Trust works in schools, prisons and communities, educating people about the damage caused by all forms of prejudice and discrimination, and empowering each individual to take a stand against it.

We hope that you will be moved and inspired by Anne's message today. To find out more about the work of the charity and to download a range of free educational resources, please visit www.annefrank.org.uk.

Thanks again, and we wish you the best of luck with your production,

Yours sincerely,

Gillian Walnes MBE

Executive Director & Co-Founder of The Anne Frank Trust UK³⁸⁵

It is interesting to note that the Anne Frank Trust UK promotes Anne in their official literature as having lead an inspirational life and extolling an inspirational message, despite the fact that we have well established that Anne's story was perhaps not extraordinary given the circumstance. Whilst the Holocaust can be counted as an extraordinary part of history, Anne's story is not that different from many other young women forced to hide from the Nazis. In fact, it can be argued that Anne and the fellow members of the Secret Annex lived in relative luxury before their arrest compared to those who found hiding spaces in barns or even in the sewers.

Additionally, as established in earlier chapters, Anne did not dedicate her life to social justice causes (which is perhaps an unfair thing to ascribe to her as she did not have the opportunity to become an adult) and her diary was merely her own musings. If Anne had survived and was either never arrested or survived her time in the camps and went on to publish her memoirs, it is not an outrageous assumption to make that she would have included some kind of message to her readers. This message, however, would have been through the lens of a survivor or having survived the camps and it may not have been inspirational as such. Again, the Anne Frank Trust UK plays on the need to ascribe an inspirational message to the narrative of Holocaust survivors and victims, when it need not be the case.

It is also interesting to note that although the Anne Frank Trust UK's programs may be "empowering each individual to take a stand against [prejudice and discrimination]," aside from a few diary entries in which Anne extols the virtue of helping others (which are omitted from the theatrical version), her diary and its theatrical narrative do very little, or arguably nothing, to empower audience goers to take a stand against micro or macro violations of human rights.

³⁸⁵ Lippiet, D. and Anne Frank Trust UK. 3 January 2013: Personal e-mail.

One Off's production was handled with extreme sensitivity and there was a pervasive sense during my time with them that the Lippiets strove for historical and cultural accuracy, going so far as to introduce me to a rabbi and figurehead in the Jewish community who was participating in the production. Although Portsmouth has a small Jewish community, it is encouraging to note that the Lippiets strove for accuracy.

Cast in the production as Anne was 16-year-old Georgia Hamorak, a non-Jewish girl who played her part with conviction, though she failed to evolve completely from Act I to Act II into Anne's more mature self. However, one can wonder if this is a testimony to the lack of cohesive writing in the play, as noted earlier, or if this is a weakness from the actress. Nevertheless, Hamorak's performance was well-received locally, and she was voted as the runner-up in the 2013 Guide Awards for Best Actress in an Amateur Play.³⁸⁶ The Guide Awards strive to celebrate the local entertainment scene within the Portsmouth area. Due to the limitations of reviews of amateur plays, this is likely the best unbiased seal of approval of Hamorak's work as Anne.

One review of this production in *About My Area: Portsmouth* failed to mention Hamorak by name, instead stating, "The girl who plays Anne managed to really bring the spirit of this young writer to life, never once falling into the melancholy maintained by the others, showing a zest for life making the story even more tragic."³⁸⁷

³⁸⁶ Courtney, N. The News. 21 January 2014. *A Night of Celebrations at The Guide Awards*. Retrieved from <http://www.portsmouth.co.uk/what-s-on/theatre/a-night-of-celebration-at-the-guide-awards-1-5821078>. 27 April 2016.

³⁸⁷ Howell, A. About My Area: Portsmouth. 7 February 2013. Retrieved from <http://www.aboutmyarea.co.uk/Hampshire/Portsmouth/PO6/News/Reviews-and-Features/241023-The-Diary-Of-Anne-Frank-At-The-Kings-Theatre-Southsea>. 29 April 2016.

The other review, published in *The Daily Echo*, a local Portsmouth paper, “Georgia Hamorak brings Anne to life, especially in the scenes with Peter, wonderfully well played by Adam Thomas.” (sic)³⁸⁸

During my research in this section of my thesis, I asked cast members to describe their experience with the Holocaust before their participation, which was not very broad. Hamorak stated that she was aware of the Holocaust before taking part in this play and didn’t feel that her awareness of it was enhanced. Her experience of Holocaust literature and media was relegated to *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* and *Schindler’s List*, though she stated she had watched *Anne Frank: The Whole Story* after being cast in this production.³⁸⁹

In correspondence with Hamorak, I asked her if she felt Anne’s story was important, to which she responded, “I think Anne’s story is important because it is based on her own personal memories. It shows the truth of what really happened during the war to everyone and it shows that the war not only affected British family life it affected everyone else to (sic).”³⁹⁰

I found Hamorak’s quote to be incredibly telling of the way not only Anne’s story is portrayed within the realm of the theatrical narrative, but how World War II is remembered by the British public. To a 16-year-old girl, learning about Anne’s diary is likely part of school curriculum, however, this quote demonstrates how deeply the victimhood is felt within the consciousness of the British public.

Despite the play’s widely recognized theatrical shortcomings, Hamorak felt the play was strongly written because it was balanced in its tensions.

Hamorak stated that she did not feel the play had any moral lessons for today’s audiences, “other than the obvious don’t discriminate against people because of

³⁸⁸ Quentin, H. The Daily Echo. 12 February 2013. *The Diary of Anne Frank, One Off Productions, Kings Theatre Southsea*. Retrieved from <http://www.dailyecho.co.uk/news/10221537.display/>. 29 April 2016.

³⁸⁹ Hamorak, G.: 27 February 2013. Personal email.

³⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

their religion but I mostly think the play is about remembrance.”³⁹¹ As a scholar who has come to this conclusion myself after studying this play for three and a half years, I found this to be an incredibly insightful conclusion.

When posed the question whether or not participating in the play had any impact on life outside of the theatre, some of the older actors gave very “expected” responses when it comes to discussing the Holocaust. Peter Clarke, who portrayed Mr. Kraler, stated, “friends have said ‘well done for telling a story that should be told.’”³⁹²

Hamorak responded in the frank manner that can only come from a teenager with the following, “Well it did take up a lot of my time towards the end and I suppose hearing people saying they really enjoyed it or they read the review in the paper made it feel all worth while.”³⁹³

Interestingly, Hamorak also reported that some of her friends were reticent to see the play or decided not to attend because they already knew the ending from having read the diary in school or having seen the film. As such, they felt they did not want to come see her perform, because facing Anne’s narrative as a theatrical experience would make them “feel too sad.”³⁹⁴

The program, handed out to audience members before the performance, was interspersed with photographs of the real Anne Frank and her family and those of the cast in rehearsal. The outside was fashioned to look like Anne’s diary itself, with the red and white plaid print. The program also included the correspondence from Anne Frank Trust UK mentioned earlier in this chapter, as well as quotes from Anne’s diary interspersed. David Lippiet also included an incredibly long (for a program of its size) background on the Holocaust, which, although looked strange and a bit overwhelming in the program itself, perhaps provided some context to audience members who were unfamiliar with the events surrounding

³⁹¹ *Ibid.*

³⁹² Clark, P. 14 February 2014. Personal email.

³⁹³ Hamorak, G. 27 February 2014. Personal email.

³⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

Anne's diary. He included the fates of those in the Secret Annex, though this information is included in the Kesselman version of the play. Lippiet also listed the numbers of people who perished at each death camp, and information about the NIOD or Netherlands State Institute for War Documentation in English (incorrectly referenced as the NSIWD), Nederlands Instituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie in Dutch, and their quest to authenticate the diary in the 1950s, which may have been an overload of information for those attending theatre.³⁹⁵ However, it shows that Lippiet was passionate about his decision to stage the play and was keen to share his knowledge with his audience members. For a growing number of people in modern day Britain who may have awareness of Anne's diary but not of the scope of the Holocaust itself, this can only serve as something positive, if not a little overwhelming.

But, perhaps the most telling of the Lippiet's intentions to produce *The Diary of Anne Frank* would come from the artistic director note that Lippiet included in the front of the program. Lippiet took the time to briefly explain why there were two versions of the play, stating that Otto Frank had omitted parts of her diary he objected to, though he failed to mention Anne's own self-editing process and that Otto Frank had to give the final stamp of approval on the original play.

Lippiet had told me that before deciding to do the play, he and his wife had seen the A Touring Consortium's 2011 production, perhaps cementing in his mind that this what he wanted to present. While many plays about the Holocaust exist, Lippiet chose this one, perhaps because of its name recognition and ability to cast it from amongst the pool of actors he already knew. In the front of the program, he makes it known that part of the reason for choosing the play was because he wanted, in some way, to participate in a level of activism from a very emotional stand point. His plea to the audience reads less like a structured note to them and perhaps more like a stream of consciousness of justifiable outrage at the indecency of man's inhumanity to man. He states (emphasis and grammar Lippiet's own):

³⁹⁵ Lippiet, D. 2013: *The Diary of Anne Frank Playbill*. Portsmouth: One Off Productions.

Sadly many have said to me FORGET the obscenity of the Holocaust. Never forget because it is still going on....RACIAL HATRED. Serbinica, 10,000 Men and Boys executed 1992. Guddafi, Mugabe, Assad....it goes on. Just a few weeks ago, a football match between two London football clubs, one with high Jewish support. The rival supporters constantly made the sound of hissing gas (The gas chambers) and chanted "Adolf Hitler is coming to get you." This is England 2012!

Theatre must be relevant and have something to say about the society it exists within. Sadly, this story remains relevant...despots and genocide exist.³⁹⁶

What remains interesting about *The Diary of Anne Frank*, is that although the play exists within the backdrop of the Holocaust and confronts a few questions of racism and the absurdity of genocide, the play itself does not describe nor confront the Holocaust as thoroughly as many other plays on the subject. Even Georgia Hamorak, who portrayed Anne Frank in this production stated to me in her interview that she didn't find the play to really be one that necessarily focused on the Holocaust, but instead on Anne's transition to womanhood and the interpersonal relationships in the Annex with the backdrop of the Holocaust.³⁹⁷

It could be noted that although *The Diary of Anne Frank*, was in this instance chosen to make a statement about genocide, it does not confront the realities of the Holocaust as well as many other plays. Those that confront the horror of the Holocaust head on include *Bent* by Martin Sherman, *Korczak's Children* by Jeffrey Hatcher, *Who Will Carry the Word?* By Charlotte Delbo, *The Grey Zone* by Tim Blake Nelson, or even Arthur Miller's *The Incident at Vichy*. Perhaps it is the recognition of the name of Anne Frank, or the ignorance that other such plays exist that often motivates theatre companies to instead choose Anne's words to represent the horrors of the Holocaust.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁹⁷ Hamorak, G. 27 February 2013. Personal Email.

David Lippiet and I spoke personally over email where I asked him some similar questions that I asked Hamorak. Lippiet's motivation for choosing to produce this play seemed even more abundantly clear in the program notes than in our personal conversation.

To the question, "What impact do you think this play has on Holocaust remembrance in popular culture?" Lippiet answered, "That we never let it happen again."³⁹⁸ When posed with the question of how this production has changed his awareness of the Holocaust, Lippiet answered that he was even more determined to never let it happen again. This theme continued to repeat itself throughout our conversation, and in his final note, he stated, "[Anne Frank was] a talented girl—knowing her fate—when she talks about her future makes my pain even greater. NEVER AGAIN." (emphasis Lippiet).³⁹⁹

It should be noted that the purpose of this passage is not to personally criticize Lippiet and his reasoning for deciding to produce and perform in *The Diary of Anne Frank*. However, it is to note that his feelings on the matter are not that uncommon and repeat throughout my case studies. The fault, however, of these comments lays in the fact that Goodrich, Hackett and Kesselman never really confront the realities of the Holocaust, as mentioned before. The audience may have an understanding of the fact that Anne and her family are in the Secret Annex because of the looming dangers of the Nazis, but the play does not critically examine the psychological impact of having one's rights stripped away one by one, nor Otto and his wife's sacrifice of moving his family from Germany to Amsterdam without much prior knowledge of the country in order to perhaps save his children. From Anne's point of view, in which although she was no doubt mature and intuitive for her age, there isn't much mulling over what the deeper meaning of being a victim of an impending genocide means. Instead, the play focuses on the psychological impact of eight people crammed in one space, facing a dreaded unknown that they are ignorant of (but the audience may be aware of) and tells Anne's coming-of-age.

³⁹⁸ Lippiet, D. 10 February 2013. Personal Email.

³⁹⁹ *Ibid*

Although that in itself does not mean the production is without merit, or the general story is without merit (despite the shortcomings of the structure of the play itself mentioned thoroughly in previous chapters), but it does mean that it neither faces the Holocaust head-on, nor does it empower audience members to fight for human rights in a modern context. There is nothing wrong with members of the audience walking away from the play and feeling motivated to help halt micro and macro racial aggressions, but the play lacks any real guidance on this topic, thus making it an interesting choice for those who want to ensure that the Holocaust never occurs again. However, Lippiet and his company failed to provide any education workshops or education materials, forcing the audience to make modern day connections and find resources for activism on their own.

Lippiet also mentioned during our interview that it is important people face Anne's story.⁴⁰⁰ While the play may force audience members to come to terms with the fact that Anne died at a young age, it does not really force us to face Anne's story in its entirety. As mentioned in previous chapters, Anne's time in Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen is almost always omitted from the official theatrical narratives of her life. As such, by watching the Goodrich, Hackett and Kesselman version, we are still not being forced to watch Anne's suffering in its entirety. One could argue that whilst the situation of the members of the Secret Annex placed enormous strain on those inside of it, it was not anywhere near as horrific as what they would face after their arrests.

Even plays like *Bent* or *Korczak's Children* or *Who Will Carry the Word?* or *The Grey Zone*, though they take place in concentration camps and the Warsaw ghetto respectively, do not really empower the audience into any kind of activism. After the lights dim and the curtain closes, audience members are not obligated to connect what they just saw portrayed to modern day human suffering. Likely, most will not join a human rights cause or participate in legislation to curtail human suffering. In the end, the play will be left in the past, an experience they had and something to mull over from time to time. As such, can it really be said that a play with no further education or empowerment resources can actually help stop

⁴⁰⁰ *Ibid*

current genocides and racial abuses in our modern society? And if one is motivated to see a play about the Holocaust, it can be argued that they are likely already a person who does not believe human rights abuses are acceptable.

Although I do not wish to comment on the intricate theatrical merits of the production, I will stop to acknowledge that the commitment, talent and passion impressed me by this amateur company. The play itself was enjoyable and the players, I felt, successfully captured much of the emotion needed to pull off a performance of this production.

In terms of public reception, it is always difficult to gauge this in amateur theatre. Because theatrical groups and reviewers are local and likely know one another, it isn't often that bad reviews are printed. However this production did receive a review in a local paper and also received the 2013 Best Drama Guide Award. As noted in mentioning Georgia Hamorak's runner-up status for Best Actress, these awards seek to celebrate the arts scene in Portsmouth. As such, this may be the best way to receive an unbiased opinion from the community, meaning that they appreciated the play enough to give it such an honor.⁴⁰¹

The two reviews of the production are in *The Daily Echo*, a local paper, and *About My Area: Portsmouth*. *The Daily Echo's* review favorably mentions several of the actors and commends the sound design. This very short review also mentions Anne's legacy, in that the play fulfils Anne's wish of going on to live after her death.⁴⁰²

About My Area's review did not focus so much on the merits of the production, but rather to give context and history of the Holocaust. Anna Howell, the reviewer of

⁴⁰¹ Courtney, N. The News. 21 January 2014. *A Night of Celebrations at The Guide Awards*. Retrieved from <http://www.portsmouth.co.uk/what-s-on/theatre/a-night-of-celebration-at-the-guide-awards-1-5821078>. 27 April 2016.

⁴⁰² Quentin, H. The Daily Echo. 12 February 2013. *The Diary of Anne Frank, One Off Productions, Kings Theatre Southsea*. Retrieved from <http://www.dailyecho.co.uk/news/10221537.display/>. 29 April 2016.

the piece limited her review of the merits of the production to saying she felt the cast did an outstanding job.

Interestingly, the review contains the following quote, which I found to be rather contraindicated of the official narrative that the Anne Frank Fonds and Anne Frank House have chosen to portray of Anne:

What was so nice about this production was that, as so often has been the case when this book has been analysed in the past, instead of focusing on the end of Anne's life, and the effects on the holocaust on her community as a whole, it delved more into the life of the young girl who had to grow up and venture into womanhood under such extreme and frightening circumstances. (sic)⁴⁰³

As the Anne Frank Foundation and Fonds expressly seek not to focus on the end of Anne's life, I found this to be a very interesting statement. Given that the play is often deemed problematic by the academic community simply because the end of Anne's life is never portrayed, as discussed at length in the previous chapters, it is very interesting to note that this reviewer felt it was overemphasized. It should also be noted that the author states "when this book has been analysed in the past," as though she were expecting some kind of analyses of the material instead of a theatrical production of the diary.

Howell's review also says, "If you are looking for a good way to break your children into the horrors of this part of history, this, I believe, is the best and kindest way."⁴⁰⁴

⁴⁰³ Howell, A. About My Area: Portsmouth. 7 February 2013. *The Diary of Anne Frank Review*. Retrieved from <http://www.aboutmyarea.co.uk/Hampshire/Portsmouth/PO6/News/Reviews-and-Features/241023-The-Diary-Of-Anne-Frank-At-The-Kings-Theatre-Southsea>. 29 April 2016.

⁴⁰⁴ *Ibid*

I find the language used to be bordering on problematic, as it does not encourage discussion of the horrors with children, but instead to “break them in” to something that they will eventually learn. Of course, taking a child to see a production of *The Diary of Anne Frank* would be more appropriate than Tim Blake Nelson’s *The Grey Zone* (which is not only riddled with profanity but discusses the work of the Sonderkommando in very graphic detail), to me this was a choice of words that felt a little strange and contrived.

Although only two reviews exist, and both focus on Anne herself more than the merits of the production, which is expected given they are reviews of amateur plays, neither speaks to the play as a vehicle for human rights awareness in modern context. While this is not said to criticize Lipiett’s intent for staging the play, it does show that without an education program to go along with the play, it can be very difficult for the audience to make any kind of connection.

The Synergy Theatre—Seaford, United Kingdom Presented October 2013

The Synergy Theatre’s production of *The Diary of Anne Frank* is unique in my case studies, as it is the only theatre that did not produce Kesselman’s updated version. Since Kesselman’s version has been available for amateur theatrical companies, the original production is very rarely performed. Due to the shortcomings of the play, which are even vaster than the Kesselman version, it is easy to see why it is so rare to see staged.

The play was presented at The Clinton Centre, adjacent to a church in a village about 13 miles outside of Brighton. Although I have stated that I do not wish to comment on the intricate theatrical merits of the productions, it is suffice to say that this production was the least impressive of the lot, not least because of the choice not to include Kesselman’s addendums. However, it should be noted that the younger members of the cast, in particular the teenage Kimberly Payne who portrayed Anne, played their roles with incredible realness and conviction.

David Parton, the director, focuses on Anne's inspiring message in his note to the audience inside of his program, which he has aptly named, "In spite of everything...."

Parton echoes the problem of Anne's narrative being cut before her death very clearly, and indeed her words being taken out of context by doing just the same thing in his notes. He states in the program, "Who among us here this evening could say, like Anne, on the threshold of an adult life so soon to be cut short in Bergen-Belsen: 'I still believe, in spite of everything, that people are good at heart....'"⁴⁰⁵ Again, this paints a picture of Anne as an eternal optimist, despite what she might have said had she survived the camps. In this regard, though Parton does accurately quote Anne's words, they are taken out of context and thus perpetuates the image of Anne as an ever optimist who could not even be tarnished by her suffering in Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen.

Because I did not spend as much time with this cast and crew as I was afforded the luxury of with the Portsmouth cast, I must rely on personal interviews to examine the intent of the director and cast alike.

Firstly, I asked Parton why he decided to do the original script, not including Kesselman's addendums. Parton stated that he had done the production previously in the '60s and '70s in Norway, so he did not feel the need to revisit new material. Due to his desire to find new information within an old source, he did not feel as though looking for other productions was helpful. Furthermore, in a statement that contradicts scholars and theatre professionals alike who have critiqued the play as extremely dated, he stated, "It has, in my opinion, an intense feeling of contemporariness." Parton went on to compare the play to such classics that are often still performed today like Thornton Wilder's *Our Town* and Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*.⁴⁰⁶

⁴⁰⁵ Parton, D. 2013: *The Diary of Anne Frank Playbill*. Seaford: Synergy Theatre Company.

⁴⁰⁶ Parton, D. 18 November 2013. Personal Email.

Parton's intent for choosing the play was perhaps both based on his own familiarity with the source material and his intent, like Lippiet's, to raise awareness of social justice issues taking place in the world today. When questioned why he felt this piece was important, Parton responded:

My reason for choosing TDOAF (sic) was that it is a story that has, if anything, even greater relevance in our global society today than it did when first published. The enhanced perspective of history 70 years on sharpens the reaction. We have become almost anaethetised (sic) against horror by our constant exposure to it through various media so that the appalling crimes against humanity lose some, at least, of their impact. Bringing the enormity of genocide down to an intensely private and personal level gives it an impact that can only derive from a 'fly-on-the-wall' experience such as this.⁴⁰⁷

Parton's intent is quite clearly very similar to that of Lippiet's. Although Parton's wish to educate audiences about the Holocaust and modern day genocide is perhaps not as virulent as Lippiet's fervor, it should be noted that like Lippiet, there was no educational material nor workshops with schools presented. Thus, again, the production is exceptionally lacking in its ability to empower audience members to rally for change in a modern day context.

In Parton's interview, he also said something to me that I had oddly never really considered with the role of Anne. In speaking of the 16-year-old actress, Kimberly Payne, who portrayed her, Parton said the following:

Of almost equal importance is the fact that she is physically much closer to Anne's actual age (by the end of the play) and, for that reason, does not carry much of the additional baggage with her that might have encumbered

⁴⁰⁷ *Ibid*

an older and more experienced actor. Her natural naïvety was - in my view - a very positive and valuable 'extra'.⁴⁰⁸

In one way, throughout my studies and examinations of these plays, I had always thought the age of the actress might increase her limitations to play the role well. The age of Anne in productions I have seen has varied tremendously, and I have seen young women from the age of 15 to the age of 30 portray her convincingly. Although I have always thought that when portraying a character of such enormous importance as Anne, one must have some sort of maturity and nuance. Although it may be said that any actor will develop this skill as their career progresses, it is interesting to note that perhaps sometimes inexperience and a knack for acting can actually be advantageous to a teenage actress in her portrayal. Kimberly Payne certainly stood out in the production and was often miles ahead of her adult counterparts in her portrayal. Parton may, indeed, have a point.

Despite my asking, no other actors participated in a written interview for this production. As such, this represents some of the pitfalls of written interviews that are done after the fact as many participants tend to simply forget about this at all.

Because this production was very amateur, no reviews exist except for a small snippet about Kimberly's performance on the Synergy Theatre's website from the publication *The Sussex Express*. Although I can find no record on it the *Sussex Express* website itself, the review states:

As Otto Frank, Annes father, Alan Lade displays dignity and compassion. Kimberley Payne, as Anne, captures the sense of girlish fun, teenage rebellion and blossoming womanhood. Outstanding moments are the ensemble playing during a celebration of the Jewish festival of Hanukkah. Be as moved by this production as few can ever fail to be when reading Anne's timeless diary. (sic)⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid*

⁴⁰⁹ The Synergy Theatre Company. (n.d). Retrieved from <http://www.thesynergytheatre.co.uk/reviews.htm>. 1 May 2016.

As stated above, it is incredibly difficult to gauge honest reactions of theatre in an amateur sense if the reactions are not recorded privately. As such, it is very difficult to measure the honest reactions of those who saw the production. Parton mentioned to me in his interview that many people told him they were moved by the piece after watching it, which I do not doubt is genuine

Southampton University Players— Southampton, United Kingdom. Presented February 21-March 1, 2014

This production was presented at the Nuffield Theatre on the campus of the University of Southampton. As with all of the plays in the case study, barring the Synergy Theatre Company, the Southampton University Players performed the Wendy Kesselman version. Though all productions mentioned in this chapter are, indeed, amateur, this was perhaps one of the more professional productions. It may be noted that perhaps this production felt more professional and more researched than the others because the University of Southampton is home to several Holocaust scholars, notably the historian Tony Kushner.

The production was also done in collaboration with The Parkes Institute, which is described in the program of the play as a “unique centre for the study of Jewish/non-Jewish relations across the ages.” This, no doubt, also contributed to the nuanced approach and more authentic feel of the production than many of the others I observed.

This production was directed by Lorraine Biddlecombe, who, like all other directors in this study, took the time to address the audience in the program. In an earlier incarnation of the draft, which was similar to what appeared in the program, Lorraine emailed me to share some of her thoughts on why she had chosen to direct *The Diary of Anne Frank* with her theatre company. She stated:

The Diary of Anne Frank is a play I have always wanted to direct, and I think it is one which can resonate with people of all ages. This powerful play gives us the chance to explore the realities of eight people having to be in hiding for two years and the relationships between them, as seen through Anne's eyes. Although set in traumatic times, there are scenes of fun and humour – which, of course, is the point: despite unimaginable circumstances, the strength of human spirit and hope survives.⁴¹⁰

Again, it seems Biddlecombe has come to also focus her efforts on extoling the virtues of Anne's inspirational qualities, as many before her have done. In the program, Biddlecombe goes even further to stress how incredibly inspiring Anne's work is, and discusses briefly how Nelson Mandela drew his strength when imprisoned on Robben Island by reading excerpts from Anne's diary.⁴¹¹ Although mentioning this connection could endeavour to place Mandela and Anne Frank in the same category as inspirational social justice advocates, much as she is often mentioned in the same context as Martin Luther King, jr., Anne's words were likely much of a comfort to someone who was also experiencing imprisonment for not actually having committed a crime. Mandela speaks of this on the Anne Frank House's official YouTube page, in which he says that he identified with Anne's words and found them inspirational coming from someone so young.⁴¹² Mandela drew strength from her account, which is likely what Biddlecombe had attempted to convey to her audience through her work on the show.

It is also interesting to note that although Biddlecombe focuses on the inspirational and optimistic side of Anne, she does not, however disclose that she wanted to produce the play to take a stand against modern human rights violations. Instead,

⁴¹⁰ Biddlecombe, L. 30 December 2013. Personal email.

⁴¹¹ Biddlecombe, L. 2014: *The Diary of Anne Frank Playbill*. Southampton: Southampton University Players.

⁴¹² Anne Frank House. YouTube. 19 August 2009. *Nelson Mandela About the Diary of Anne Frank*.. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHd2Y98pvbc>. 1 May 2016.

she hopes to inspire her audiences and help them reflect on the strength of the human spirit.

The cast in this production was incredibly strong. Lead by teenage April Napper as Anne, they gracefully tapped into the nuances of the play and performed with conviction. Although I did not get the chance to interview April, she took the opportunity in the program to mention that this was one of the most professional productions she had been apart of, and it was much different than her roles she typically performed in her college.⁴¹³ It was clear, however, that April had made a real connection with Anne, whether through her own naiveté or as an actress beyond her years in terms of talent.

The production itself was unique in several ways. Firstly, it was the only production of the five to utilize an ensemble, which proved to be very effective. Because of the way many theatres are structured, it can be very difficult to divide between the interior and exterior of the Secret Annex, as would have been a problem with several of the productions. However, because this production took place on a large, full-scale stage, it was very easy to delineate between the two worlds. In periods of transition during the story, school children, a few adults and men dressed in Nazi uniforms would crossover, acting out very quick impromptu street scenes. This included those walking past the Nazis looking visibly shaken and upset. Although the Nazis were in Holland for a full five years and they may have become part of the furniture, so to speak, during that time period, I still found the reactions incredibly telling and effective. These crossovers put Anne's world into context that she is not in isolation on a far remote island, but actually in the center of a bustling world capital. Whether Biddlecombe had intended to or not, these crossovers also highlighted the terror that many Dutch citizens felt during the German reign.

This production also had a set with a full structure, meaning that when Anne and Peter went into the attic for their scenes, they actually moved into the attic.

⁴¹³ Biddlecombe, L. 2014: *The Diary of Anne Frank Playbill*. Southampton: Southampton University Players.

Although few productions produce the Annex to scale or as it really was, this was effective in that it did, indeed, feel like more of a secret hideout for the pair.

Biddlecombe also made the decision to keep the cast onstage during the interval instead of closing the curtain and allowing them rest. Although realistically, one full year passes in between the acts, it still gave the audience the impression of being cooped up with nowhere to go. The cast members remained in character, going about their daily business, as they would have within the confines of the Secret Annex.

Another thing that makes this show incredibly successful is that the cast seemed to be devoid of a lot of the saccharine sentimentality that goes along with a production of this sort. Although the Biddlecombe does mention Anne as an inspiring figure, there isn't as much of a sense of Anne as a hero or that by doing this production, audiences will somehow be inspired to change the world around them. It is perhaps this lack of sentimentality and frankness in which the subject matter was dealt that made it so much more successful than the others. Instead of telling the story of a tragic heroine, Biddlecombe's production felt much more as though she were telling the story of a real person and two real families in very extraordinary circumstances.

The production also included a blog where cast and crew shared their thoughts a handful of times. Although I did not get to interview April who played Anne in this instance, reading a few of her blog entries were quite telling of the way Biddlecombe and she approached the role. Although she says she hopes that the play inspires people not to take life for granted, again, she is devoid of a lot of the sentimentality of the character of Anne in general. It is clear that she is not being playing Anne in any kind of romantic fashion, but simply as a young girl very similar to April herself.⁴¹⁴

⁴¹⁴ Southampton University Players Blog. *The Productions Blog-Anne Frank*. Retrieved from <https://southamptonuniversityplayers.wordpress.com/past-nuffield-productions/the-directors-blog-anne-frank/>. 1 May 2016.

The reviews of the production were also surprisingly unsentimental, yet gave the actors and director credit where it was due. The Daily Echo stated that Biddlecombe portrayed the final two years of Anne's life with great sincerity and likewise praised the production on their set design.⁴¹⁵

Although no other reviews of the play exist, it should also be noted that the production was nominated for a Curtain Call Award for the year 2014. The Curtain Call Awards seek to recognize the best of theatre, both professional and amateur, in the Hampshire region. Though the production didn't wrack up the awards, it was nominated for Best Set Design of the year, a true testimony to the effectiveness of what was created. In the blurb announcing the nomination, the Curtain Call Awards state that the scenery, "Gives a sense of the period and of the limited space the characters must share."⁴¹⁶

Unfortunately, none of the actors responded to my request for an interview, despite repeated attempts.

Bedford Dramatic Club—Bedford, United Kingdom October 15-19, 2013

The Bedford Dramatic Club in Bedford, United Kingdom presented *The Diary of Anne Frank* with Kesselman's adaption at The Place Theatre in Bedford. This small, black box style theatre seats 130 people, and because of the theatre's small size, *The Diary of Anne Frank* was sold out almost every single night. This production was under the direction of Lorna Dawson, who in her late 20s was the youngest person in my study to direct this play by far.

⁴¹⁵ Quentin, H. The Daily Echo. 27 February 2014. *The Diary of Anne Frank, One Off Productions, Kings Theatre Southsea*. Retrieved from http://www.dailyecho.co.uk/news/11040448.REVIEW_The_Diary_of_Anne_Frank_Southampton_University_Players_Nuffield_Theatre/. 1 May 2016.

⁴¹⁶ Stilliard, E. Echo News. 9 December 2014. *Curtain Call Awards 2014—The nominations*. Retrieved from http://www.echo-news.co.uk/news/11654462.Curtain_Call_Awards_2014_the_nominations/. 1 May 2016.

The cast itself was impressive, although Anne, played by Kirsty Newman in this production, was likely one of this weakest links, which colored the overall experience of the play. An inexperienced actress (although to be fair, the others in this study were all young girls and therefore likely not very experienced), she fell prey to the trap of making Anne extremely annoying in a similar way that Natalie Portman did during her Broadway portrayal. Kirsty also had trouble with Anne's transition from the first act to the second act, but as the writing is so weak, it can be argued that few, aside from very talented actresses with extremely nuanced directing, can really do this effectively.

Although in this production, there were a few obvious errors in historical facts (i.e. the actors only wore the Star of David marked "Jood" on their coats instead of all of their clothing when they first arrived), what it lacked in that department, it made up in accuracy in the portrayal of Judaism. The group had hired a man from the Milton Keynes District Synagogue to help coach them on Jewish traditions, such as how to light the Hanukkah candles, the correct pronunciation of the Hebrew words and how to put on a prayer shawl. Although it is clear that a few other productions also had help in this department, there was something about this play that felt incredibly authentic. Perhaps it was also the extra attention paid to Dussel's religion. As noted in previous chapters, the real Dussel, Fritz Pfeffer was perhaps the most religious of the group. However, in the original Broadway version, he is portrayed as totally secular and confused about basic Jewish traditions. Bedford Dramatic Club sought to make a nod to Pfeffer's actual religiousness by having him pray or put on his prayer shawl a few times when his character was supposed to be in his room and not actively engaged in the central conversation. As a researcher, I really appreciated this, as it is part of Pfeffer that seems to often be overlooked, quite sadly.

Although the "playing space" was very small due to the size of the theatre, the actors made use of it with black stage blocks. There wasn't much of a set in terms of walls between the actors, as there were in the Southampton and Portsmouth productions, but they were implied.

In this production, Dawson made a choice I had not seen before. That is, instead of having the Nazis come and arrest the members of the Secret Annex, the audience could only hear a sound effect of the Nazis coming up the stairs. It was still incredibly powerful, and the fear inside the Secret Annex was just as palatable without their foreboding presence. In fact, I noticed many members of the audience openly sobbing.

Another unique directorial choice Dawson made was the bows for the actors. Instead of having the actors either stand in place and bow or come out as an ensemble, the actors, instead, did something entirely different. In Kesselman's version of the play, Otto Frank ends the play by leaving the diary on stage, stating, "All that remains."⁴¹⁷ He leaves the stage, as the lights darken around the diary before a blackout. Dawson made the decision to have each cast member come out on stage one by one and place a rock on Anne's diary before bowing as an ensemble.

Placing a rock on a grave is a Jewish custom, which shows those who visit the graveyard that someone has recently visited that particular grave. As flowers wilt, rocks do not, and will technically live forever, thus a stone is more appropriate.⁴¹⁸ In this way, since Anne does not have a physical grave where she is actually buried, though a symbolic one exists for both Anne and Margot at Bergen-Belsen, her diary becomes her grave, the marker that she lived. In this way, I felt it was an incredibly powerful and touching sentiment, even though many others in the audience were undoubtedly confused as it was without explanation. My non-Jewish friend turned to me during the end of the play and asked if they were placing potatoes on the diary, as during the play there was so much talk surrounding the vegetable. Perhaps it would have been wise for Dawson to include something in the program about why stones were being laid on Anne's grave, but it was not mentioned.

⁴¹⁷ Kesselman, W., F. Goodrich and A. Hackett. 2001: *The Diary of Anne Frank Play*. New York: Dramatists Play Service, Inc., p. 69.

⁴¹⁸ Shurpin, Y. Chabad.org. *Why Do Jews Put Pebbles on Tombstones?*. Retrieved from http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/3002484/jewish/Why-Do-Jews-Put-Pebbles-on-Tombstones.htm. 4 May 2016.

The program itself was short and devoid of much extra information or even any sentimentality. Dawson wrote that it was an “incredible experience to bring this story to the stage and educate more generations about Anne Frank’s story and the holocaust.(sic)” She used most of her space in the Director’s Note for thanking specific people for their help with the play, and did not really go into her motive for choosing the play, nor did she speak about Anne as heroic, optimistic or even inspiring. She also did not speak of performing the play as a way to combat current issues involving genocide and human rights violations.⁴¹⁹

However, when speaking to Dawson personally, the narrative somewhat changed to a more sentimental approach. Dawson said in our interview that she had chosen *The Diary of Anne Frank* specifically to educate the local community about the Holocaust.⁴²⁰ Though schools were offered discounts to see the production, there was no education packet for the students, talkbacks or workshops to aid in education.

When I asked Dawson what her main goal for producing this production was and if her goal was reached, she answered, “My main goal was education and I do believe the audience that watched the show walked away knowing more about the holocaust (sic) and the effect it had. I am hoping that a lot went back to further research into the holocaust.(sic)”⁴²¹

However, without actual workshops or sponsored education, one cannot assume that the audience actually went away knowing more about the Holocaust as a whole, specifically because Anne’s story is more about her life in the Annex than the Holocaust in general.

Although Dawson did not appear to produce the play to make an impact on world politics, she did hope to create a sense of education and awareness of the

⁴¹⁹ Dawson, L. 2014: *The Diary of Anne Frank Playbill*. Bedford: Bedford Dramatic Club.

⁴²⁰ Dawson, L. 24 February 2014. Personal email.

⁴²¹ *Ibid*

Holocaust in general. However, this leaves much up to the audience members and is mostly a hope that the play will spark an interest in further research.

It is difficult to gauge public reaction of this production, as there were no reviews in local papers. However, the play was not nominated for any awards in the NODA East Regional Awards, an awards event for excellence in theatre in the region of the eastern UK, despite the fact that some other productions done by the same company received nominations.⁴²²

Conclusion

Two other productions of *The Diary of Anne Frank* were invited to take part in my research, but declined or were unable to provide much extra information.

However, from these four productions, it is clear to see that Anne's story is alive and well theatrically, despite the problems with the narrative.

It seems producers and directors choose this play because of either a fondness for Anne's story in general, or as a desire to educate about the Holocaust. In some cases, such as David Lippiet's, it is also about making a change to current events.

Although it cannot be assumed that are unable to generally make connections, without further educational programs, it becomes very difficult to see how audiences are empowered to learn more or make societal connections. While it can be argued that most people do not need spoon-feeding, those who see the play will only do further research if they are interested. And as stated many times throughout this thesis, Anne's story itself does not give much in the way of Holocaust education on the event as a whole.

⁴²² NODA: Be Inspired by Amateur Theatre. *NODA East Regional Awards 2013 Presentation*. Retrieved from <https://www.noda.org.uk/noda-east-regional-awards-2013-presentation>. 4 May 2016.

However, from reviews and reactions of cast members, it is easy to see that the play, despite its numerous flaws, still has a profound effect on people and Anne's words are alive and well onstage. But, it is a shame that those wishing to directly quote Anne's diary in a play are currently only able to use one of the approved plays, or that there isn't a better version available in the English language.

It is powerful how Anne's legacy lives on and how many people are still touched by her story today. One would just wish that her legacy would be allowed to do so in a better form.

Chapter Seven: *Anne*: The Play

The new play, *Anne*, represents a new chapter in the on-going controversy of Anne Frank's representation. The controversy itself continues to shed light on the fact that Anne's story is still *the* story to represent Holocaust victims, specifically children. And although there was some effort to make her not as "optimistic" as in previous productions, she still is seen that way. While some aspects of the original plays are smoothed over, it is still, indeed, incredibly problematic.

Acknowledging the shortcomings of the original performances, a team in the Netherlands created a new production about Anne Frank, which premiered in 2014. The creators featured veterans of both Broadway and professional Dutch theatre.

Like the original production, a husband and wife team, Jessica Durlacher and Leon de Winter, authored this new play titled simply *Anne*. This time, however, the team arguably had more of a connection to Anne's words than Goodrich and Hackett. Both Dutch, Durlacher is the daughter of an Auschwitz survivor. De Winter was raised in an Orthodox Jewish family and lost over 100 family members in the Holocaust. Although the play was co-authored by the pair, it was written in conjunction with the Anne Frank Fonds in Basel, Switzerland. The Anne Frank Fonds chose not to include the Anne Frank House in its decisions, despite the two once being under Otto Frank's direction.⁴²³

When announcing the play, the Anne Frank Fonds said the following, emphasizing their "rightful ownership" of Anne's words over anyone else's:

⁴²³ Carvajal, D. The New York Times. 12 May 2014. *Amid Tensions, a New Portrayal of Anne Frank*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/13/theater/a-holocaust-play-in-amsterdam-opens-in-controversy.html?_r=0. 19 May 2016. of *Anne Frank*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/13/theater/a-holocaust-play-in-amsterdam-opens-in-controversy.html?_r=0. 19 May 2016.

Dutch authors Jessica Durlacher and Leon de Winter are to stage ANNE, a new play based on the Diary of Anne Frank and the first new theatrical adaptation of the source material since 1955, after being chosen to write the script by the Anne Frank Fonds Basel. The Anne Frank Fonds Basel, founded by Otto Frank, the universal heir and rights-owner of the Frank family estate, is launching the project to provide a contemporary rendition of one of the most important texts of the 20th century, bringing it to new audiences. ANNE will show the famous story of Anne Frank in a completely new way, allowing today's generations to experience and understand this important work.⁴²⁴

Although the Anne Frank Fonds claims that this is the first time Anne's life before and after the diary is featured prominently, they are ignoring the 2001 film *Anne Frank: The Whole Story*, which goes into greater depth than the play itself. However, since both the Anne Frank Fonds and Anne Frank House eschewed the film, it is not surprising that it would not be acknowledged.

The play itself, however, does differ dramatically from the Goodrich and Hackett version, not the least of which because it is in Dutch. In this way, Anne is portrayed authentically, and not as an American or British teen who is somehow transported to a life in the Secret Annex.

Anne premiered in 2014 in a purpose built theatre, named Theater Amsterdam, just north of the city. The playing space for the actors was curved whilst the audience sat inside of it, though it was not in a 360-degree space. But because of the massive area in which the actors had to work, the set designers created to-scale versions of the Frank family's apartment on Merwedeplein and a rotating to-scale model of the Secret Annex. While the audience did not rotate, the set itself

⁴²⁴ Anne Frank Fonds. 24 April 2013. *Anne Frank's Diary Brought to Life in New Play*. Retrieved from <http://www.annefrank.ch/news-view/items/anne-franks-diary-brought-to-life-in-new-play.html>. 19 May 2016.

did, allowing the audience a clearer glimpse of life inside of the confining Secret Annex. The Secret Annex rotates in front of the audience, the offices of Opteka are on the left side of the stage, as though it is cut in half and the audience is privy to what is occurring inside.

The production also utilizes multimedia, projected onto curved screens, which are swept on and off stage, mostly during scene changes. These screens show not only Anne's diary, but also photographs and multimedia of the concentration camps, Paris in the 1950s, and some of Hitler's speeches. It is generally an effective way to keep the audience's attention as the complicated sets shift on and offstage.

Although I was able to see a performance in this play, there are limitations to discussing it within the thesis as the script has not yet been made available for academic analysis. The Anne Frank Fonds is unwilling to make it available to those who are not performing the play. On the same note, I do not speak Dutch and instead saw the play with a translation device in my ear. Because Anne's story attracts such an international audience and performing it simply in Dutch would limit ticket sales, audience members are able to listen to the play translated into eight languages. This makes it extremely difficult to analyze the text to the same degree I have been able to analyze the text of the previous plays discussed.

Although this thesis does not seek to speak to the merits of productions, I will say that theatrically speaking, this script is written with far more nuance and authenticity, despite its continued problematic nature. The script itself would be one I would recommend as a performance over the other two available versions.

Anne begins in Paris after the war, where Anne, as a figment of her own imagination, is studying abroad. While in a café, she briefly mentions her wartime diary, which piques the interest of a Dutch publisher who has overheard the conversation she is having with her fellow students. She decides to sit down with the mysterious publisher and begins to tell him all about the story she plans to publish. Although the Anne Frank Fonds states that the play goes into depth nonetheless about the life of Anne before the war, this is somewhat of a fallacy, as

there are only a few brief scenes. One includes Anne's 13th birthday on Merwedeplein where she receives the diary from her father. Two of her girlfriends, Hanneli Goslar and Jacqueline van Maarsen are portrayed by actresses, but there isn't much substance in their portrayals. Likewise, Hello Silberberg, the boy who Anne mentions in the beginning of her diary as having a crush on her, is portrayed as coming to Anne's apartment, but again, there isn't much depth nor substance to his character.

As the play unfolds, Anne tells the publisher all about her life in the Secret Annex. Although without a physical copy of the script, it makes it very difficult to analyze, it does go into greater detail than the original play, mainly not skipping all of 1943. This can be attested by the fact that the play is at least double the length of the previous incarnations.

As Anne details the story to her publisher, periodically removing herself from the action of the play to fill him in on details, she learns that he is actually her crush from before she went into hiding. This is a boy named Peter Schiff whom Anne wrote about a few times in her diary, idolizing him and bemoaning that she did not know his whereabouts.

During her time in the Secret Annex, Anne wrote that although she had feelings for Peter van Pels during the height of their romance, that she could not stop thinking about her childhood romance with Peter Schiff. On February 28, 1944, Anne writes, "Peter Schiff and Peter van Daan have melted into one Peter, who's good and kind and whom I long for desperately."⁴²⁵

Anne also discusses Schiff in much more detail in her diary entry dated January 7, 1944. She writes in this entry, she will regale Kitty with the tale of her "one true love" and speaks of the time she spent with Peter walking hand-in-hand through the city. After a vacation to the countryside with her family, she returns to find Peter had moved to another address. When she began to see him at the Jewish

⁴²⁵ Frank, A. 2002: *Anne Frank: The Definitive Edition*. O. Frank and M. Pressler, eds. S. Massotty trans. London: Puffin Books. p. 199.

Lyceum after the mandate that all Jewish children attend Jewish schools, he stopped saying hello to her, and she convinced herself she had moved on from him.

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As the play progresses, Anne and the other members of the Secret Annex are arrested. Anne is briefly shown in Bergen-Belsen, or what amounts to a symbol of the camp. She sits with Margot, coughing and cradling her in a blanket on train tracks, the rest of the cast standing silently around the dying sisters as snow falls from the top of the stage. Anne tells her sister she was having a fever dream, in which she was a student in Paris and met Peter Schiff, who had become a great publisher. After the audience learns that the set-up around the real story was simply a typhus-induced dream, Otto Frank delivers a monologue, somewhat similar to the original plays, in which he details what happened to the members of the Secret Annex.

In this version, however, Otto Frank includes the demise of Peter Schiff. Schiff is thought to have perished at Auschwitz with his family, though it is possible that he died in Bergen-Belsen like Anne. Although his fate is not completely certain, a photograph of him was discovered in 2008, which is thought to be the only surviving picture. The photo was given to the Anne Frank House by Ernest Michaelis, a childhood friend of Schiff, who kept the picture after leaving Germany for the UK.⁴²⁷ As this photograph surfaced somewhat recently, perhaps that was the impetus for using Schiff as a device throughout the play.

At the end of the production, Anne stands up and walks down the train tracks to Bergen-Belsen as snow falls around her, symbolizing the eternal life the public has given her.

The production itself, however, was embroiled in controversy right from the beginning. This very much highlights the issue of ownership of memory. This is

⁴²⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 163-165.

⁴²⁷ The New York Times. 27 February 2008. *Anne Frank's True Love*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/02/27/arts/27arts-ANNEFRANKSTR.BRF.html>. 20 May 2016.

largely due to the fact that they chose to not collaborate with the Anne Frank House, and instead create the play without them. Although since Otto Frank died, tensions between the two foundations have been high, many at the museum saw this as the ultimate division and a slap in the face. It is also curious that the Fonds would choose to produce the play in Amsterdam, accessible in several different languages, and not consult the Anne Frank House. From a strictly marketing standpoint, one can assume that tourists interested in Anne's story might see the play and visit the Secret Annex during their visit to Amsterdam. However, when I visited during the play's run, fliers and advertisements were noticeably absent. Any mention of the play was returned with a quick dismissal of, "We are not affiliated."

Despite the play being approved by Buddy Elias, Anne's first cousin who controlled her estate until his death in 2015, and having been attended by the King of the Netherlands⁴²⁸, the Anne Frank House received no offer of participation.

The director of the Anne Frank House at the time, Ronald Leopold, was quoted in the New York Times as publicly denouncing the spectacle of the play. He was particularly upset that the theatre offered patrons a nice view of the water and that hungry and thirsty theatregoers could get a snack box and drinks during the intermission. A restaurant, built adjacent to the theatre, also offered packages to patrons, allowing them a meal and an evening at the theatre. Leopold also took direct issue with the price of the performance (up to €75), and was quoted as saying that the story of Anne Frank should not be a "nice evening out."⁴²⁹ This is, however, in conflict with the fact that many plays on the West End and on Broadway also offer tickets at the same price, or even at a higher price point. Many

⁴²⁸ The Daily Mail. 15 June 2014. *Anne Frank's diary brought to life in new multimillion pound play featuring stunningly realistic sets in specially-built Amsterdam theatre*. Retrieved from <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2658177/Anne-Franks-diary-brought-life-new-multimillion-pound-play-featuring-stunningly-realistic-sets-specially-built-Amsterdam-theatre.html>. 21 May 2016.

⁴²⁹ Carvajal, D. The New York Times. 12 May 2014. *Amid Tensions, a New Portrayal of Anne Frank*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/13/theater/a-holocaust-play-in-amsterdam-opens-in-controversy.html?_r=0. 19 May 2016.

of these shows also offer restaurant packages and refreshments at the intermission, regardless of their content. If *Anne* were to travel internationally at professional venues, as the Fonds had planned, these amenities would continue to be offered. Thus, one could make the case that Leopold's issue with the play is not about the spectacle of theatre, but about the obvious exclusion of the Anne Frank House.

Leopold was quoted, however, stating that he did find the play to present a much broader picture of Anne than the original Goodrich and Hackett piece, specifically because it dared depict Anne in Bergen-Belsen, if just briefly. Leopold was vocal about the exclusion of Johannes Kleiman, Victor Kugler and Bep Voskuijl as characters in the play, given their heroic efforts to help the inhabitants in the Secret Annex.⁴³⁰ However, they are also overlooked in most adaptations of Anne's diary, on film or stage. They seem to only be included as characters in their own right in the 2001 film, *Anne Frank: The Whole Story* which neither the Anne Frank Fonds nor Anne Frank House approved.

In an interview with the *Times of Israel*, Annemarie Bekker, a spokesperson for the Anne Frank House, stated that, "Adaptations such as theater plays, films and musicals almost always contain fictional elements that can seem factual, and this can occasionally be problematic."⁴³¹

Despite the Anne Frank House's objections, the play, which was set for a limited engagement in 2014, continues to be extended two years after its initial opening. The production closed briefly in 2016 to allow for another production in the Theater Amsterdam, but reopened in April of that year with a few cast changes.

Buddy Elias stated that he was happy with the way the production turned out, especially by the performance of the star of the play, Rosa da Silva. Although da Silva, who portrayed Anne until 2015, was nearing 30 during her performance, she

⁴³⁰ *Ibid*

⁴³¹ Lebovic, M. The Times of Israel. 18 December 2014. *A most unseemly battle over the legacy of Anne Frank*. Retrieved from <http://www.timesofisrael.com/a-most-unseemly-battle-over-the-legacy-of-anne-frank/>. 21 May 2016.

did play Anne with a conviction and lacking the saccharine tendencies that many younger actresses tend to attribute to Anne. Elias said that despite not having seen Anne since she was nine years old, he felt Durlacher and de Winter wrote his cousin more authentically than any other portrayal and that da Silva captured her essence. He stated, "It was really moving to see Anne as I remember her in her liveliness and her playfulness." In regards to the theatrical experience in general, Elias stated that it "really shook him."⁴³²

Although the play, up to the time of this publication, has continuously sold out and proven an enormously popular tourist attraction, critics gave mixed reviews. Da Silva's performance was praised, however, by Mark Lebovic of The Times of Israel, who stated, "To her credit, Rosa da Silva's portrayal is moodier and less saccharine than most Frank depictions, and da Silva maintains presence even during cheesy afterlife scenes between Secret Annex fiascos."⁴³³

Mark Lebovic of The Times of Israel also labelled the play as "emotionally flat" and felt that the constant moving of the sets detracted from the story. He also felt that although the Anne Frank Fonds advertised that there would be scenes from the diary that were previously excluded, he didn't feel they made much use of the extra material they were allowed to work with. He stated:

Other writers have given Frank a post-death life — Auslander, Ozick and Roth come to mind — but none of them had unlimited access to a trove of unpublished materials. "Anne" barely makes use of new research, and the touted inclusion of Frank's post-hiding experience in Nazi camps amounts to one quick, opening voice-over, plus a hokey final scene where Frank literally hops down the train tracks at Bergen-Belsen.⁴³⁴

⁴³² Carvajal, D. The New York Times. 12 May 2014. *Amid Tensions, a New Portrayal of Anne Frank*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/13/theater/a-holocaust-play-in-amsterdam-opens-in-controversy.html?_r=0. 19 May 2016.

⁴³³ Lebovic, M. The Times of Israel. 18 December 2014. *A most unseemly battle over the legacy of Anne Frank*. Retrieved from <http://www.timesofisrael.com/a-most-unseemly-battle-over-the-legacy-of-anne-frank/>. 21 May 2016.

⁴³⁴ *Ibid*

A blogger, who owns the website *What's Up with Amsterdam*, stated that, "I personally feel Anne Frank deserves to be presented as more than a wild, rather shallow, hormone driven teenage girl like the play makes her out to be." This blogger also felt that the shift in Anne's writing and maturation throughout the diary was totally ignored and instead, Anne seemed to stay the same age throughout the piece.⁴³⁵

Despite any mixed reviews the play has received in newspapers and theatrical columns, the play has proven enormously popular with tourists and locals alike. The simple fact that the play has attempted to close several times, only to extend its run, or close temporarily to open again, is a huge testament to the popularity of the show. The play is featured on many Dutch tourist sites such as Holland.com, and Dutch people have even urged tourists to come see the show instead of coming to Holland for the "famous" prostitution and drugs.

Despite the clear popularity of the show within the general public, the Anne Frank House stated to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that they didn't feel it was an appropriate way to discover the history of Anne and her family, and that visiting the Anne Frank House was much more worthwhile. Ronald Leopold, spokesperson for this particular article stated, "You go to see 'ANNE' in a place which had had nothing to do with Anne Frank. It's backdrop, a show with actors, and it is a radically different experience than historical immersion in the place where it happened, where the diary was."⁴³⁶ In the same article, Leopold stated that, however, he felt that the play would "increase traffic" to the Anne Frank House, which he could see as a positive effect.⁴³⁷ Several Tripadvisor users who have stated that they saw the play before visiting the Anne Frank House during their Amsterdam vacation confirm this phenomenon. Despite the conflict between the two organizations, tourists and locals alike seem to think that the play and a visit

⁴³⁵ What's Up with Amsterdam?. n.d. *Review of Anne Frank Play*. Retrieved from <http://whatsupwithamsterdam.com/review-anne-frank-play/>. 22 May 2016.

⁴³⁶ Liphshiz, C. Jewish Telegraphic Agency. 18 March 2014. *At new Anne Frank theater in Amsterdam, tragedy and fancy dinners*. Retrieved from <http://www.jta.org/2014/03/18/news-opinion/world/at-new-anne-frank-theater-in-amsterdam-tragedy-and-fancy-dinners>. 22 May 2016.

⁴³⁷ *Ibid.*

to Anne's Secret Annex complement each other nicely and give visitors a much broader picture of what happened inside.⁴³⁸ Despite the objections of the Anne Frank House, the Anne Frank Fonds stated that they chose to mount the production first in Amsterdam instead of Basel, or anywhere else for that matter, because of how much the city is interwoven into Anne's diary.⁴³⁹

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, this play ushers us forward into a new era of memory and theatricality of Anne Frank. In some ways, this play straddles both genres, attempting to be historically accurate while also reflecting on the memory of Anne and how we interact with that memory.

The play itself, theatrically, is incredibly modern and utilizes so much technology that it may be difficult for non-purpose built theatres to recreate it. While there was a push originally to have the play produced in many other countries, it seems that, as of 2017, there is not much talk of continuing this, which may mean that this play does not make it into the canon of theatre that represents Anne as a whole. Because it was only produced in Dutch, this leaves its audience, sadly, extremely limited.

Anne is also a narrative that was clearly controlled by the Anne Frank Fonds. Although it does represent a new era that discusses the audience's relationship with memory, there is little new information gleaned in this play, aside from discussing some of the discord with her father that was neglected in previous incarnations.

Although Anne is shown in Bergen-Belsen at the end of the play, her condition has not deteriorated, even at the time of her death. We do not see the despondent Anne

⁴³⁸ Tripadvisor.co.uk n.d. *Anne Frank Her Diary on Stage*. Retrieved from https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/Attraction_Review-g188590-d7808640-Reviews-Anne_Frank_Her_Diary_On_Stage-Amsterdam_North_Holland_Province.html#REVIEWS. 22 May 2016.

⁴³⁹ Liphshiz, C. Jewish Telegraphic Agency. 18 March 2014. *At new Anne Frank theater in Amsterdam, tragedy and fancy dinners*. Retrieved from <http://www.jta.org/2014/03/18/news-opinion/world/at-new-anne-frank-theater-in-amsterdam-tragedy-and-fancy-dinners>. 22 May 2016.

that Chapter One, and key eyewitnesses, tell us her final days left her in. Instead, we still see an Anne who is cheerfully comforting her sister as the two lie dying of typhus, asking her what she is dreaming of and what the two will do after the war.

This last scene may be touching dramatically, but it still shows that the freedom to show Anne as she really was is still not completely there—and may not be—as long as the Anne Frank Fonds exists to guard over her memory.

While *Anne* also represents a post-survivor narrative, Buddy Elias, who is now no longer living, also tightly controlled it. As such, this is one of the last plays about Anne that has been reviewed by a close relative of hers. As such, we are now ushered into a new age where that voice is now silenced, and the image of Anne is now subjected to the Anne Frank Fonds and the public at large.

Conclusion

Studying theatre as it relates to *The Diary of Anne Frank* is one area that seems to have been neglected over the years. While sparse studies do exist on the Holocaust in theatre, the idea of discussing one victim and the way she is represented continuously throughout history, from her death to present, has been neglected.

While some may argue that theatre is less pervasive than film and therefore not as important of a topic of study in the realm of the memory of the Holocaust, it is important to note that theatre is often the precursor to films, making it one of the first lenses people look at historical events through. While theatregoers may also only be a select type of audience, theatre itself is also by and large reflective of the society around it. Therefore, studying the way Anne Frank's image has changed through the vein of theatre represents a strong case study in the changing image of Holocaust and memory.

Simply by using *The Diary of Anne Frank* as an example, we can see the cultural shifts that have taken place in the last 70 years since the Holocaust. In the 1950s, for example, the shame of survivors was pervasive, as were stories about the Holocaust without the Holocaust in them, as discussed in Chapter 2. As such, the original version of *The Diary of Anne Frank* plays like a kitchen sink drama, typical of plays of the era. The Holocaust is not discussed in depth, and the play manipulates and falsifies facts in order to universalize the piece and make Anne seem like a relatable everyday girl. In fact, one could easily forget that she was in hiding because she was Jewish and without context, might mistake the play for the story of any working class teen during that time. As such, this reliability to Anne, and the omission of the horror of the end of her life, made her an easy martyr and saint-like figure to hold up as an emblem of the Holocaust.

When the play was redone in the 1990s, the element of the survivor had been completely done away with, as by then many survivors had begun to pass on. Any shame Otto Frank may have carried because of his experience was tossed aside, as

were any of his previous reservations in order to ensure that Anne was as “authentic” as possible.

Of course, it is impossible to capture an “authentic” version of a person, even in autobiographical form. However, by the 1990s, the Holocaust had become pervasive in American culture, as discussed in depth in Chapter 3. Thus, the idea of making Anne universal fades and gives way to the identity culture of the time. The quest for historical accuracy is followed through with minute detail, as films that feel very real like *Schindler’s List* are the order of the day. Anne’s Jewishness, for better or worse, becomes front and center, as does the Jewishness of periphery characters who were otherwise ignored, or their Jewishness not mentioned much in the diary originally.

The Kesselman version of the play is not fully devoid of the horrors of the Holocaust, but does not delve deeply into it either. Otto Frank’s monologue at the end of the play tells us what happened to the characters, but Anne is still portrayed as an optimistic teenager, who was “even happy in Westerbork.” The depression she experienced at the end of her life, and the utter desperation and deplorable conditions that surrounded her death are omitted in order to maintain the illusion that Anne’s optimistic words are in spite of the horrors she had experienced—even if they were written months before.

In the 1990s, the sense of urgency that the survivors are now beginning to disappear seems to foster in society at large, as well as within the plays about Anne Frank, the idea that the Holocaust must be preserved for future generations. Because its authenticity was ignored for such a long time, it seems as though the 1990s is a time to make up for that by creating almost a rote re-enactment of what happened during the time in the Secret Annex, even though the Goodrich, Hackett and Kessler version fails to do so on many levels. Because of the increasing interest in the Holocaust of the time, Anne’s story does not seem as important as others, and it ultimately is not as impactful as it was when it first made its debut.

Moving forward, theatre about Anne in the 2000s and 2010s transcends historical accuracy and focuses on the author's relationship to Anne or Anne in terms of memory. Anne thus becomes a tool not for teaching about the audience's relationship to the Holocaust, but for asking questions such as "What would she think if she could see how her diary has impacted the world today?" and "How will Anne be remembered moving forward?"

In some cases, Anne is used as a vehicle to tell someone else's story, to criticize the way the Holocaust is presented in popular culture or as a way for the author to discuss and digest their own familial relationship with the Holocaust. Using Anne as a conduit can help the author dig deeper into their own family's history or act as a buffer for the memories that become too painful. In this way, she is an archetype and almost becomes a person who never truly existed. In a way, however, Anne Frank as the public imagines her never did truly exist, which makes this a fair statement and assumption.

The most recent 2015 theatrical offering, simply entitled *Anne*, mixes the 1990s with the author's relationship to the play. Again, Anne's final hours are shielded from the audience's view. While Anne is portrayed in Bergen-Belsen suffering from typhus, she regales the audience with her story via a fever dream. Instead of portraying Anne in the terrible fevered state she was, in which she threw out her clothes due to the lice becoming unbearable on her body, she sits calmly and collectively, dreaming pleasant dreams to distract herself and her older sister Margot from the horrors of the Holocaust.

While this version strives for accuracy within the dialogue and sets, it does not offer much new to the narrative, aside from creating a fully Dutch Anne. Additionally, it utilizes the trope asking the audience what would have happened had Anne lived, incorporating some of the elements of our relationship to Anne as a memory instead of simply telling her story as it appears in the *Diary*.

Many theatre scholars have stated that theatre's task is to hold a mirror up to society, a phrase that is quoted as early as the Shakespearean play *Hamlet* when it

is stayed in Act III Scene 2 that the purpose of playing is to hold a mirror up to nature.

Max Stafford-Clark is also well known for having expressed this notion, in terms of stating that theatre should hold a mirror up to society in its political form. While theatrical versions of *The Diary of Anne Frank* do not hold a mirror up to society in the same way that Stafford-Clark is expressing, they do hold a mirror up to the politics of memory and tells scholars much about how the field memory changes and the way art is shaped due to these trends that come and go.

The Future of Anne Frank's Image in Theatre and Society at Large

As we continue to lose survivors of the Holocaust and their "official" narratives, how the Holocaust is represented in modern society will continue to change and shift. In Alvin H. Rosenfeld's book *The End of the Holocaust*, he states that the era we are living in is one where the survivor is absent, as discussed previously in this thesis. Although the survivor is absent from Anne's story today, as the time of the publication of this thesis, survivors are still able to tell their stories, though their numbers may be dwindling.

In two to three generations, Anne's story, like many others, will become almost folklore, passed down from one generation to the next like a baton and will remain alive in our memories solely as cultural representation. Rosenfeld says, "Two or three generations from now, it is like that the term 'Holocaust' will still be in circulation, but as a historical referent it may no longer bring so vividly to mind the events that it still is capable of conjuring today, especially among those who were subjected to its horrors and survived to tell about them."⁴⁴⁰

Throughout this thesis, it has been made extremely clear that Anne's words are not only protected, but viewed as sanctimonious and holy, almost as though they are

⁴⁴⁰ Rosenfeld, A. 2011: *End of the Holocaust*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, pp. 240.

from a Bible passage. The Anne Frank Fonds insists, despite Anne's obvious intelligence and capability, which she demonstrated from the tender age of 15, that they are merely protecting her in attempting to vet who uses her words.⁴⁴¹ But does this capable young woman's legacy ultimately need babysitting and protection? This question remains ever more relevant as those who did know her begin to die, leaving those of us left with only her enduring words. How can her legacy be fully protected by those who did not even know Anne personally? And would Anne, who dreamed so vividly about becoming a world famous writer, want her words to be protected in such a way? If Anne was frustrated by what she perceived to be her mother's overbearing nature in her diary, it is interesting to imagine how Anne herself might perceive the current disputes and desperate efforts to control her identity.

Additionally, the memory of the Holocaust, for right or wrong, will continue to experience cultural resurgence from time to time due to the fascination of society at large. Today, it is, as Raul Hillberg describes, "a market of absolute evil against which all other transgressions in the conduct of nations could be measured and assessed."⁴⁴²

Additionally, Alan E. Steinweis notes in his essay included in Flanzenbaum's *The Americanization of the Holocaust*, that the interest in the Holocaust ebbs and flows due to not only public interest, but the "significance attached to 'victim' status in American culture."⁴⁴³ As such, the interest in Anne's story will come and go, though there will always still be a core audience for her work.

⁴⁴¹ Flood, A. The Guardian. 18 January 2016. *Anne Frank's diary caught in fierce European copyright battle*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/jan/18/anne-franks-diary-caught-in-fierce-european-copyright-battle>. 27 May 2016.

⁴⁴²Hillberg, R. 1996: *The Politics of Memoery: The Journey of a Holocaust Historian*. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee. pp. 123.

⁴⁴³Steinweis, A. 1999: Reflections on the Holocaust from Nebraska. In H. Flanzenbaum (ed). *The Americanization of the Holocaust*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, p. 179.

But the question ultimately comes down to, as so many times asked, especially after the death of her father and closest confidant, “Who owns Anne Frank?” And can her image accurately be protected, even with the tight intervention of the Anne Frank Fonds?

Legally, the Anne Frank House and Anne Frank Fonds “own,” or hold authority over Anne’s image and will continue to do so as long as the Fonds can manipulate laws so that they are able to retain control over her image. Whether the motivation is money or a moral obligation that they see to Otto Frank is less clear, but it is apparent that their rules will continue to govern Anne’s image in popular culture despite the landscape of politics of memory of the time.

I mentioned in the introduction of this thesis that Anne’s image has become sanitized, and the “real Anne” that lives in the minds of theatrical producers and Otto’s memory may be but a shadow of her, but are not Anne as she would have presented herself. Instead, moving forward with the white-knuckle grips the foundations hold on Anne’s images, we are steering further and further away from what the Anne was like. It has become, in a way, unfair on Anne’s memory as she does not control it herself, and as such, she has moved from being a person to a mere symbol. The fights between the Fonds do not remedy this situation in the slightest, but perhaps further elevate her to sainthood or as a martyr.

However, as this thesis has presented, one can argue that although it is wrong to use the language “owns” in regards to Anne Frank (she, in that respect, although no longer alive, owns herself), the legacy of Anne Frank is in effect public domain. Though the Fonds have tried and continue to try to ensure that there is one image about her presented, it is clear that Anne’s story means many things to many different people. Seeing the reaction of the casts and crews of the productions of *The Diary of Anne Frank* makes it incredibly clear that even an “official” script can have many different motivations and interpretations behind it. This is, in essence, the beauty of theater: one can take the same script and create vastly different works from artist to artist.

Additionally, although artists have been barred from using specific words from Anne's diary, that has not stopped them from creating new material on Anne. This can be seen in reference to books, such as *Annexed* by Sharon Dogar, which tells the story of the Secret Annex from Peter's perspective, *The Boy Who Loved Anne Frank* by Ellen Feldman, a fictional account of "what if" Peter had survived the war, and many, many more stories. Additionally, major films, such as 2001's *Anne Frank: The Whole Story* have been made without the "blessing" of the Fonds, and as this thesis discusses, entire plays have been created without using the exact words Anne wrote in her diary.

Anne's story has so captured the public's imagination that parodies of her story or comedic references have even been made on popular television shows like *South Park* and *Robot Chicken*.

While's Anne's official narrative might be problematic to scholars, historians and theatrical producers, it none the less is a testament to our eternal fascination with an incredibly intelligent and insightful girl who never had the chance to grow up. She has become a symbol of all of the children who perished in the Holocaust, and sometimes even a symbol of all of the children murdered in world conflicts. For many teenagers around the world, they have read her words and related to her struggles with her parents and sister and the shy pangs of a first love. Anne has become every one of us, despite any control others feel they have over her.

And while it is impossible to say what Anne would have really wanted had she survived the Holocaust, it is clear that her legacy and story is so captivating that it cannot belong to one person or foundation. Anne Frank belongs to no one. Anne's legacy belongs to everyone.

However, Anne Frank herself belongs to only one person: Anne Frank. Her legacy has become so divorced from the actual human being that this legacy can only be beholden to everyone. She is molded, bent and shoehorned into different works of art to serve people's agendas, including the very foundations created to protect her. She has also been manipulated by society at large to fit her into the current

popular narrative of the time, and how the Holocaust is represented in popular culture.

It is clear from the popularity of the new production that her popularity will endure. But as we move forward, her popularity extends less to the authentic and more to the theatrical character that has been created from memory. This version of Anne belongs to all of us.

The authentic Anne, however, belongs to Anne and Anne alone—and there is no way for scholars, writers, directors or artists to capture her spirit as it truly existed, as much as they will continue to try to achieve this impossible feat.

Appendix: Consent Form

The Image of the Holocaust in Postwar American and British Theatre

A PhD research project organised by the Stanley Burton Centre for Holocaust Studies (SBC), University of Leicester

Since 1946 with the commercial success of Ben Hecht's Holocaust political drama, *A Flag is Born*, the Holocaust has been a staple subject for many theatre companies in the United States and Britain. Few seasons pass by without the mention of productions such as *The Diary of Anne Frank* or *Cabaret*, while lesser known and new works about the Holocaust created by British or American writers are ever increasing. These works are important to our cultural narrative, as English is the predominate language of the arts. Additionally, many plays are often turned into films, meaning how the Holocaust is portrayed in the English speaking world on stage has an enormous effect on how the narrative of the Holocaust will continue for the next several generations. As many survivors die off, these theatrical works will live on to carry the legacy to future generations. The memory of the Holocaust will gradually be separated from Holocaust as survivors are replaced with theatrical narratives, which may be politicized or subject to second or third-hand information. Artists are not historians and should not be held to that standard and their responsibility is not necessarily to provide accurate historical information; however they are shaping the way the world remembers a very important and tragic event.

As the Holocaust provides many questions about the human condition and human nature, it is not surprising that many artists choose to explore the topic on stage. This project aims to study why and how many artists in the United States and Britain, with very little personal connection to the Holocaust, have chosen to write, direct or perform in plays dealing with the subject. Many theatre companies produce plays with a social action intention (such as genocide prevention) or in conjunction with their own or an outside education department,

however, this study aims to also target what, if any impact, these programs have on students, the general public and the American and British perceptions of the Holocaust.

Interviews will be conducted by email or via forms in person after a production. In some cases, a follow-up phone session may be required or an interview in person may be requested. In all interviews, names may be disclosed (particularly those of playwrights), unless you wish to remain anonymous. If you do wish to remain anonymous, please indicate.

Interviews will be done at your leisure and when convenient to you, unless conducted as a group interview or at an appointed time via the telephone or in person. You are free to choose not to answer specific questions or to withdraw your participation at any time.

This project aims to contribute towards gaining a better understanding of how theatre of the Holocaust is produced, why it is produced in such large quantities in English, and how educational theatre companies can better reach their audiences and/or target social action programs and genocide prevention. The project will contribute to a larger dialogue of the politics of memory and the portrayal of the Holocaust in modern art and will serve to fill the void of theatrical audience reception studies and the portrayal of a modern tragedy on stage.

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Copyright Assignment & Consent Form:

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The Holocaust in British Popular Culture: Interpretations of Recent Feature
Films

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RECORDINGS

The purpose of this assignment and consent is to enable the 'The Image of the
Holocaust in Postwar American and British Theatre' project to permanently
retain and use written words and/or sounds recordings of participants.

In respect of the content of a sound recording or written words made by and, or,
being deposited with the 'The Image of the Holocaust in Postwar American and
British Theatre' project, consisting of the recollections of a contributor and
constituting a literary work as defined by the Copyright, Designs & Patents Act
1988:

As present owner of the copyright in the contributor content (i.e. the words
spoken/written by the interviewee), I hereby assign such copyright to the 'The
Image of the Holocaust in Postwar American and British Theatre' project. I
hereby waive any moral rights, which I presently own in relation to this work on

the understanding that the content will not be used in a derogatory manner and that the author of the contribution will be correctly identified in all uses of it. I understand that no payment is due to me for this assignment and consent. In assigning my copyright, I understand that I am giving 'The Image of the Holocaust in Postwar American and British Theatre' the right to use and make available the content of the recorded or written interview in the following ways:

- * use in schools, universities, colleges and other educational establishments, including use in a thesis, dissertation or similar research
- * public performance, lectures or talks
- * use in publications, including print, audio or videocassettes or CD ROM
- * public reference purposes in libraries, museums & record offices
- * use on radio or television
- * publication worldwide on the Internet

Do you wish to remain anonymous? YES/NO

Do you want your name to be disclosed? YES/NO

.....Not sure which one is in accordance with the new copyright laws...

Brief details of deposited material (indicate name(s) of recordist):

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Signed: Date:

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Address:

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Email:

'The Image of the Holocaust in Postwar American and British Theatre' project
use

Signed on behalf of 'The Image of the Holocaust in Postwar American and
British Theatre'

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Subject of

deposit:.....

Accession number:

© in sound recording also assigned YES/NO or N/A

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