



History on Trial: My Day in Court with a Holocaust Denier

By Deborah E. Lipstadt

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. In a much-publicized case, David Irving, the author of numerous books about WWII, sued Emory University historian Lipstadt and her British publisher, Penguin, for libel. Lipstadt had called Irving a Holocaust denier in a book about the Holocaust denial movement, and Britain's libel laws put the burden of proof on her to show that the charge was true. Did that mean proving the Holocaust had happened? Was Lipstadt, as Irving claimed, trying to restrict his freedom of speech, or was he restraining hers? Was the courtroom the proper place to examine historical truth? The press hotly debated these issues, but as Lipstadt relates in this powerful account, she and her adept lawyers felt they simply had to discredit a man who had said that "no documents whatsoever show that a Holocaust had ever happened." In 2000, Judge Charles Gray decided in Lipstadt's favor, finding it "incontrovertible" that Irving was a Holocaust denier. The drama of the book lies in the courtroom confrontations between an evasive and self-contradictory Irving (serving as his own lawyer) and Lipstadt's strategically brilliant barrister, Richard Rampton, and the scholars who testified in her defense. Lipstadt herself is a reluctant heroine, a feisty, outspoken woman forced to remain silent (she did not testify in court) and let her lawyers speak for her. No one who cares about historical truth, freedom of speech or the Holocaust will avoid a sense of triumph from Gray's decision—or a sense of dismay that British libel laws allowed such intimidation by Irving of a historian and a publisher in the first place.

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From School Library Journal

Adult/High School—In *Denying the Holocaust* (Penguin, 1994), Lipstadt called Irving, an English author of books on World War II and the Third Reich, the most dangerous Holocaust denier because his works were reviewed in mainstream journals and he commanded a certain level of respect and influence in the field. Irving later sued her and her publisher, Penguin UK, for libel. Under English law, the burden of proof in a libel case rests with the defendant. The core of the book is the trial itself, combining a page-turning eyewitness account and a close look at the mind-set and dubious research methods of a neo-Nazi. Irving served as his own lawyer and constantly courted press coverage. Among his assertions: Hitler did not order the *Kristallnacht* violence but attempted to stop it; the Allies were responsible for typhus epidemics in the concentration camps; Anne Frank's diary is a romantic novel; more people died in Ted Kennedy's car at Chappaquiddick than in the gas chambers at Auschwitz. Ultimately, Irving's case collapsed under the weight of evidence and expert testimony provided by the defense. In addition to possible use with the curriculum, this book will appeal to teens interested in modern history, historiography, and law.—Sandy Freund, Richard Byrd Library, Fairfax County, VA

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From [Bookmarks Magazine](#)

Emotions run high when the subject of the Holocaust comes up for discussion, yet reviewers approached Lipstadt's account with even, critical, and generally positive eyes. Many gave the author credit for presenting a multifaceted case in a riveting, highly readable manner—her spin differs from books written by those who testified on her behalf—Richard J. Evans's *Lying About Hitler* (2001) and Robert Jan van Pelt's *The Case for Auschwitz* (2002)—and one journalist's account—D.D. Guttenplan's *The Holocaust on Trial* (2001). A few critics, however, found the narrative slowed by excessive detail, and noted that the book suffers from a few dry patches. In terms of tone, opinions ranged from "a little self-righteous" (*Baltimore Sun*) to "never loses its suspense, readability or momentum. Or humor" (*Salon.com*). Despite these disparate comments, all critics agreed that Lipstadt's story is a fascinating one and an important historical lesson for the record.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Karen Moore:

The book *History on Trial: My Day in Court with a Holocaust Denier* make you feel enjoy for your spare time. You should use to make your capable considerably more increase. Book can for being your best friend when you getting stress or having big problem using your subject. If you can make examining a book *History on Trial: My Day in Court with a Holocaust Denier* to be your habit, you can get more advantages, like add your personal capable, increase your knowledge about a number of or all subjects. You can know everything if you like available and read a book *History on Trial: My Day in Court with a Holocaust Denier*. Kinds of book are a lot of. It means that, science book or encyclopedia or other people. So , how do you think about this reserve?

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Michael Sweet:

History on Trial: My Day in Court with a Holocaust Denier can be one of your nice books that are good idea. We recommend that straight away because this publication has good vocabulary that may increase your knowledge in words, easy to understand, bit entertaining however delivering the information. The article author giving his/her effort to put every word into joy arrangement in writing *History on Trial: My Day in Court with a Holocaust Denier* nevertheless doesn't forget the main position, giving the reader the hottest in addition to based confirm resource information that maybe you can be one of it. This great information could

drawn you into brand-new stage of crucial imagining.

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