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Book Review: In the Presence of Butterflies: The Story of the Original Butterfly Project

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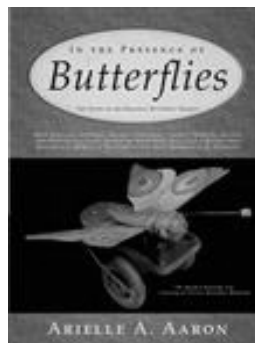
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College dedicated to educating the young citizens of Charleston to an internationally renowned center of higher education. Morrison illustrates this identity change with a fair, unbiased perspective as she describes the rationale behind various presidential decisions, and she takes care to describe the response of the academic faculty to these changes. The author is understandably less able to provide an unbiased perspective when recounting the blatantly and unabashedly sexist or racist behavior of many College administrators.

A college without students is nothing, and the same is true for a book about a College's history. No matter how deeply Morrison's prose becomes intertwined with the politics of the school's administration, she always remembers the students. The author describes various aspects of student life, such as the commencement regalia, class satisfaction, and recreational activities. The author also mentions illustrious alumni. While student life does take a narrative back-seat to the political and administrative history of the College, the reader still obtains a solid understanding of the student body's evolution.

In the end, this is an extremely well-researched and well-written book that succeeds in illuminating both the mistakes and successes of the College of Charleston in the past 70-plus years. Though a more extended summary of pre-1937 history for context would have been useful, it remains an easy yet scholarly read. A highly recommended purchase for collections with an emphasis on South Carolina history or the development of higher education and civil rights in the south. It is currently available in hardcover and is not available as an electronic book.

Tammy Ivins
Francis Marion University



Aaron, Arielle A. *In the Presence of Butterflies: The Story of the Original Butterfly Project*. Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2011. 192 p. ISBN 978-1-4634-3285-0. \$29.95

Teaching children about the Holocaust is never easy. It's obviously not a pleasant topic. One always considers how to teach about the horrific and not horrify; how to warn about history's terrible tendency to repeat itself without terrifying listeners about the future. Arielle A. Aaron's, (aka Joy Summerlin-Glunt), *In the Presence of Butterflies* speaks to those concerns by providing answers to those very questions and providing methods and suggestions for materials to do so.

Butterflies documents the story of the original Butterfly Project planned and directed by South Carolina Social Studies teacher Eleanor Schiller. If you've had the pleasure of reading Ms. Aaron's previous work, *I Remember Singing*, you will remember Eleanor (Ellie) is the wife of Hugo Schiller whose Holocaust survival

story was related in the book. Ellie and Hugo planned and directed a project in which over one million paper butterflies made by school children and collected by teachers all over the world were placed on a field in memory of the children who died in the Holocaust. The project not only gave people a visual picture of the magnitude of the lives lost, it also gave those involved the opportunity to teach and/or learn about the Holocaust and honor those who died.

Chapter one is the why behind the Butterfly Project. Essentially it is the acknowledgement that what happened in Nazi Germany was due simply to pure, unadulterated evil allowed to grow to the point of disaster. *Butterflies* emphasizes that evil has been with us throughout history and will continue to be. As such, it waits for its chance to emerge and take over. Our best defense is to teach our students about it and prepare them to resist it on an individual level each and every day so it does not grow to the point it overcomes us or our societies as it nearly did in the last century. This is the mission of the Schillers, the Butterfly Project and Ms. Aaron's book.

Chapters two through twelve give an account of the original Butterfly Project as well as subsequent Butterfly projects. They are accompanied by poems, student letters, pictures and paintings. The Butterfly Fields are stunning. If there is any fault at all in these chapters, it is that the butterfly pictures and paintings were not reproduced in color – that, however, is a minor issue.

Chapters thirteen through seventeen are short biographies of those persons behind or influential to the project including Ellie and her husband Hugo and Alice Resch Synnestvedt, the woman who resisted Hitler's evil by helping save as many

children as she could, one of whom was Hugo Schiller.

Chapters nineteen through twenty-two include information on museums and centers dedicated to researching, documenting and educating about the Holocaust, and commemorating the lives lost. Chapter nineteen discusses the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C., and includes some of the Museum's suggested guidelines for teaching about the Holocaust.

The remaining chapters discuss the Yad Vashem world center for Holocaust documentation established in 1953; Simon Wiesenthal, Holocaust survivor and Nazi hunter; the Simon Wiesenthal Center founded in Los Angeles in 1977 and the Center's Museum of Tolerance founded in 1993; as well as the Terezin Memorial established in 1947 in the Czech Republic to commemorate the victims of the Terezin Ghetto.

The entire final chapter, twenty-three, is a highly useful extended Holocaust chronology. It includes events that occurred in Germany and Europe before Hitler's rise, during his years of power and the post-war years after his fall up to June of 1948. Immediately following the book's bibliography, are sections on how to teach about the Holocaust to ages K-Adult; best approaches and practices for teaching middle school and adult students; teaching the Holocaust across the curriculum; and discussion topics. There is also an extensive list of age appropriate reading suggestions that include fiction and non-fiction; a section on teacher resources; a list of books and films for adults; and a vocabulary list for students.

Finally, there is a section that speaks to the heart of the book's mission and the reason

we remember the Holocaust. Like Aaron's earlier book *I Remember Singing*, there is an emphasis on learning from the past and becoming personally responsible for making the world a better place. This section speaks to that responsibility with suggestions that will hopefully prevent similar catastrophes from occurring in the future.

Although the tragedy of the Holocaust can be a difficult topic to teach, *In the Presence of Butterflies* is a valuable teaching resource that manages to turn feelings of sadness about the past and helplessness to change it into positive, action-oriented hopefulness of preparing ourselves and future generations to recognize and resist evil in whatever form it may take in the years to come.

Paris E. Webb

Marshall University Libraries



Golland, David Hamilton. *Constructing Affirmative Action. The Struggle for Equal Employment Opportunity*. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2011. 248 p. ISBN 978-0-8131-2997-6. \$50.

This book by Golland is a thorough account of one of the most divisive issues in the 20th century.

Golland tells his readers early on that this book is not about the role of affirmative action in higher education.

What this book does cover is the federal legislation that set the stage for the affirmative action implementation.

The author writes in detail about both the advocates and opponents of affirmative action; the differing stances of the presidents in the oval office regarding this issue; the role of the federal government in affirmative action, and the difficulty implementing affirmative action.

This book also is an examination of the powerful entities that were both for and against affirmative action and the “bureaucratic inertia” Golland refers to which succeeds in delaying Affirmative action’s goals. The book also is about the Supreme Court decisions which upheld many of the President Johnson-era laws and programs. Golland notes how grassroots organizations at the local level were able to effect change at the national level.

Golland, a history professor at the City University of New York, decided to focus much of his coverage on the events that took place in Philadelphia during the first years of affirmative action. Then President Richard Nixon enacted the Philadelphia Plan in 1969 which was one of the first major applications of this plan. Similar plans were created in other cities, after the Philadelphia Plan emerged.

The Philadelphia Plan was a program that required federal contractors to hire and train