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Der Giftpilz, or *The Poisonous Mushroom*, written by former school teacher Ernst Hiemer (1900-1974), is an antisemitic children's book published in 1938. The original text of the book was reprinted until 1940. It is currently located in six California libraries as a non-circulating text. The universities who hold the original text include University of California-Los Angeles and the University of Southern California. Not much is written about Ernst Hiemer. According to his Wikipedia page he was born in Spalt, Germany and died in Altötting, Germany. It also says he worked as a writer for *Der Stürmer*, also as a school teacher in the 1920s, where he probably took an interest in writing children's literature. This information is confirmed both by his Nuremberg court testimony and by Gregory Wegner's book, *Antisemitism and Schooling Under the Third Reich* (2014).

Hiemer published two other books, *Der Pudelmopsdackelpinscher*, The Mongrel (1940) and *Der Jude im Sprichwort der Völker*, The Jew in the Proverbs of the People (1942). *Der Pudelmopsdackelpinscher* is another children's book containing short stories, and *Der Jude im Sprichwort der Völker* lists antisemitic sayings. None of the articles written by Hiemer for *Der Stürmer* could be found. *Der Giftpilz* is comprised of seventeen short stories that are designed to teach German children the dangers of Jews. The stories warn children of the cruelty, backwardness, thievery, and evilness of Jews, with particular attention to Jewish men, who are described as criminals and lechers. The appearance of the Jew is also a large component of the book, "the hook-nose" is an indicator of the Jewish race, serving as a marker of their inferiority. The book gains its title from the first story in which a mother and her young son discuss the danger that Jews pose to the German population, the son then says that the Jew is like a "toadstool/poisonous mushroom," poisonous to organisms around it. The book villainizes the Jewish faith and the whole of the Jewish world population. The book was published by *Der Stürmer* publishing house. Julius Streicher (1895-1946), the owner and editor of *Der Stürmer*, was tried in the 1946 Nuremberg Trial and *Der Giftpilz* was entered into evidence as proof of the antisemitic texts published by Streicher. It is probable that due to the use of *Der Giftpilz* as evidence, the 2006 reprinted version of the 1938 book names Julius Streicher erroneously as the author of the book.

Commented [hm1]: This could be a separate entry in the ann. bib. below.

Image: Ngram of Ernst Hiemer and *Der Giftpilz* [prof's note: the ngram is not very revealing in this case]



Annotated Bibliography

1. Hiemer, Ernst, and Hensley Henson. 1938. *The Poisonous Mushroom*. London: Friends of Europe
The first translated copy of this work was published the same year by the publication Friends of Europe which was an anti-Nazi journal. The translation includes a forward written by Dr. Herbert Hensley Henson (1863- 1947) of the Church of England. **The forward is a condemnation against the book itself and antisemitism.**
2. Warburg, G. O. 1939. *Six Years of Hitler: The Jews Under the Nazi Regime*. G.Allen & Unwin. <https://books.google.com/books?id=HJygAAAAAAAI>.
One of the first books to mention *Der Giftpilz*, *Six Years* is an analysis that details the treatment of the Jews under the first six years of Hitler's regime. It is also a counter to the argument that Jews were not being persecuted in Germany during this time. *Der Giftpilz* is mentioned as a text that was targeted to children.
3. M. Baumont and International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies. 1955. *The Third Reich: A Study*. Praeger. <https://books.google.com/books?id=F0TAQAAMAAI>
This 910-page book from the University of Wisconsin- Madison is focused on the spread of Nazi ideology and the Nazi party's rise to power and its control over the German economy and politics. *Der Giftpilz* is cited as an example of Nazi ideology and its power over the German public. The book was cited as evidence in Julius Streicher's trial.
4. Baird, Jay W.. 1978. "Das Politische Testament Julius Streichers". *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 26 (4). Oldenbourg Wissenschaftsverlag: 660-93. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30195161>.
This document lists *Der Giftpilz* under the evidence list compiled against Julius Streicher during his **April 30, 1946 hearing** during which time the author of the book Ernst Hiemer gave testimony. The text is in its original German; Google translate was used to translate part of the text.
5. Mieder, Wolfgang. 1982. "Proverbs in Nazi Germany: The Promulgation of Anti-semitism and Stereotypes Through Folklore". *The Journal of American Folklore* 95 (378). University of Illinois Press: 435-64. doi:10.2307/540750.
This journal article discusses how antisemitism was spread through the use of folklore and stereotypes. The power of folklore and stereotypes was exploited by the Nazi party. Ernst Hiemer's third book *Der Jude im Sprichwort der Völker* is mentioned in this source as a text which promulgated Jewish stereotypes.
6. Wegner, Gregory Paul. 2002. *Anti-semitism and schooling under the Third Reich*. New York, N.Y.: Routledge Falmer.

Commented [hm2]: How hard is it to obtain a copy? Did you see it? What in particular does it condemn? Isn't it unusual that a 'critical edition/translation' of a *children's* book is published the same year as the original? Who was Henson?
This annotation could be beefed up for v. 2.

Commented [hm3]: One might search for the original Nuremberg Trial publication and get a citation from there.

This 2002 book discusses how Nazi ideology was inserted into the classroom setting. *Der Giftpilz* was according to the author used in the classroom setting with Elementary aged students. This book details the short stories written in *Der Giftpilz*.

7. Pagaard, Stephen. 2005. "Teaching the Nazi Dictatorship: Focus on Youth". *The History Teacher* 38 (2). Society for History Education: 189–207. doi:10.2307/1555719.

Like the Gregory Wegner book, Stephen Pagaard's book focuses on the Nazi teachings in the classroom and outside of the classroom, in Nazi youth organizations. The book *Der Giftpilz* is cited as an example of Nazi doctrine in youth literature that was taught and read in schools by young children.

[prof's note: this is excellent and all that was expected for version 1. However, for v. 2 you could say a bit more about the various editions--instead of the ngram, which doesn't tell us much, you could use worldcat's "Find more information about:" link: <http://ucsb.worldcat.org/wcidentities/lccn-no98076924>.

Also, this book is available with images and translations on various websites found by a regular google search, and it has its own Wikipedia page--which has some very interesting leads at the end: a copy is on display at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, a modern translation is offered for sale on a neo-Nazi website. Translating the German Wikipedia page reveals how many copies were published, and the illustrator's name--further leads that could become separate entries in the annotated bibliography.

Also, a google books search brings up several relevant titles:

Nazi propaganda Zbyněk A. B. Zeman, 1973 <https://books.google.com/books?id=8hRoAAAAMAAJ>
Teaching and Studying the Holocaust 2009 by Samuel Totten, Stephen Feinberg
My guess is that the notes in Wegner's book (no. 6 above) would have further references to round out how relevant and widely invoked this book still is today.]