

The writing is uneven and does not flow well, which appears to indicate that the three writers did indeed share in the writing. One wishes that they had communicated more often during the final draft. One of the more annoying mannerisms is the paraphrasing of a source, only to follow immediately with a full quotation of the source. The writing style is also uneven, and is probably a result of the co-authorship factor. These are little things, but they interfere with the reader's concentration, especially when one begins to anticipate a quote or tries to guess which one of the three authors wrote this chapter.

Overall, the writers make a strong case for disbanding the Rangers, and this was their purpose. However, there are too many mechanical and stylistic problems to make this book anything more than a volume of propoganda. Unfortunately, little else has been written in this vein from a Chicano viewpoint, thus, we should see a great deal of this book in Chicano studies classes.

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BARBARA MYERHOFF. *NUMBER OUR DAYS*. New York: E. P. Dutton, 1978. 306 pp. \$12.95.

Number Our Days had its genesis in a research project on ethnicity and again at the University of Southern California where author Barbara Myerhoff is chairman of the department of anthropology. Her study of a group of elderly Jews living on and around the beach in Venice, California and who were members of the Aliyah Senior Citizens' Center, was undertaken reluctantly after Professor Myerhoff encountered resistance among the elderly Chicanos she had intended to study. The study absorbed four years of her life and ended in this record of surpassing warmth and intelligence of the past and present of a people in the tag ends of whose lives the remnants of an entire culture reside.

Having been enjoined by the Chicanos to "study her own kind," Professor Myerhoff finds herself friend and sometimes family member (Josele Masada decided she was his long-lost granddaughter) to the elderly Jews, as well as emissary from an outside world usually blind and deaf to their existence. The old people were mostly from the same Eastern European world of shtetls as her own grandparents, and in their advanced age, Professor Myerhoff sees prefigured her own future. Perhaps it is in part because she never really resolves the question of whether what she was doing was "anthropology or a personal quest" that *Number Our Days* has the wonderful immediacy of good fiction along with the insights into another culture we seek in good anthropology.

Shmuel the tailor becomes Professor Myerhoff's key informant. Although he is one of the "most educated and interesting people in the community," Shmuel Goldman was a difficult choice, nonetheless. His critical and judgmental intelligence had alienated him from the group of Jews with whom he shared common roots and traditions. Myerhoff's friendship with Shmuel engenders suspicion among many Center people who respect Shmuel, but distrust his atheism, his anti-Zionism and his hostility to formal organizations. Professor Myerhoff's forays into the world of the Center are enhanced, interpreted, often even directed by Shmuel's knowledge of Jewishness and by his sensitive understanding of the dynamics of the Center. He is a guide to the shared past of the Center people as well. He goes back more and more, he says, in his thoughts and dreams to his youth in Poland, and in telling Myerhoff of those memories, he gradually unfolds for her the roots of "Yiddishkeit," of the fold culture that barely survives today, and will almost surely die with the generation of Jews of whom Myerhoff writes. Describing his life in the small town in Poland that was his home and that of generations of his family before him, Shmuel laments the destruction of that place and way of life by Hitler:

It is not the worst thing that can happen for a man to grow old and die. But here is the hard part. When my mind goes back there now, there are no roads going in or out. No way back remains because nothing is there, no continuation. Then life itself, what is its worth to us? Why have we bothered to live? All this is at an end. For myself, growing old would be altogether a different thing if that little town was there still. All is ended. So in my life, I carry with me everything -- all those people, all those places ... If my life goes now, it means nothing. But if my life goes, with my memories, and all that is lost, that is something else to bear.

The loss of Yiddishkeit, of a time and place that will die with the memories of Shmuel and other members of his generation, all past eighty now, is not the only tragedy of the world Myerhoff reveals to us. Nor is the accelerating loss of faculties, powers and competencies of these aging people who were the "one-generation proletariat." They came as immigrants in poverty, out of oppression, to rear a first generation of Americans to become successful professional and business people. The sad irony of that miracle was the creation of an unbridgeable gap between themselves and those children who, because of their parents' struggles, live in different worlds. Still more poignant is the loss in our world of meaning and purpose that we must feel keenly when we read of the Aliyah Center Jews. Profoundly removed from the narcissism that characterizes modern American culture, the Center Jews continue to live by the values that informed the lives of countless generations of Jews before them. Shmuel the atheist says, "For me, acts more than beliefs make a Jew. Judaism means you know yourself, your

traditions, your history, you live them. To be a good human being, in the Jewish way, to believe in life, to believe in humanity, to follow the Ten Commandments, that is enough to be a good Jew." For the Center Jews, that means to do in retirement and old age what they've always done. Their belief in life, in humanity emerges in the continuation in their materially narrowed lives of the rituals and traditions that tie them to God, to their own dead and to "all the Jews who are doing these same things even if I can't see them." It emerges in the philanthropy that is more important to them than anything the money might buy; and in the continuing sense of obligation to the world around them and to the generations to follow. Rebekah, Shmuel's wife, continues the labor movement activities of her working years in efforts on behalf of Chicano migrant laborers. When Professor Myerhoff asks her, "Do you enjoy that work?" Rebekah answers, "Who could enjoy standing in a parking lot on a cold day, arguing with strangers? You don't do these things to enjoy. It has to be done, that's all."

It is in that tradition of humanity and responsibility to others that Myerhoff gives us the book. Shmuel dies, but he has told his story to Professor Myerhoff, and because of her it is not lost.

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JAY P. DOLAN. *THE IMMIGRANT CHURCH, NEW YORK'S IRISH AND GERMAN CATHOLICS, 1815-1865*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975. 221 pp. \$12.50, \$3.95 paper.

Jay Dolan confines this study on immigrant Catholicism in New York City largely to the half-century between 1815 and 1865. He does, however, briefly note significant ties among events occurring in the secular world of Europe and America which influenced the nature of the migrations and the attitudes of the immigrants. (For example, the Germans of '48 brought with them political leanings that their predecessors had had). It is important to keep in mind that it was the era *following* the American Civil War when the great waves of immigrants, including large numbers of Catholics from southern and eastern Europe, poured into the United States. The half-century of which Dolan writes was the time when Catholicism survived early nativist attacks and when it became firmly established particularly in the eastern United States of which New York was a prime example.

As the title suggests, Dolan devotes this study to Irish and German Catholics. Early on, he discusses the transfer of loyalty