

Pushing Time Away – My Grandfather and the Tragedy of Jewish Vienna
by Peter Singer. Granta 2004.

Peter Singer is a Professor of Bioethics, a distinguished author and a well known champion of animal rights and welfare; it is a reasonably safe surmise that his grandfather, David Oppenheim, at least until the publication of *Pushing Time Away*, is less known.

The sub-title of this book might lead the reader to assume that it is largely a 'Holocaust' memoir, but in fact it is much more: a biography of the author's grandparents, David and Amalie, both of bisexual inclination but happily married until David's death in Theresienstadt in 1943, David's professional life as a classical scholar and collaborator with Sigmund Freud and Alfred Adler, his military service during World War 1, their daughters Kora and Doris and their escape from Nazified Austria to Australia, and David and Amalie's struggle to survive after the 1938 Anschluss.

Peter Singer intersperses his own experiences in the telling of this story, his researches into his family's past, his visits to those surviving men and women who knew his grandparents, and to the places they lived and David died, the former 'show camp' of Theresienstadt/Terezin.

Singer writes movingly of the travails of his family, and with great insight and clarity of their motivations and actions during an extraordinary six decades.

This is a memorable addition to the growing bibliography of Jewish memoirs from the first half of the 20th century, and one the content of which encapsulates the tragedy that befell so many European Jews as a result of racial bigotry and Nazi myopia.

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