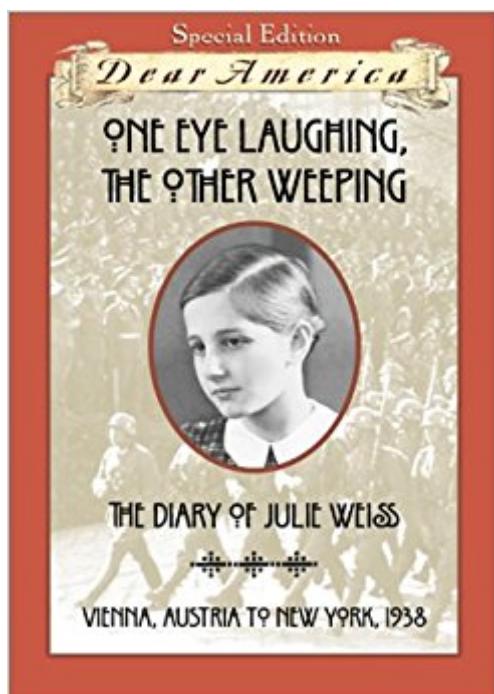


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# One Eye Laughing, The Other Eye Weeping: The Diary Of Julie Weiss, Vienna, Austria To New York 1938 (Dear America Series)



## **Synopsis**

During the Nazi persecution of the Jews in Austria, twelve-year-old Julie escapes to America to live with her relatives in New York City.

## **Book Information**

Age Range: 9 - 12 years

Lexile Measure: 950L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 254 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars 79 customer reviews

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## **Customer Reviews**

Grade 5-9-A story set in Vienna on the eve of World War II. Eleven-year-old Julie Weiss adores her rich and successful father, but is ambivalent toward her superficial mother. Step by step, the girl, her Jewish family, and their friends suffer from the violent persecution inflicted on them by the Nazis. Her mother commits suicide. Her father, one of the few Jews who foresaw what would happen, is able to send Julie to her mother's sister in America. There, in shock and despair, the child takes time to mend, but the kindness of her aunt, an actress, and her jolly husband help her to start a new life. The pace of the story quickens rapidly as conditions in Austria escalate from a pervasive anti-Semitism to life-threatening Nazism. Denenberg furnishes adequate foreshadowing in the Vienna portion, two mysteries in the United States section, and a satisfying family relationship (relevant to the two mysteries) that adds interest and contributes to an upbeat ending. Marcia W. Posner, Holocaust Memorial and Educational Center of Nassau County, Glen Cove, NY Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.

This entry in the Dear America series follows 13-year-old Julie Weiss through the pivotal year 1938,

when the Nazis invade Austria. Julie's father is a beloved doctor in Vienna, her mother a social butterfly, her brother a Zionist. Although Julie knows she is Jewish it doesn't mean much to her until the Nazis come, and the Jewish population is terrorized; Julie's mother commits suicide rather than endure the coming horror. Dr. Weiss has had the foresight to give Julie English lessons and gets her to an aunt in New York. Here the story takes on a fairy-tale quality. Julie's aunt is a famous stage actress, and within a few short months Julie is appearing on the stage with her, to much acclaim. The book contains some omissions: no mention of Julie's trip from Vienna to New York, and after a few bad moments, not much questioning of what has become of her family. But author Denenberg does a good job of capturing what it must have been like for Viennese Jews, who felt secure with their lives and friendships only to find everything can change in a minute. Photos of Vienna and New York, as well as other information, are appended. Ilene Cooper Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

I loved this book as a child. It was one I read over and over. Flash forward to 2013. I made a goal over the summer: I would read all the dear America books. At first, it was just the ones I hadn't read, but soon I was re-reading all the books. And when I got to this one, I remembered reading it a lot and loving it. Then I re-read it. I can't say how much I don't like Julie. She is a complete brat, and I can't sympathize with her at all. There are terrible things going on around her and all she cares about is a fight she had with her friend over her hair or her fights with her brother Max. The second part of the book makes no sense. She comes to America and is immediately picked to be in a play. Um....shouldn't there be a language slash accent barrier here? I understand she left a bad situation, but to come into one that's so good is hardly realistic. I'm not sure why I liked this book so much, but it's down pretty far on the list when I rank these books

One Eye Laughing (World War II) / 0-439-09518-2 Unlike most Dear America books, the first half of "One Eye Laughing" occurs not in America, but rather in Austria. Julie is a blonde, blue-eyed Jewish girl who watches with growing concern and apprehension as Hitler marches on her beloved city. When the Nazis take over with the barest hint of a fight, she and her family and friends are rounded up to be hurt, humiliated, and tortured for the delight of the non-Jewish population. Julie flees, alone, to America and the second half of the book begins. The first half, the Austrian half, is troublesome in predictable ways. It seems evident that it would be almost impossible to accurately portray the atrocities of World War II in a manner that would not be disturbing for young adults. When Julie's mother is ordered to 'dress up' in her finest clothes and then dragged off by a group of soldiers, only

to return hours later quiet, withdrawn, and suicidal, it is pretty clear that she was brutally gang raped. Julie's mother later commits suicide, as do many of Julie's friends. Julie tells the tale of one man who is doused with gasoline and set on fire. Julie's brother leaves the family to run off to Palestine, and her father (infuriatingly) refuses to accompany her to America, saying that his patients need him more than she does. The overwhelming tone of the story is one of isolation, pain, and hopelessness. Obviously, such a tone is historically accurate, but the result is probably not palatable for many children and young adults. Certainly, reactions will depend on the child in question. Part two details Julie's new life in America and is frankly rather boring. Julie settles in with her new family with very little problems and immediately begins to live a sort of charmed life. Because she does not want to be mocked for her accent in school, she is given private tutors. She quickly becomes a celebrated success when she unexpectedly subs for "Wendy" in her aunt's professional rendition of "Peter Pan" and the local newspapers crow loudly about the lovely new actress. We receive no further information about Julie's missing brother (is he safe? did he make it to Palestine?) or her father (was he murdered? sent to the camps?) until the brief and depressing epilogue. Julie does not follow the war in the papers because it upsets her. As such, the last half of the novel is almost completely useless as a glimpse into history because Julie encounters neither the War, nor the culture around her, by virtue of being completely sheltered. The story of her rise to fame is whimsical and light, probably meant to offset the opening horrors of the first half, but the overall combination is rather unpleasant. The result seems to be an introduction of horrors watered down by an unfinished story. I highly recommend that parents read "One Eye Laughing" before providing it to a child, and be prepared to answer the tough questions that World War II always raises. ~ Ana Mardoll

I bought this for my 14 year old daughter for her book club and she really enjoyed it.

I read it before giving it to my son top read.. it is well written very sad though.. Just FYI!!

This book is a special edition of Dear America series and also a kids book. It is, however, a good kids book. I have never read much about any Holocaust survivors that were from Austria where this story takes place. The story is taken from the diary of Julie Weiss in Vienna, Austria covering the dates of January 1 1938 to November 28 1938. Basically, it shows how her life is turned upside down after Germany takes over Austria in March 1938. Julie is able to escape to the United States in June 1938 staying with her Aunt and Uncle in New York City. After the Germans take over Austria

the book is very fast paced, actually like a whirlwind of horror. The worst part is, these events are based on the truth. The character and story are fiction based on fact. A good book for learning about the Holocaust and a good read.

Do Not judge the first few pages. When I stared to read it I fell in love. The author wrote this book so different but so amazing. And its amazing journey in the Holocaust. When I was in school reading this book i was so tuned into the book i could not hear anything because i was so into the book. To wrap it all up I will 100% offer this book to friends. One of my favorite books

It is a good book to read.

Fantastic young adult book!

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