



Meshuggenary: Celebrating the World of Yiddish

Payson R. Stevens, Sol Steinmetz, Charles M. Levine

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Rumors that Yiddish is a dead language are greatly exaggerated. In fact, both the Yiddish language and culture are alive and well in America and elsewhere. English speakers take note: *The Random House Dictionary* and the *Oxford English Dictionary* both contain almost 100 Yiddish words that are now considered part of the English language. The impact of Yiddish culture is strongly felt in the films of Woody Allen, in Broadway shows like *The Producers*, and in television sitcoms such as *The Nanny* and *Seinfeld* in the tradition of the comic headliners of the Catskills. The world of Yiddish reaches out and embraces us in the literature of Isaac Bashevis Singer and Art Spiegelman, the culinary offerings of innumerable delicatessens, and the renewed popularity of *klezmer* music.

Yiddish is rich and soulful, thick with pathos, full of humor and self-deprecating wit and sarcasm -- as a language it uniquely captures the essence of what, or who, it describes. If you've ever *noshed* on a *bagel*, or yelled at the *schmuck* who had the *chutzpah* to cut you off at the traffic light, you've been enriched and empowered by Yiddish.

Beautifully designed and illustrated, *Meshuggenary* is a deeply researched and eclectic introduction to Yiddish language, culture, and history. It explores the basics of Yiddish vocabulary and grammar; proverbs, expressions, blessings, curses, and insults; and even the difference between Yiddish, Yinglish (Yiddish-origin words now part of English), and Yiddlish (words that sound Yiddish but aren't). There are chapters on Yiddish humor, literature, theater, and music; a who's who of Yiddish luminaries; and a captivating glimpse of the contributions of women to its literature and culture. So you shouldn't go hungry, there's a chapter on food with a tempting selection of family recipes. And if this little taste isn't enough to satisfy you, there's information on a host of books and Yiddish Web sites and Internet links.

Erudite, accessible, highly informative, and enormously entertaining, *Meshuggenary* is an irresistible pleasure.



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Barbara Butler:

Playing with family inside a park, coming to see the ocean world or hanging out with pals is thing that usually you could have done when you have spare time, after that why you don't try issue that really opposite from that. Just one activity that make you not sensation tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you already been ride on and with addition details. Even you love Meshuggenary: Celebrating the World of Yiddish, you can enjoy both. It is very good combination right, you still need to miss it? What kind of hangout type is it? Oh can happen its mind hangout people. What? Still don't obtain it, oh come on its known as reading friends.

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