

Emails between [Dr. Sybille Steinbacher](#), director of the [Fritz Bauer Institute](#); [Dr. Barbara Distel](#), who directed the Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site for 33 years; and myself.

This exchange took place between September 25, 2018, and October 14, 2018. I fixed some formatting issues but made no other changes.

Von: Daniel Slosberg
Gesendet: Dienstag, 25. September 2018 16:51
An: Sekretariat Prof. Dr. Steinbacher
Betreff: help identifying potential Holocaust fraud

Dear Professor Steinbacher,

I found your name at the USHMM website and see that you've done a lot of work on Dachau. I'm hoping that you can help me.

I am a writer and musician in Los Angeles. I've been investigating the career of a public figure — Diana Nyad — who often tells a story about a Holocaust survivor who was ostensibly transported from Krakow to Dachau in late 1942 or early 1943. I've come to believe that Nyad fabricated the whole thing, possibly by piecing it together from other stories she heard or read. Could you take a look at the story — it's brief, and I've also summarized it below — to see if it makes sense?

In particular, I have a two Dachau-related questions, though I welcome any thoughts you have:

1. Is it likely that a family consisting of a mother and two daughters would have been transported from Krakow to Dachau around the end of 1942?
2. Is there any record of a three-year-old at Dachau being subjected to the kinds of things that Nyad describes?

...

In the following, I've gathered details common to most or all of the six versions I'm familiar with. If you want to read the whole thing — it runs about two printed pages — you can find the version from Diana Nyad's 2015 memoir, *Find a Way*, here: <https://wp.me/P9c9ol-ZS>. I've also posted a spreadsheet (<https://tinyurl.com/y7764vos>) that links to the six versions and highlights some differences among them.

SUMMARY

At dinner after one of her talks, Nyad meets an elderly woman (never named) who is originally from Kracow, Poland. This woman is a professor at the university (also unnamed) where Nyad just spoke.

Nyad identifies the woman as a survivor because she sees numbers tattooed on her arm.

The woman tells Nyad her story: When she was three years old, the Gestapo came to her home in Kracow. They shot her father because he refused to leave. They forced her, her mother, and her six-year-old sister onto a train to Dachau.

At Dachau, they were separated. The mother and sister went to the right, the three-year-old went to the left and never sees her family again. The Nazis then force the three-year-old into sexual

slavery, making her serve as “the little concubine” to the camp’s SS officers. The survivor then gives — in Nyad’s telling — horrifying details about what the SS officers did to her.

Two and a half years later, with the camp liberated, a French family adopts the girl. On the first day with her new family, the girl tells the adoptive mom everything that happened in the camp. The new mom then gives the girl a little pep talk, whereupon she (i.e. the girl) goes on to live a rich, full, happy life.

...

Two details immediately call the story’s validity into question:

1. The Nazis did not tattoo prisoners at Dachau, only at Auschwitz.
2. The survivor’s age. Nyad claims, in one version, that she was 88 when they met “a couple of years” before an event in 2011 (see <https://vimeo.com/28469108>, 10:06). In all versions, Nyad says that the woman was three when she entered the camp and that the camp was liberated 2½ years later. That makes her five or six in 1945. If that were true, she won’t turn 88 until 2027.

Please understand that I am not questioning whether or not sexual abuse happened during the Holocaust. I know that it did and that it was probably much worse than we could ever imagine. I am, however, questioning the facts of this particular story, a story that I suspect Diana Nyad made up and now deploys for her own benefit.

Again, I’d very much appreciate hearing anything you have to say about Nyad’s account. Also, if you know of anyone else who might be helpful, please feel free to forward this message.

Sincerely,

Daniel Slosberg
Los Angeles, CA

From: Sekretariat Prof. Dr. Steinbacher
Subject: AW: help identifying potential Holocaust fraud
Date: October 1, 2018 at 12:17 AM
To: Daniel Slosberg

Dear Mr. Slosberg,

thank you for your email. I forwarded it to Dr. Barbara Distel, the former director of the Dachau concentration camp memorial site.

Best,

Sybille Steinbacher

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Prof. Dr. Sybille Steinbacher

Fritz Bauer Institut - Direktorin
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Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main

Norbert-Wollheim-Platz 1
60323 Frankfurt am Main

From: Barbara Distel

Subject: your letter to Prof. Steinbacher from September 25, 2019

Date: October 14, 2018 at 8:54 AM

To: Daniel Slosberg

Cc: Sybille Steinbacher

Dear Mr. Slosberg,

Professor Steinbacher had been on vacation so she asked me to answer your e-mail of September 25, 2018. Unfortunately I have been away too which is the reason it took me so long to get to your request, please forgive me.

I read the text on the Internet and watched the report and now try to answer your questions:

1. Dachau was a concentration camp for men only, there were never families or mothers with children. Jewish families in Poland were sent to Ghettos and from there to the death camps, or directly to the death camps in Poland, never to Germany. The description refers to Auschwitz, the way she tells it is completely fictional.

During the last years (1943 - 1945) a large number of subsidiary camps was established where Dachau prisoners worked mostly for the German armament industry. There were some subsidiary camps and work detachments where also women prisoners worked. Shortly before the liberation on April 29, 1945 there were about 67 000 inmates in Dachau and its subsidiary camps, 4600 of them were women (4000 Jewish women). There was a number of babies who had been born shortly before the liberation.

2. There were no three year old children in Dachau, contrary to Buchenwald concentration camp there was no children's barrack in Dachau.

I have never heard of sexual abuse of children in Dachau concentration camp.

Sincerely

Dr. Barbara Distel

(former director of Dachau concentration camp memorial site)