The Cannibals: A Study Guide

Cast of Characters
The Loudspeakers.
Heltai, a survivor.
Hirshler, a survivor.
Puffi, a fat man.
Klaub, a medical student.
Ghoulos
The Gypsy.
Uncle.
The Ramaseder Kid.
Weiss, the cook.
Little lang.
Proffessor Glatz.
The Silent Haas.
S.S. Schrekinger, The Angel of Death.
Kapo.

Setting

(Source: As listed in the text of the play.)

George Tabori- The Playwright

George Tabori was born may 24, 1914, in Budapest, Hungary, one month before World War One began. He was raised in a secular Jewish family.

During the beginning of the Second World War, Tabori was a journalist and war correspondent, working for the BBC. As a journalist, Tabori was well aware of what the Nazis were doing to the Jews throughout Europe. He called his parents, requesting they come to visit him in Istanbul, in 1941. They refused, preferring to stay home. He never forgave himself for not demanding they come. His mother, somehow, escaped deportation to the camps. His father, however, was not so lucky. He was taken to Auschwitz, where he was murdered in 1944.
Many of his plays deal with the Holocaust. The Cannibals takes place in a bunkhouse in Auschwitz. The main difference with Tabori’s Holocaust material is that he resists sentiment, and never makes his Jewish protagonists into saints. He used Brechtian Techniques “to counteract any cheap emotionalism, to alienate the audience, and to shock them into serious (re-) consideration of the past.” He also called the play a “ritual of remembrance, in which the actors repeatedly abandon situation in order to concentrate on the process of remembering.” Tabori also called The Cannibals a “black mass.”

Tabori also showed the other victims of the Holocaust in his work. “Most important is that the Jewish protagonists are not the only victims in these plays, nor are they depicted sentimentally as victims.” Alongside the Jewish characters in the play, there is a Greek, a German, a Gypsy, and a homosexual. Throughout the play, the characters argue about the need to survive versus the need to stay civilized, about eating or being eaten. “In the end, most of them are eaten by the ovens or gassed.” In Tabor’s world, the Jews were not the only victims, and therefore did not have exclusivity on suffering.

In another of his plays, Mein Kampf: A Farce, Tabori presents with Herzl, an Austrian Jew, who meets Adolf Hitler in a flophouse. He is given the opportunity to save Hitler’s life, but with the full knowledge of what will happen if Hitler is allowed to survive.

**Plays by George Tabori**

- *Flight in Egypt* (produced 1952)
- *The Emperor’s Clothes* (1953)
- *Miss Julie*, adaptation of play by August Strindberg (1956)
- *Brouhaha* (1958)
- *Brecht on Brecht* (1962)
- *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Uri; A Gangster Spectacle*, adaptation of play by Bertolt Brecht (1963)
- *Andorra*, adaptation of play by Max Frish (1963)
- *The Guns of Carrar*, adaptation of play by Brecht (1963)
- *The Cannibals* (1968)
- *Mother Courage*, adaptation of play by Brecht (1970)
- *Clowns* (1972)
- *Talk Show* (1976)
- *Changes* (1976)
- *Weisman and Copperface* (1991)

(Source: [www.jewish-theatre.com](http://www.jewish-theatre.com))
**Auschwitz- The Setting**

Auschwitz was the largest camp run by the Nazis during World War Two. It was responsible for the largest number of prisoners at a single camp. Auschwitz itself was broken into three separate camps:

**Auschwitz I-** A concentration camp, and the first of the three to open. 70,000 deaths occurred at this camp. Above the entrance gate to the camp hangs the infamous sign reading “Arbeit Macht Frei”, or, “Work Shall Set You Free”. The “B” in Arbeit was hung upside down by Jewish prisoners, in a subtle protest.

**Auschwitz II-** The largest of all the Nazi’s camps. Statistics differ from source to source, but most numbers agree that roughly one and a half million to two million people were put to death, a little over a million of them being Jews. Many non-Jews were also imprisoned in this and other camps: Poles, Gypsies (Roma), homosexuals, mentally ill, and almost anyone else the Nazi’s deemed unfit, or ‘subhuman”. Railroad tracks ran right into the center of the camp. Prisoners were let out of the cattle cars, where Nazi doctors would immediately inspect them. Those deemed fit enough to be of service, generally men between the ages of 18 and 35 were led off in one direction, to be laborers. Those deemed unfit (women, children, the elderly, and infirm) were led off in the other direction, more often than not straight to the crematorium, or gas chambers. This camp is also where Dr. Josef Mengele, “The Angel of Death”, conducted his medical experiments, on dwarves, twins, children, and many others. The camp doctors also conducted sterilization experiments on women at the camps.

**Auschwitz III-** a labor camp. Prisoners here were forced to work in nearby munitions and chemical companies. Included in this camp were several small satellite camps, near the neighboring town of Monowitz.

The two main methods of execution at Auschwitz, and many of the other camps throughout Europe, were the crematoria and the gas chamber. The crematoria were basically large ovens. The prisoners would put in, and cremated alive. The crematoria were all destroyed during or right after the war. During the war, they were able to run twenty-four hours, processing thousands in a day. One was reconstructed at Auschwitz after the war. It is now part of the standing museum/ memorial that Auschwitz has become.

Many times, the prisoners, after coming off the trains, would be told they were being marched to showers, to disinfect and wash away any lice or bacteria that may have been acquired during the long trips across the country in the cattle cars. They were marched into large concrete structures. They were told to hang their clothes on hooks, and, naked, would then move into a large open space. They were told to breathe in deep, that it would be beneficial for their lungs. What was pumped into the sealed room was called Zyklon B. Zyklon B is a chemical that produces cyanide gas. Within half an hour, everyone would be dead. Hundreds of people would be marched in at a time.
There were 700 escape attempts at Auschwitz, with roughly 300 successful. Those that failed were put to death.

**Cannibalism: The Taboo**

The first, or the last taboo, depending on how you look at it, is cannibalism. It is a taboo that before which, there were none, and after which, remained the greatest. There are several reasons/causes for cannibalism in human society, and the main one being the most obvious is of course: people are hungry. There are several different types of cannibalism. I will group them as follows: tribal society, in war, people lost on land and sea, the insane and finally the celebrity wake of cannibalism.

Many tribal societies have at one time or another been accused of cannibalism. It is said that we have a gene whose specific purpose is to protect us from diseases that can only be transmitted from eating human brains. Anasazi, Aztecs and inhabitants in Fiji, Yucutan, Columbia, Polynesia and Brazil, have all been linked to Cannibalism. In 1618 in the Seneca Valley in New York, the Native Americans were accused of eating the dead after a battle. Captain James Cook was eaten by natives in Hawaii. Critics have debated and attacked implications that primitive societies engaged in cannibalism as baseless and sensationalistic. And they themselves have been attacked for revisionism and denying the facts.

War is also brutal, and its brutality cannot be more emphasized than in the practice of cannibalism. Whether to satisfy their hunger, or simply putting no value on human life in their stressful circumstances, accusations of this practice are commonplace against soldiers in war. In Vietnam, on all sides except for the American and Italians in WWII (even in the concentration camps), in WWI, in Sierra Leone, the Congo, and even during the cultural revolution in China cases have been documented. But Cannibalism in war goes back to the first crusades and even as far back as Hannibal in the Alpine mountains in the 3rd century BC!

Those lost on land and sea face a cruel choice between life and the first foundation of society. The most famous historical incident has been the Donner party, but even more recently was a Ugandan Rugby team portrayed in the movie *Alive*. There have been several documented cases of French or English vessels capsized and lost at sea giving into their hunger and eating their unconscious or dead companions. And even when not traveling, specifically the great famine of 1315-1317 there were numerous reports of cannibalism.

But the most sensationalistic, and even starmaking, cannibals have been the psycho-sexual mass murderers. Haarman, Spesiwtsew, Fish, and more recently Dahlmer. The most discouraging sicko is Issei Sagawa, who in 1981 ate a Dutch woman in France and because of the international legal system was quickly released, becoming a celebrity in Japan. He still writes a weekly column. Armin Miewes is another one that leads us to
question assisted suicide. In 2001, in Germany, he found a willing victim to dine on through the internet. He is thankfully serving a life sentence.

And of course, art being what it is, artists have used this material, even before Hansel and Gretel, for their own purpose. Murialist Diego Rivera claimed to have dined on many cadavers in 1904 and believed that it was the mark of a modern mind to do so. In 2000 Chinese performance artist Zhu Yu ate a baby on the internet, raising the eyebrows of Scotland Yard and the FBI. Eminem in one of his songs claims to be a cannibal. Trey Parker has a musical about this very subject. *The Silence of the Lambs* and *The Cook The Thief His Wife and Her Lover* deal with this subject as well. And to bring things into a full circle, the rapper and actress Eve recently ago broke up with her boyfriend because of rumors that his father practiced cannibalism.

**Suggested Writing Prompts**

1. Choose another fictional piece dealing with the Holocaust (i.e. *Schindler’s List*, *Sophie’s Choice*, *Night* by Elie Wiesel, etc.) and compare it to *The Cannibals*. Look at similarities and differences in techniques, conventions, humor, writing style, approach to material, etc.
2. Pick a character from *The Cannibals*, and follow his individual story. How does his specific journey inform the actions and themes of the play?
3. Personal Experience: Are you related to or do you know someone who was a victim of the Holocaust? Knowing their story, how did that affect your experience watching *The Cannibals*?
4. Why do you feel this particular story was expressed in the manner it was? Use instances from the play to prove or disprove why you feel this manner of storytelling is more affective than other methods of storytelling.
5. What effect does it have on you that Tabori deals with cannibalism in the concentration camps?
6. Why does Tabori deal with the subject of cannibalism in the concentration camps?
7. Would circumstances ever drive you to cannibalism? What is your opinion of the inmates who participated in cannibalism? What is your opinion of those that fought against it? What is your opinion of those that aided but did not commit the act?
8. What is your opinion of cannibalism? Has this play changed your opinion of the subject? What specific instances in the play affected you most?
9. Why do you think that Heltai and Hershler were the survivors? Explain
10. How does this play struggle with the idea of civility? Give specific examples.
11. How does the staging differentiate between modern times and the concentration camp past?
“The Cannibals” by George Tabori

GLOSSARY

Abominable/Abomination (page 210): Worthy of causing hatred or disgust.

Auschwitz, Auschwitz-Birkenau (page 201): Located about 37 miles west of Krakow, Poland, the Auschwitz-Birkenau area was annexed by Nazi Germany in 1939. The Auschwitz concentration camp was the largest forced labor facility and human extermination center during World War II. 90% of the deaths were Jews and while the exact number of deaths remains controversial, scholars estimate 1.1 million Jewish, 140,000-150,000 Polish, and 23,000 Roma (Gypsy) deaths occurred at Auschwitz.


Auschwitz Trot (page 201, 203): “The way to and from work had to be covered at a brisk military trot; anyone falling out of line was shot. On my arrival about 3,000 people, of whom 2,000 were Slovak Jews, were working on this emplacement. Very few could bear the strain and although escape seemed hopeless, attempts were made every day. The result was several hangings a week.”

**Babooshka** (page 252): Scarf (like a bandana) worn over the head.

**Bel Canto** (page 238): Italian: Beautiful singing. A style of operatic singing popular in the early 19th century known for “perfect evenness throughout the voice, skillful legato, a light upper register, tremendous agility and flexibility, and a certain lyric, ‘sweet’ timbre.”

(Source: Wikipedia)

**Bertolt Brecht, “Brechtian Theatre”**: Bertolt Brecht was a German playwright of the mid-20th century. Two Brechtian Theatre ideas include:

--- Epic Theatre: Also called ‘theater of alienation’ or ‘theater of politics’, Brechtian ‘Epic Theater’ strives to create an effect that raises the playgoer’s experience above entertainment or a dramatized version of reality and, instead, turn it into an opportunity for an audience to evaluate different sides of an argument.

--- Alienation Effect: *Verfremdungseffekt* in German, the ‘Alienation Effect’ is a Brechtian device that breaks the audience from their ‘suspension of disbelief’ and makes them aware they are watching actors in a play, oftentimes achieved by breaking the illusion of the fourth wall between the actors and the audience. While Stanislavski method works to make the actors to become entirely believable in their characters that the audience forgets they are watching actors in a play, Brechtian ‘Alienation Effect’ works conversely to remind the audience that they are watching actors on a stage presenting a dramatized form of argument.

**Black Mass**: A parody of Christian Mass practiced by Satanists in which Satan is praised and Jesus is cursed. The Christian ‘Host’ is profaned and defiled sometimes replaced. Often flesh is eaten in its place.

(Source: Wikipedia)

**Block 11** (page 255): The prison block in Auschwitz, where both Jews and non-Jews were punished for crimes by the Gestapo. Christians, notably Catholic priests and German dissidents, were tortured before being shot.
Cannibalism: Also known as 'anthropophagy;' humans eating human flesh. Considered one of the last taboos of civilized culture, many human societies have participated in various forms of cannibalism including endocannibalism (eating dead relatives) in order for the deceased to achieve immortality, criminal cannibalism (Jeffrey Dahmer) which is linked to sexual fetish and dysfuntion, exocannibalism (eating war captives or enemies) for the purpose of gaining their spiritual strength, mythic cannibalism (Hansel and Gretel), and survival cannibalism (Donner Party, Holocaust victims) which is the most acceptable form of cannibalism today although there are cases of survival cannibalism that have met with criminal prosecution. "Blood Libel" is a form of cultural libel in which one culture accuses another less developed culture of cannibalistic practices typically with children as the victim.

The Charleston (page 223): A dance popular in the United States around 1923 and named after the city of Charleston, South Carolina, ‘The Charleston’ has it’s roots in African dance movement and was first seen in the Broadway show ‘Runnin’ Wild’ and can be danced alone or with a partner. Simple movements swing the arms alternately as the dancer steps forward and kicks and the steps back and lunges with the alternate foot.

Chicory Leaves (page 252): Wild weed, edible leaves, cousin to the dandelion.

Cloven (page 216): Past participle of ‘to cleave.’ Divided, split in two. A cloven hoof is divided into left and right halves.

Cock crowing (page 203): Jewish tradition by the time of Christ, the night was broken into four watches: even, midnight, cock-crowing, and morning.

Csepel Camp (page 236): Forced labor camp in Budapest, Hungary where all Hungarian Gypsies were rounded up and then transferred to Auschwitz.
(Source: Barsony, Janos and Daroczi, Agnes. “Roma Holocaust, Facts and Denials.”
http://www.osi.hu/rpp/Revision2.htm)

Deuteronomy: (Page 216-217): The fifth book of the Hebrew Bible which prevent Jews from eating blood and includes a list of animals Jews are forbidden to eat as in Chapter 12:

“23: Only be sure that thou eat not the blood: for the blood is the life; and thou mayest not eat the life with the flesh.
24: Thou shalt not eat it; thou shalt pour it upon the earth as water.”

And in Chapter 14:7-20: “

“7: Nevertheless these ye shall not eat of them that chew the cud, or of them that divide the cloven hoof; as the camel, and the hare, and the coney: for they chew the cud, but divide not the hoof; therefore they are unclean unto you.
8: And the swine, because it divideth the hoof, yet cheweth not the cud, it is unclean unto you: ye shall not eat of their flesh, nor touch their dead carcase.
9: These ye shall eat of all that are in the waters: all that have fins and scales shall ye eat:
10: And whatsoever hath not fins and scales ye may not eat; it is unclean unto you.
11: Of all clean birds ye shall eat.
12: But these are they of which ye shall not eat: the eagle, and ossifrage, and the ospray,
13: And the glede, and the kite, and the vulture after his kind,
14: And every raven after his kind,
15: And the owl, and the night hawk, and the cuckow, and the hawk after his kind,
16: The little owl, and the great owl, and the swan,
17: And the pelican, and the gier eagle, and the cormorant,
18: And the stork, and the heron after her kind, and the lapwing, and the bat.
19: And every creeping thing that flieth is unclean unto you: they shall not be eaten.
20: But of all clean fowls ye may eat.”

(Page 239) Deuteronomy 28:22-26: Passages that list punishments for Jews who fail the honor the word of God:

“22: The LORD shall smite thee with a consumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning, and with the sword, and with blasting, and with mildew; and they shall pursue thee until thou perish.
23: And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron.
24: The LORD shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust: from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed.”
25: The LORD shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies: thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them: and shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth.
26: And thy carcase shall be meat unto all fowls of the air, and unto the beasts of the earth, and no man shall fray them away.”


Dresden Town (page 263): German town leveled by U.S. and other allied forces, indiscriminately killing civilians.

The Eternal Verities: (page 220): Refers to the enduring truths of life. The Theosophical Society holds ‘The Eternal Verities” as part of their doctrine in explaining the nature of consciousness and reality, the ideas of karma and reincarnation in that “life is not born nor does it die… death is simply a separation.”


Faro Game: (page 228) A card game with nearly 1:1 odds, invented in Europe in the 17th century, popular in the American ‘Old West’ (as seen in the movies “Tombstone” with Kurt Russell and both ‘Wyatt Earp’ and ‘Open Range’ with Kevin Costner) but became unpopular in contemporary casinos because the odds did not favor the ‘house’.

Faust/Faustian (page 226, 228): Relates to Christopher Marlowe’s play, “Dr. Faustus” or Goethe’s “Faust” in which the main character makes “a deal with the devil” for immediate gains only to pay with eternal damnation. Faustian deals relate to winning short term pleasures only having to pay dearly in long term pains. (Source: Wikipedia)

Fettucini con insalata verde (page 220): Italian: ‘Fettucini pasta with a green salad.

“The Final Solution”: A euphemism used by Hitler and his followers to describe the genocide of all non-Nordic people, especially Jews. Himmler’s letter describing Nazi Germany’s approach to “the final solution to the Jewish problem in Europe”:

I herewith order that the resettlement of the entire Jewish population of the Government-General be carried out and completed by December 31, 1942.

From December 31, 1942, no persons of Jewish origin may remain within the Government-General, unless they are in collection camps in Warsaw, Cracow, Czestochowa, Radom, and Lublin. All other work on which Jewish labor is employed
must be finished by that date, or, in the event that this is not possible, it must be transferred to one of the collection camps.

These measures are required with a view to the necessary ethnic division of races and peoples for the New Order in Europe, and also in the interests of the security and cleanliness of the German Reich and its sphere of interest. Every breach of this regulation spells a danger to quiet and order in the entire German sphere of interest, a point of application for the resistance movement and a source of moral and physical pestilence.

For all these reasons a total cleansing is necessary and therefore to be carried out. Cases in which the date set can not be observed will be reported to me in time, so that I can see to corrective action at an early date. All requests by other offices for changes or permits for exceptions to be made must be presented to me personally.

Heil Hilter!

H. Himmler

(Source: Yad Vashem: Jewish Virtual Library; http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Holocaust/Himorder.html)
Diary of Hans Frank, then Governor General of Occupied Poland. In a cabinet session on Tuesday, December 16, 1941, in the Government Building at Cracow, Frank made the following closing address:

"As far as the Jews are concerned, I want to tell you quite frankly that they must be done away with in one way or another. The Führer said once: 'Should united Jewry again succeed in provoking a world-war, the blood of not only the nations which have been forced into the war by them, will be shed, but the Jew will have found his end in Europe'. I know that many of the measures carried out against the Jews in the Reich at present are being criticized. It is being tried intentionally, as is obvious from the reports on the morale, to talk about cruelty, harshness, etc. Before I continue, I want to beg you to agree with me on the following formula: We will principally have pity on the German people only, and nobody else in the whole world. The others, too, had no pity on us. As an old National-Socialist, I must say: This war would only be a partial success if the whole lot of Jewry would survive it, while we would have shed our best blood in order to save Europe. My attitude towards the Jews will, therefore, be based only on the expectation that they must disappear. They must be done away with. I have entered negotiations to have them deported to the East. A great discussion concerning that question will take place in Berlin in January, to which I am going to delegate the State Secretary Dr. Buehler. That discussion is to take place in the Reich Security Main Office with SS-Lt. General Heydrich. A great Jewish migration will begin, in any case.

"But what should be done with the Jews? Do you think they will be settled down in the 'Ostland', in villages? This is what we were told in Berlin: Why all this bother? We can do nothing with them either in the 'Ostland' nor in the 'Reich kommissariat'. So liquidate them yourself.

"Gentlemen, I must ask you to rid yourself of all feeling of pity. We must annihilate the Jews, wherever we find them and wherever it is possible, in order to maintain there the structure of the Reich as a whole. This will, naturally, be achieved by other methods than those pointed out by Bureau Chief Dr. Hummel. Nor can the judges of the Special Courts be made responsible for it, because of the limitations of the framework of the legal procedure. Such outdated views cannot be applied to such gigantic and unique events. We must find at any rate a way which leads to the goal, and my thoughts are working in that direction.

"The Jews represent for us-also extraordinarily malignant gluttons. We have now approximately 2,500,000 of them in the General Government, perhaps with the Jewish mixtures and everything that goes with it, 3,500,000 Jews. We cannot shoot or poison those 3,500,000 Jews, but we shall nevertheless be able to take measures, which will lead, somehow, to their annihilation, and this in connection with the gigantic measures to be determined in discussions from the Reich. The General Government must become free of Jews, the same as the Reich. Where and how this is to be achieved is a matter for the offices which we must appoint and create here. Their activities will be brought to your attention in due course."
**Fourth Wall:** The imaginary, invisible wall that exists between the actors on stage and the audience. In a proscenium theater, the fourth wall might exist in the same space of the curtain. The fourth wall exists only as the audience is allowed to “suspend their disbelief” that they are not watching actors in a fictional world but as a window into a different reality. In cinema, the fourth wall is both the camera lens and the movie screen (or television screen.)

**The Fuehrer** (Page 262): In Nazi Germany, the term generally referred to Adolf Hitler, the conquering dictator of Europe in World War II. *Führer* in German translates to ‘leader’ or ‘guide’ and has created a social problem in Germany because the term is still in common usage. Prior to his role as ‘The Fuehrer,’ Hitler was politically the Chancellor of Germany.

(Source: Wikipedia)

**Gastronomy** (page 218): The art and science of good eating.

(Source: The Nizkor Project; Jewish Virtual Library: http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Holocaust/frank_on_jews.html)

More words from Hitler and his “Final Solution.”

Source: The Holocaust Museum, Washington D.C.
Genocide: A crime against humanity in the coordinated plan to exterminate a national, ethnic, racial or religious group by mass executions, sterilizations, moving the children from the targeted group to another, disintegrating the targeted groups social and political institutions, its language, culture and religion.

(Source: Wikipedia)

Gestapo (page 228): The secret police of the Third Reich, credited with keeping Hitler in power and known for their brutal methods and merciless executions. Heinrich Himmler was the chief officer of the Gestapo (refer to “The Final Solution”).

(Source: Wikipedia)

Glede (page 216): A bird referenced in Deuteronomy that is forbidden to be eaten by the Jewish people along with the kite and osprey. A glede is a black kite: a carnivorous raptor commonly called a ‘buzzard.’

(Source: Bible Software by johnhurt.com: http://www.htmlbible.com/kjv30/nave/nave2033.htm)

Glissando (page 223): A musical term that refers to a continuous sliding from one pitch to another.

(Source: Knowledge Rush: http://www.knowledgerush.com/kr/encyclopedia/Glissando)

Guten abend: (page 245): German: ‘Good Evening.’

Gypsies: Often considered nomadic and tribal people, also known as Romani or “Roma,” gypsies have been targeted for persecution throughout history. During the Nazi Holocaust, they were declared to be "subhumans". In 1941-JUL, the Einsatzkommandos were instructed to "kill all Jews, Gypsies and mental patients." A few months later, Himmler ordered that all Roma be deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau for extermination. Sybil Milton, a former Senior Historian of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum estimates that 500,000 Roma and Sinti persons were exterminated. This number is supported by the Romas and Sinti Center in Heidelberg.

(Source: http://www.religioustolerance.org/roma.htm)
**Hassidic (Hasidic) Jews** (page 237): Founded in Eastern Europe in the 18th century, Hassidic Judaism or ‘Hasidism’ grew out of a need for a more spiritual practice of faith apart from the academic practice of other sects of Judaism. Hasid is formed from root words in Hebrew meaning ‘piety’ and ‘loving kindness’ and the primary tenets are to find ‘God in all things’ and ‘communion between God and man.’ Hasidic Jews are known for their very distinctive attire and long beards.

(Source: Wikipedia)

**Heraklion** (page 238): Greek port city on Crete, near the ancient site of Knossos dating back to 2000 B.C. Named after Hercules (Heracles.)

**Heraus** (page 244): German: ‘out’ or ‘out here.’


**Herodotus and Strabo** (page 264): From the first book of Herodotus written 400 B.C.E chronicles the feuds between the Greeks and the Persians. Herodotus is known as both the ‘father of history’ and the ‘father of lies’ due to his heavy fictionalization and plagiarism. In his ‘Histories,’ Herodotus remarks that the Issedones and the Androphagi (flesh-eater) Scythians “practiced euthanasia of their elderly males, followed by a ritual feast at which the deceased patriarch's family ate his flesh, gilded his skull, and placed it in a position of honor…” Strabo was a geographer in the fifth century B.C.E. who also chronicled ‘funerary cannibalism’ (endocannibalism) in the Celts during his travels.

(Source: Wikipedia)

**Hippocratic Oath** (page 229): The oath taken by physicians for the ethical practice of medicine including confidentiality and restraining from sexual relationships with patients. Attributed to Hippocrates in the 4th century B.C., the phrase most associated with the Hippocratic Oath is this: *primum non nocere* or ‘First, do no harm.’ Interestingly, this phrase is not a part of the original oath but from Hippocrates’ *Epidemics.*

(Source: Wikipedia)

**Hippogriff** (page 231): Mythical creature, from the cross of a griffin and a mare. From Bulfinch’s Mythology: symbol of impossibility and love. “Mating griffins and mares” was a phrase akin to “when pigs fly.”
The Holocaust: The systematic extermination of the Jews of Europe and North Africa and other ethnic minorities during World War II by Nazi Germany. Estimated Holocaust deaths ranges from 5 to 6 million, including the million and more gassed, starved or worked to death at the Auschwitz concentration camp.

(Source: Wikipedia)

Hoopoe (page 217): Another type of bird cited in Deuteronomy that God named ‘unclean’ and forbid the Jews to eat. The hoopoe is a type of migratory kingfisher.

(Source: Wikipedia)

Howard Johnson’s: Restaurant (Page 201): Hotel chain founded in 1925 in the U.S. known for its ’28 flavors of ice cream’ and menu featuring fried clams, chicken pot pies, frankfurters, baked beans and ice cream desserts. Motor lodges are still found in abundance off highways but only four restaurants remain open in 2006. The west coast equivalent would be the familiar ‘Denny’s’ restaurant.

(Source: Wikipedia)

Hysterico passio: (page 240): Allusion to Shakespeare’s King Lear. Hysterical passion with choking and shortness of breath, historically attributed to female mental illness.

Kaddish (page 206): A Kaddish is a Jewish prayer but ‘The Kaddish’ typically refers to a prayer for the dead, inspired by Ezekial 38:23 in which mourners sanctify God’s name when all nations become the eyes of God. Originated in Babylonia, first spoken in Aramaic and only by the rabbi, in the 13th century this ritual of mourning was spoken by the mourners themselves. A Kaddish requires a quorum of ten men (called a minyan):

Yisgadal v'yiskadash sh'mei rabbaw (Cong. Amein).  
May His great Name grow exalted and sanctified (Cong. Amen.)

B'allmaw dee v'raw chir'usei  
in the world that He created as He willed.

v'yamlich malchusei,b'chayeichon, uv'yomeichon,
May He give reign to His kingship in your lifetimes and in your days,

uv'chayei d'chol beis yisroel,
and in the lifetimes of the entire Family of Israel,

ba'agawlaw u'vizman kawriv, v'imru: Amein.

(Cong: Amein. Y'hei sh'mei rabbaw m'vawrach l'allam u'l'allmei allmayaw)
(Cong Amen. May His great Name be blessed forever and ever.)

Y'hei sh'mei rabbaw m'vawrach l'allam u'l'allmei allmayaw.
May His great Name be blessed forever and ever.

Yis'bawrach, v'yishtabach, v'yispaw'ar, v'yisromam, v'yis'nasei,
Blessed, praised, glorified, exalted, extolled,

v'yis'hadar, v'yis'aleh, v'yis'halawl sh'mei d'kudshaw b'rich hu
mighty, upraised, and lauded be the Name of the Holy One, Blessed is He

(Cong. b'rich hu).
(Cong. Blessed is He)

L'aylaw min kol birchawsaw v'shirawsaw,
beyond any blessing and song,

tush'b'chawsaw v'nechemawsaw, da'amirawn b'all'maw, v'imru: Amein
praise and consolation that are uttered in the world. Now respond: Amen.

(Cong. Amein).
(Cong. Amen).

Y'hei shlalawmaw rabbaw min sh'mayaw, v'chayim
May there be abundant peace from Heaven, and life

awleinu v'al kol yisroel, v'imru: Amein
upon us and upon all Israel. Now respond: Amen.

(Cong. Amein).
(Cong. Amen).

Oseh shlawlom bim'ro'mawv, hu ya'aseh shawlom,
He Who makes peace in His heights, may He make peace,
awleinu v'al kol yisroel v'imru: Amein
upon us and upon all Israel. Now respond: Amen.

(Cong. Amein).
(Cong. Amen).


Kapo (page 255): Shortened from Kameradenpolizei or “comrade police”, kapo were prisoners who had been recruited by their captors to police their fellow prisoners. They received privileges and were often as brutal towards their fellow men as the Nazi guards.

(Source: Wikipedia)

Kaputziner (page 227): Austrian version of espresso coffee.

Impecunious (page 218): Habitually having little to no money.

(Source: Merriam-Webster Online: http://www.m-w.com/cgi-bin/dictionary?book=Dictionary&va=impecunious)

Laci Racz (page 221, 223): Gypsy Musician. Hungarian folk music artist.

The Last Supper (page 205): Referenced to the Bible’s New Testament when Jesus shared his last supper with his apostles prior to his arrest and subsequent crucifixion. During “the last supper,” Jesus gave thanks and served wine and bread to his apostles saying “this is my blood” of the wine and “this is my body” of the bread with some Christian faiths believing the bread and wine were “transubstantiated” (substance transformed) such that the apostles performed “ritualized cannibalism.”


Liverwurst (page 220): A sausage that contains 10-20% liver, usually pork liver, sometimes calf liver.

(Source: Wikipedia)

Madame Bovary (page 219): A Novel by Gustave Flaubert attacked for obscenity in 1856. The plot involved a desperate housewife who escaped provincial boredom by
engaging in adulterous affairs and became a 19th century bestseller once the obscenity charges were dismissed. Author Flaubert was known for his attention to detail in word choice.

(Source: Wikipedia)

**Masticate** (page 207): To chew food.

**Meta-theater:** Theater presentation in which the play is aware it is being watched by an audience, most often suspending the fourth wall illusion and the actors comment upon their characters or speak directly to the audience. Most often used in improvisation and comedy or in a play-within-a-play format. Mel Brooks often uses meta-theater devices for comedic effect while Brechtian theatre uses meta-theatre in the form of his ‘alienation effect.’

“**What am I looking at?**
Meta-cinema/theatre

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**Miranda, Titania and Lavinia** (page 233): All three are women from Shakespearean plays but Uncle, in the play, is trying to remember Cordelia from the final act of ‘King Lear’, Act 5, Scene 3:

**CORDELIA:** We are not the first  
Who, with best meaning, have incurr'd the worst.  
For thee, oppressed king, am I cast down;  
Myself could else out-frown false fortune's frown.  
Shall we not see these daughters and these sisters?

**KING LEAR:** No, no, no, no! Come, let's away to prison:  
We two alone will sing like birds i' the cage:  
When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel down,  
And ask of thee forgiveness: so we'll live,  
And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh  
At gilded butterflies, and hear poor rogues  
Talk of court news; and we'll talk with them too,  
Who loses and who wins; who's in, who's out;  
And take upon's the mystery of things,  
As if we were God's spies: and we'll wear out,  
In a wall'd prison, packs and sects of great ones,  
That ebb and flow by the moon.

**EDMUND:** Take them away.
KING LEAR: Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia, [20]
The gods themselves throw incense. Have I caught thee?
He that parts us shall bring a brand from heaven,
And fire us hence like foxes. Wipe thine eyes;
The good-years shall devour them, flesh and fell,
Ere they shall make us weep: we'll see 'em starve first. [25]
Come.
[Exeunt LEAR and CORDELIA, guarded.]

The play ends when King Lear brings out his daughter Cordelia who has been hanged and then the king dies himself. The character Albany ends the play with these lines:

ALBANY: The weight of this sad time we must obey; [325]
Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.
The hath borne most: we that are young
Shall never see so much, nor live so long.

(Source: Shakespeare, William. “King Lear”
http://www.engl.uvic.ca/Faculty/MBHomePage/ISShakespeare/Lear/Lear5.3.html)

Oedipus Complex (Father/Son Relationships): Psychologist Sigmund Freud’s theory about the development of neuroses beginning in male children at about the age of five when boys develop an unconscious desire for exclusive love of their mothers at the expense of the father. Philosophers Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari have generalized Freud’s Oedipul theories to include social structures in society where power structures develop with the intent of “discipling the subject” and “the will to power.” Derived from the Greek legend of King Oedipus who unwittingly murdered his father and married his mother, dramatized by Sophocles in his play Oedipus Rex in 429 B.C.

(Source: Wikipedia)

Omelette, the Prince of Denmark (page 220): Play on words (pun) with an allusion to Shakespeare’s Hamlet (omelette), the Prince of Denmark.

Orphic Tranquility (page 226): An allusion to Orpheus, the mythic Greek figure of song and the master of the lyre.

Pederasty (page 257): Sexual relationships between men and adolescent boys. Similar to pedophilia/pedophile.

Ram’s Horn (page 201): See ‘Shofar.’

Sabbath (page 232): Sabbath or Shabbat is the holy day of rest and prayer. Sabbath begins before sundown Friday night and ends after nightfall Saturday night, (night is
defined by when three stars can be seen in the sky). Work is forbidden, candles are lit for remembrance and meals must be eaten and it’s required that the day be enjoyed.

Schadenfreude: German: No direct translation to English but means, “to take pleasure from another person’s misfortune.” Examples of schadenfreude include displays of poor sportsmanship to the attitude of the Nazi regime towards the Holocaust victims.

(Source: Wikipedia)

Shofar (page 201, 253): Trumpeting through a ram’s horn, historically used to annunciate the start of battle, biblically used to announce events of major importance such as the fall of the wall of Jericho, the beginning of the new moon, the beginning of the Jewish new year (Rosh Hashana) and the Day of Atonement.

(Source: Wikipedia)

The Showers (page 259): “There are no water pipes to the showerheads, nor is 14 anywhere near enough showers for such a large room. Therefore, these items were DUMMY SHOWERS, made of wood or other materials and painted, as stated by several former members of the Sonderkommando (Jewish prisoners forced to participate in the genocide). These dummy showers were not placed there by chance, or for purposes of decoration, but with a very precise purpose: to mislead the people entering Leichenkeller 1/gas chamber 1, a misrepresentation implying the deliberate intention to cause them to die by inhaling a deadly gas.”

(Source: Zimmerman, John C. “How Reliable are the Hoess Memoirs?”: http://www.holocaust-history.org/auschwitz/hoess-memoirs)
**Sic Transit Gloria Mundi** (Page 206): Latin: ‘Thus passes the glory of the world.’ Oftentimes used to say, “Fame is fleeting” or a reminder of one’s mortality in the world.

(Source: Wikipedia)

**Sieg Heil** (page 226): German: ‘Hail Victory’. During World War II, ‘Seig Heil’ and ‘Heil Hitler’ were often used interchangeably as a form of greeting.

**Sopron** (page 249): Pronounced ‘shop-ron.’ A city in Hungary near the Austrian border along the train route that transported Jews and Gypsies from Hungary into Poland and finally to Auschwitz.

**Suspension of Disbelief:** An audience must be willing to accept that the premise of a story and identify emotionally with the characters. Playwrights, authors, actors and directors typically work to make sure nothing interferes during the presentation of the fiction that will break that illusion and the audience agrees to passively accept the illusion in order to be entertained.

**Sweetbread** (page 247): Organ meat, usually refers to the thymus or pancreas of pigs or calves. Highly perishable but high in nutrients.

(Source: Wikipedia)

**Taboo:** Behaviors that are socially or culturally forbidden. In religion, taboos prohibit access to the sacred thereby protecting it. Taboos can become but often are not usually written as laws. Taboos: cannibalism, eating pets, eating insects, pederasty, incest, human euthanasia, nudity, etc. Borrowed from the Polynesian language ‘tabu.’

**George Tabori:** Hungarian born playwright and director, he left Germany in 1935 to escape Jewish persecution although his father died in Auschwitz. “There are taboos that must be broken or they will continue to choke us,” he wrote upon the 1969 German premiere of *Cannibals*. He is also the author of a book about Bertolt Brecht, “Brecht on Brecht.”

**“To Be or Not To Be”** (page 232): Refers to Shakespeare’s ‘Hamlet’ and is the beginning of Hamlet’s soliloquy when the Prince of Denmark contemplates the meaning of life and contemplates the comfort of suicide.

**Wehrmacht** (page 262): German: “Armed Forces” (i.e. army, navy, air force)
Yes! We Have No Bananas (Page 223): Song satirizing rationing, published in 1923 by Frank Silver and Irving Cohn, sung by Billy Murray, Al Bernard, Billy Jones and William West. See appendix for the lyrics.

(Source: http://www.geocities.com/Area51/Corridor/5109/NovYesBanana.html)

Yiddish: A language-dialect derived from the German-Jewish Ashkenazi culture in the 10th century. The Yiddish dialect became the home language of Jews up until the time of the Holocaust. (Source: Wikipedia)

--boobele (page 215): term of endearment (similar to “sweetheart”)

--meshugene (page 215): crazy person

--oi vey is mir! (page 231): ‘Oh, my God!” or “Goodness, gracious!” or “Woe is me!”


Yom Kippur (page 201): The most important holiday of the Jewish year: the holy day of atonement for sins between man and God. From Leviticus 23:27-32: *Howbeit on the tenth day of this seventh month is the day of atonement; there shall be a holy convocation unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls; and ye shall bring an offering made by fire unto HaShem. 28 And ye shall do no manner of work in that same day; for it is a day of atonement, to make atonement for you before HaShem your God.*

Compiled by Teresa Troutman 8/7