

GENDERING THE HOLOCAUST

Gendering Mourning in the Image of Anne Frank

Anne Frank gyászolásának nemek szerinti értelmezése

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Abstract

Why and how has Anne Frank been identified as an icon of victimhood in the Holocaust to be remembered and mourned? This paper aims at understanding the workings of gendered and racialized idioms of remembrance and memorialization in turning Anne Frank into an icon. The paper states that in order for Anne Frank to be appropriated into the master narrative of the Holocaust, her representations have been subjected to de-sexualization, de-Judaization, feminization, and infantilization. The paper tracks down these four gendered and racialized idioms in various representational modes of Anne Frank; the different editions of her diary, photographs and artworks used on the cover of the dairies, theatre plays and movies. And finally, the paper draws attention to the pitfalls of using gendered and racialized idioms to remember and mourn Anne Frank: her de-sexualized, de-Judaized, feminized and infantilized representations silence her particularities (her age, gender and race) that made her a target of murderous regime of the Nazi in the first place.

Keywords: gender, Anne Frank, mourning, representation

The Anne Frank House has made a number of videos related to Anne Frank's life available online, including a footage of Otto Frank talking about his surprise upon reading Anne's diary. In the video, Otto Frank describes Anne Frank he saw in the diary as "...quite a different Anne I had known as my daughter" (Anne Frank House, 2009). According to Otto Frank, although he was very close to his daughter, he had never knew her deep thoughts on life and her seriousness until he read the diary. Later in the video, he claims that he can understand the real feelings of Anne Frank only through the diary. Otto Frank's identification of the diary as the conduit of Anne Frank's 'real feelings' articulates an impression of authenticity of the diary's content. By arguing that he can only see Anne Frank's inner-self through the diary, Otto Frank authenticates the diary as a piece of literary work that should be seen as a 'truthful' representation of Anne Frank.

The diary, with its different publications that were edited in different forms, is not the only means of constructing a ‘truthful’ representation of Anne Frank. After its first publication in 1947, Anne Frank’s diary was adopted to a stage performance called ‘the Dairy of Anne Frank’. The dramatization of the play was done by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett. The Broadway production premiered in the USA in 1955, ten years after Anne Frank’s death. It won Tony Award for Best Play and Pulitzer Prize for Drama. The script by Goodrich and Hackett later turned into a movie directed by George Stevens in 1959. Both the play and movie have played a crucial role in memorialization and iconization of Anne Frank. However more importantly, they have given the Anne Frank’s story represented in the first edition of the diary an afterlife; the audience gets to witness events that do not take place in the diary (published in 1947). The first scene of Act I starts with Otto Frank returning to the Secret Annex in November 1945. Miep Gies greets Otto Frank, and hands in Anne’s ‘original’ diary that she retrieved from the Annex after the family’s arrest, and kept safe. Through their conversation, the audience learns that everyone in the Frank family including Anne have been murdered in the concentration camps, leaving Otto as the sole survivor of the family. The next scene starts with Anne’s voice reading an entry from the ‘original’ diary, and taking the audience back to July 1942. The following scenes are representations of the stories in the diary (published in 1947) except the last two scenes of Act II in which the people in the Annex are arrested by the SS, and Otto Frank in 1945 finishes reading Anne’s ‘original’ diary. Unlike in the diary (published in 1947) which ends on August 1, 1944, three day before people in the Annex are arrested, the play provides a detailed ending, and closure for the audience, thus creates a coherent and consistent story of the people in the Annex, and image of Anne Frank.

The implication that the stories of what happened in the Annex throughout the play, apart from the starting and ending scenes, are taken from Anne’s ‘original’ diary is conveyed to the audience by the scene where the life in the Annex starts with Anne’s reading of an entry from her ‘original’ diary. The supposed incorporation of Anne’s ‘original’ diary into the play fashions an aura of authenticity around the play and the image of Anne Frank created through her representation in the play. However, the issue of authentic representation of Anne Frank and her life story gets even more complicated by the fact that the edition(s) of the diary itself which was available to the script writers is a product of interventions and editing of different people including Otto Frank reflecting these people’s own concerns in and effects on memorialization of Anne Frank. The search for an authentic representation of Anne Frank, and the claim of finding one erase the social, cultural, and political forces behind memorialization and iconization process of Anne Frank. This is why, in this paper, I will not be searching for the most accurate or authentic representation of Anne Frank, but instead I will follow a historical survey of different publications and adaptations of the diary done by Jeffery Shandler (2012) so as to understand the historical process of iconization of Anne Frank. Such an endeavor to understand the dynamics of iconization of Anne Frank has been undertaken intensely by many scholars, the most famous one being Alvin H. Rosenfeld. He talks, in length, cultural, ideological, political, and religious factors that affect what we ‘recall’ about Anne Frank (Rosenfeld, 2004, p. 2). However, the vastly accumulated literature on Anne Frank (including Rosenfeld and Shandler) tends to ignore the role of gender in creating the iconic image of Anne Frank. Thus it is the aim of this paper to utilize gender analytically alongside with race and age in analyzing historical process of iconization of Anne

Frank. I will argue that in order for Anne Frank to become an icon of the Holocaust victims, and to be remembered and mourned, her representations have been subjected to (1) de-sexualization, (2) de-Judaization, (3) feminization, and (4) infantilization.

Through her representations in the play and movie as well as in different editions of the diary, documentaries and TV series, Anne Frank has turned into an icon of cheerful, clever, willful young girl representing those who suffered and died under the murderous regime of the Nazi Germany. Although confined to live in the Annex in order to escape death, she had a will to survive, and tell her own story through her writings. Her death marking the loss of her potential future and plans came to embody all lost futures of the Holocaust victims. As a universally known icon, she is ‘the victim’ to be mourned, and mourning her means mourning the horrors and deaths of the Holocaust. Reading and watching her life is seen as an act of remembering the Holocaust and mourning the victims. What makes Anne Frank an iconic image of an event that claimed millions of lives? How is it possible that her life was appropriated by so many people to remember and mourn that event which themselves did not experience? Griselda Pollock (2007) believes that the diary, especially its edited versions, is easy for people to appropriate as a source of remembrance because “it is both though enough and sufficiently sentimental...to introduce the topic of the Holocaust without exposing readers to events too shocking to contemplate” (Pollock, 2007, p. 127). Anne Frank’s life in the Annex does not directly involve bodily horrors of the Holocaust; mass shooting, tortures, gas chambers, and sexual violence. We do not get to read about her death in the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. Her youthful face is forever frozen in time, and her sincere account of her life in the Annex enables the cultural appropriation of the Holocaust; she becomes an icon through being “the face and voice of a cultured, middle-class, articulate teenage girl whom both images and writing appears to suspend between a brief life and a long immortality without passing through the pain of her dying” (Pollock, 2007, p. 127). However, can the fact that the diary is easy on the readers be the only explanation for Anne Frank being a universal icon? Is it enough to say that the reason why she is an icon is because her representations are untouched by cruelty of the Holocaust?

In order to understand how Anne Frank become a universally remembered and mourned victim, her iconic mode of representation should be analyzed at the intersection of gender, race and age. I believe that these three categories of difference play a crucial role in shaping Anne Frank into a grievable person by everyone. Moreover, through this case study, I aim to show that mourning is actually a gendered act; grievability of Anne Frank is dependent on her image fitting into a gender script written for female victims of the Holocaust. In other words, I will argue that in order to make Anne Frank accessible, appropriable and grievable by everyone, she is stripped of sexuality and Jewishness, and she is feminized and infantilized. Thus this paper will contribute to the existing literature on Anne Frank, a gendered and racialized understanding of how mourning works through idioms available to us in the master narrative of the Holocaust. Simultaneous de-sexualization and feminization of Anne Frank is a reflection of interplay of age and gender; her representation as a teenage girl (between ages of 13 and 15) means silencing of her sexuality while she embodies the feminine face of the victimhood. Her image fits into a well-known, totalizing category of victimhood; ‘women-children’.

The Grievability of the Other:

Revealing the process of iconic memorialization of Anne Frank as an object of universal mourning starts with asking the following questions; whom do we mourn? And why? The grievability is a concept of Judith Butler, which touches upon the discussion of why we publicly mourn some people but not others. The issue of bestowing some with public mourning but depriving others with the same public emotional response to their deaths becomes central to Butler's book, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*. Butler argues that "the differential allocation of grievability that decides what kind of subject is and must be grieved, and which kind of subject must not, operates to produce and maintain certain exclusionary conceptions of who is normatively human: what counts as a livable life and a grievable death?" (Butler, 2004, pp. xiv–xv). According to this formulation, mourning is not a simple tool of healing process and getting over death. My understanding is that the act of grieving some and not grieving others depending on their gender, ethnicity, religion, age and so on turns mourning into a regulatory power over the public remembering; by allowing to mourn some people but not others, the canonized narrative (of the Holocaust in our case) decides on who have had a livable life, whose lives are worth remembering in the public space. Those who get to be mourned are those who are deemed human.

Butler's initial target group in relation to whom she develops the concept of grievability is those people the US killed under the name of global war against terrorism after 9/11. She notices that the names, images and narratives of these people are erased from public representation of mournable subject of this war (Butler, 2004, p. xiv). She points out the role of ethnicity in indicating people as either grievable or un-grievable, a point which I will be making when I am discussing erasure of Anne Frank's Jewishness. However, there is no need to limit ourselves to one social category of difference. Gender can become a criteria through which people are assigned different degrees of grievability. Those who perform the normative roles of femininity and masculinity can find a space in the public discourse for remembrance and mourning, while those who does not (or cannot) follow gender norms are left silenced, forgotten, and un-mourned. Butler's discussion of grievability goes tightly hand in hand with remembering, yet two concepts should not be reduced to one another. Remembering is implied within the concept of grievability, as it is impossible to grieve someone without constructing an image of the deceased that can be recollected when it is needed. However, grievability indicates that construction of that image is done selectively; the past of the deceased is reconstructed according to accepted gender norms of the society leaving behind the elements of her past, which does not correspond to those norms. This is the very reason why I am looking at the gendered idioms of remembering that are used in iconization of Anne Frank; Anne Frank become grievable because her image that is selectively constructed to be publicly remembered corresponds to the accepted gender norms of the society.

The representation of women forced to work in the brothels in the concentration camp can be an example of the point that gender norms decides whom to remember and whom to mourn. Up until 2005, there was no museum exhibition to mention forced prostitution in its details. Originally titled "Sex work in the concentration camps", a project was developed in collaboration with students from Berlin University of the Arts and University of Vienna in order to catalog the history of concentration camp brothels (Jacobs, 2010, p. 59). Only in 2007 when the exhibition was moved to Ravensbrück, the titled was changed to include the word 'forced' before 'sex work'. As Janet Jacobs (2010) noted, the change in the title indicated "a shift in the representation of prostitution from 'voluntary' to forced form of

sexual labor under the Nazis” (Jacobs, 2010, p. 59). However, this example displays the still present idea of women ‘volunteering’ for sex work and stigmatizations attached to sex work in general. In an environment where the prisoners were facing their total annihilation under the spatial-temporal absence of any kind of guarantees for their survival, volunteering for sex work is a concept that should be treated with caution. Most of women in brothels were held against their will, subjected to forced sexual relations, medical experiments for sexually transmitted diseases, and abortions (Jacobs, 2010, p. 60). Yet women bartering sexual favor for survival cannot be marginalized or stigmatized on the basis that they should have died instead, as honorable women (in many cases bartering sexual favor was not enough to keep them alive). This reflects the stigma still attached to sex work in general; those who are involved in it, voluntarily or forcefully, are seen as immoral. As a result, any memory relating to these events were erased or turned into taboos that need not further discussion. Museums and their curators as agents of memorialization overlooked and thus silenced women who ‘volunteered’ for sex work. These women, even when they were alive, underwent the same kind of double oppression; among other prisoners, they “were perceived to have received special treatment”, thus experienced “isolation and judgment” of their fellow prisoners (Jacobs, 2010, p. 61). All in all, gender norms (in this case, stating that women cannot involve in sex work voluntarily or involuntarily) decide on whom to memorialize in the museums and whose pain, suffering and death to mourn.

After drawing attention to the role of gender in assigning people with grievability, I want to turn to yet another set of questions that need answering; is there any way to mourn the other? If yes, in what ways? That is to say, can the other become grievable if her representation is made to fit into some norms? Can we mourn Anne Frank as a Jewish intellectual woman? Griselda Pollock raises this question in a more elegant manner; “...can the experience of mourning for, or sharing the trauma and suffering of an other, always require identification, that is, the abolition or reduction of their alterity and particularity so that we find common ground not interrupted by the pain beyond our own knowing or the experience that marks difference: race, class, and sexuality” (Pollock, 2007, pp. 128–129). I argue that the other can gain some form of grievability if her particularities and differences are erased and thus silenced. I borrow Marianne Hirsch’s (2002) concept of infantilization and feminization of victims. Hirsch’s main point is that if gender is used as an idiom of memorialization, it becomes a tool “that mediates the ways certain images have been able to circulate in the visual culture of the postmemorial generation” (Hirsch, 2002, p. 104). Hirsch looks at different exhibitions’ methods of appropriating perpetrator images (thus the Nazi Gaze) into the body of artwork. She claims that gender idioms of infantilization and feminization of victims and hyper-masculinization and depersonalization of perpetrators result in obscuring the sources of the images, and making them appropriable (Hirsch, 2002, pp. 103–104). For the sake of this paper, I will limit myself to infantilizing and feminizing the victim. Hirsch analyzes re-appropriation of the boy in Warsaw holding his hand in the air by different artists, and come up with the conclusion that focusing on the boy alone by cropping out others in the photo uproots him from the community in which he and his experience of oppression are rooted, and universalizes the victim as innocent child (Hirsch, 2002, p. 108). Hirsch mentions Judy Chicago’s artwork in which she situates the image of the boy among other child victims. In this artwork, the famous photo of the burned Vietnamese girl is collaged as if she threatened by the phallic images of bombs and a cartoon image of a male

soldier, and this image is juxtaposed to the image of the boy in Warsaw. Hirsch believes that such artwork invites the audience to both feminize and infantilize the category of the victim in their minds (Hirsch, 2002, p. 112). Hirsch clearly applies the idea of gender as an idiom of memorialization to the case of Nazi Photographs becoming appropriable into the visual culture and losing their sources and original reasons to be taken which results in the obscuration of the Nazi Gaze. I want to expand two gendered idioms of memorialization to include the case of Anne Frank and how her various representations in the cultural industry make her position of an icon of remembrance and mourning possible. In the end, my aim is to show that the iconic memorialization of Anne Frank through gendered idioms of infantilization and feminization together with erasure of her Jewishness creates a gendered pattern of mourning. Anne Frank's representation as a mournable victim is conditioned on her infantilization, feminization de-sexualization and de-Judaization. In order to allocate grievability to her, she must become one of the eternal (belonging to women-children category of victimhood) and universal victims. Any other specific experience especially her sexuality and Jewishness must be silenced in order for her to be mourned. However, we cannot ignore the following shortcoming of such formulation of iconic memorialization; if we level down differences and particularities of the other, what is left to mourn? Without the very components of her identity that made Anne Frank a target for murderous regime of the Nazi Germany, her death and mourning are decontextualized and directed to empty signifies that only works for the audience to experience catharsis in a control manner. Moreover, remembering and mourning disconnected from the social relations that gave way for a need to remember and mourn in the first place further marginalize those who do not want to or have a chance to get rid of their connections to their identities.

Gendered and Racialized Idioms in the Image of Anne Frank:

I will start my analysis of iconic memorialization of Anne Frank with de-Judaization process. Some of the early editions of the diary, and its forewords, introductions and images of the book cover put an emphasis on Anne Frank's Jewishness. The cover of the Modern Library edition of *the Diary of a Young Girl* published in 1952 had a girl wearing an armband with a yellow six-pointed star (Schandler, 2012, p. 33); a reference to her Jewish identity and discrimination she underwent under the Nazi regime. This is the only image that has a connotation of Jewishness, other covers used her own images, the building she was hiding in, or the images of Anne Frank's 'original' dairy. In addition, the first edition of the diary published in 1947 had a preface written by Annie Romein-Verschoor qualifying the diary "as a war document, a document of the cruelty and heartbreaking misery of the persecution of the Jews, of human helpfulness and treason, of human adjustment and non-adjustment of the small joys and the great and small miseries of life in hiding" (Schandler, 2012, p. 37). The preface focused especially on the reasons why Anne Frank and people hiding with her in the Annex had to suffer.

Nonetheless, other editions were not so generous in stressing her Jewishness; the attention is taken away from her Jewishness to Anne Frank's being an innocent young girl who is clever and willful. Eleanor Roosevelt's forewords for the first U.S edition of the diary which was included into different editions as well "praises Anne's spiritual resolve, while ignoring her physical suffering, and emphasizes her familiarity, while marginalizing her Europeaness and eliding her Jewishness (Schandler, 2012, p. 38) In order to see herself in

the image of Anne Frank, and to say that “I feel how close we are all are to Anne’s experience” (Schandler, 2012, p. 38), Roosevelt needed to silence the reasons behind Anne Frank’s suffering and death. Furthermore, de-Judaization did not only take place in the representations of the diary. For example, comparing its draft versions to the full version Hackett-Goodrich screenplay of the dairy which was turned into a theater play and a movie that immensely contributed to iconization of Anne Frank reveals a shift from Anne with a Jewish identity to a universalized and sterilized Anne. In the scene where the police is coming to the Annex to arrest everyone, Anne is speaking to Peter van Pels. In the early drafts of the play, Anne was saying the following; “we’re not the only Jews that have had to suffer. Right down the ages there have been Jews and they have had to suffer” (Pollock, 2007, p. 127). However, in the version which turned into the play and movie, Anne says “we’re not the only people that have had to suffer. There’s always been people who have had to . . . Sometimes one race . . . sometimes another . . . and yet” (Pollock, 2007, p. 127). In the very scene where she is about to be discovered and to be sent away to suffer and die, she cannot utter her particularities and differences that turned her into a target of a relentless killing machine; instead she has to make a general comment on the suffering of all humans.

I will now look at how feminization, infantilization and de-sexualization of Anne Frank work side by side to create an iconic image of victim. The images selected for the covers of the diary stress her youthfulness, her hopeful smile in the face suffering and death and her courage in the face of atrocities that were happening around her. In the first edition of *Het Achterhuis*, Annie Romein-Verschoor wrote that Anne grew “from girl to woman only to be cut tragically short, like a flower that bloomed once, richly and superabundantly, only to die soon after” (Pollock, 2007, p. 37). And in the introduction for the first German Edition of *Das Tagebuch der Anne Franck*, Marie Baum wrote “Poor child! Poor Anne! The blossom, which one would have wished to see flourish and bear fruit, was broken” (Pollock, 2007, p. 37). In both of accounts of Anne Frank’s death, what makes her death terrible and more grievable is the fact that she was a young victim whose potential future was taken away from her. And the way her death and loss of her future are defined is heavily feminized. Referring to her as a flower, her adolescence as blossoming and her death as being cut and broken feed into the universal use of metaphor ‘woman being a delicate flower’ and enforces her iconic image defining the victimhood as universally feminized.

Although her story is qualified as a coming of age story, we never get to see woman she might become; she is forever frozen in a state of innocence because of her death and constant representation of her as a young girl. Since we do not have any photo of her in Auschwitz, her representations are not touch by her death. She is always depicted as a girl full of hope. One of the well-known photographs of Anna Frank as a 12-year-old girl makes her face as iconic image masking her death by freezing her open, cheerful, girlish face in time. As a result of the iconic memorialization of her as a young girl, Anne Frank is denied of her sexuality, as well. As she is in an age where her sexuality is developing, but openly exploring it is seen as an inappropriate and even immoral act. Thus her mentions about discoveries of her body and about her knowledge of how sexual intercourse happens are omitted in the master narrative of Anne Frank as the ultimate victim. For example, the Amsterdam press *Uitgeverij Contact* excluded the passages dealing with Anne Frank’s discussion of menstruation and sexuality in 1947 version of the diary (Schandler, 2012, p. 33).

Moreover, we do not see Anne Frank as an adolescent who is exploring her sexuality. And if we do, her credibility as a universal victim is shaken. It is a fact that the ‘repressed’ sexuality of Anne Frank has been resurfacing with the latest editions of the diary. The part of the diary where she describes her vagina is included in the latest version. These versions allow us to reconstruct a representation of Anne Frank, which does not exclude her sexuality. However, such ‘sexualized’ images of Anne Frank prove to be far less universally acceptable than the de-sexualized Anne Frank. Gail Horalek, the mother of a 7th-grade child in Michigan in the US, has made international headlines by complaining that the unabridged version of Anne Frank's diary is pornographic and should not be taught at her daughter's school (Flood, 2013). Although the school decided keep the unabridged version as a reading material, this does not mean that this was an isolated incident. There are other cases similar to this reflecting the idea that an Anne Frank without being infantilized, feminized and de-sexualized has a hard time in claiming to be a universally accepted icon. In 2010, after the complaints of a parent, Virginia school district stopped using the “Definitive Edition” (Bennett-Smith, 2013). And the American Library Association received a few complaints about this version of the diary (Daily Mail Reporter, 2013).

Anne Frank further infantilized by showing her in a state of childish hope. In the very end of the movie, while showing the flying birds (a symbol of freedom) over the Annex, she says “I still believe, in spite of everything, that people are truly good at heart” (Pollock, 2007, p. 130). The full passage¹ in the diary actually demonstrates her complicated emotions over the situation she is in. She is not expressing an unfounded and innocent hope; she is aware of the death and suffering around her, yet she refuses to build her life around chaos and death. It is problematic to crop her words so that they will look more innocent; it is a move done in the name of infantilizing her further more. Moreover, an image of infantilized, feminized and de-Judaized Anne whose death we do not get to see in the play and movie creates a safe environment in which the audience can empathize with the sterilized Anne without being bother with her troubled death and without contemplating over the social, political, economic and cultural structures that made possible discrimination and domination of people based on their gender, race and age. In other words, the audience does not really mourn Anne Frank's death which leads to remembering her particularities and creating a well-grounded historicity of her life. Instead in the control environment of the theater, they have catharsis; they go through emotions, feel the suffering and pain of the sterilized Anne, but have a closure in the end by seeing her hopeful words. They leave the theater with a sense of accomplishment, yet they are left with nothing but an ignorance of Anne's deeper layers of identity and those of the victims of the Holocaust in general.

The last means of infantilizing and feminizing Anne Frank works through ignoring of her thoughts about marriage. Jon Blair's documentary called *Anne Frank remembered*, finishes with a male voice reading one passage from the diary;

¹“ It's difficult in times like these: ideals, dreams and cherished hopes rise within us only to be crushed by grim reality. It's a wonder that I haven't abandoned all my ideals, they seem so absurd and impractical. Yet I cling to them because I still believe, in spite of everything, that people are truly good at heart. It's utterly impossible for me to build my life on a foundation of chaos, suffering and death. I see the world being slowly transformed into a wilderness. I hear the approaching thunder, that one day, will destroy us too. I feel the suffering of millions. And yet, when I look up at the sky, I somehow feel that everything will change for the better, that this cruelty too will end, that peace and tranquility will return once more” (Pollock, 2007, p. 130)

I don't want to have lived in vain like most people. I want to be useful or bring enjoyment to people, even those I have never met. I want to go on living after my death! And that's why I am so grateful to God for having given me this gift, which I can use to express myself and to express all that is inside me (Pollock, 2007, p. 132).

However, in the diary before this passage, there was another;

But I want to achieve more than that. I cannot imagine having to live like Mother, Mrs. van Daan, and all the women who go about their work and are forgotten. I need to have something besides a husband and children to devote myself to! I don't want to have lived in vain like most people (Pollock, 2007, p. 125)

Anne Frank as a young girl cannot be imagined as a critique of futility of housework. Her need to become more than a wife and a mother cannot be voiced if the documentary wants to claim a more universal audience. This is why this passage was erased from this particular representation of Anne Frank so that she would remain infantilized and feminized; a young girl that may have blossomed into a mother and a wife, but we can never know that as her future is frozen in a state of speculation which left her life open to the effects of totalizing assumption of gender norms.

Conclusion:

In order to conclude my discussion, I can use Andrea Pető's (2014) formulation of non-remembering. Pető defines non-remembering as "a conscious process of forgetting and also a process of substituting painful, 'hot memories' with cold, less painful memories" (Pető, 2014, p. 2). Although the aim of the iconic memorialization of Anne Frank is to turn her into an object of remembering and mourning, the processes of de-sexualization, de-Judaization, feminization and infantilization have emptied out Anne Frank to the point that she is non-remembered, leaving behind an empty shell that everyone can appropriate. Her different layers of identity and her horrible death which are 'hot memories' were traded with 'cold, less painful memories' of her being a young, beautiful, cheerful, willful young girl with full of hope. By leveling down any difference and particularity of Anne Frank, different agents of memorialization overlook the fact that what made Anne Frank a 'victim' of the Nazi regime was her assigned vulnerability because of her identity as Jew and woman. When the sources of her suffering and death are dismissed, we lost track of what are we mourning and why are we mourning; instead we attach feeling of grief to an empty signifier unearched from its every connections to differences and particularities that made her vulnerable to violence and death in the first place.

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