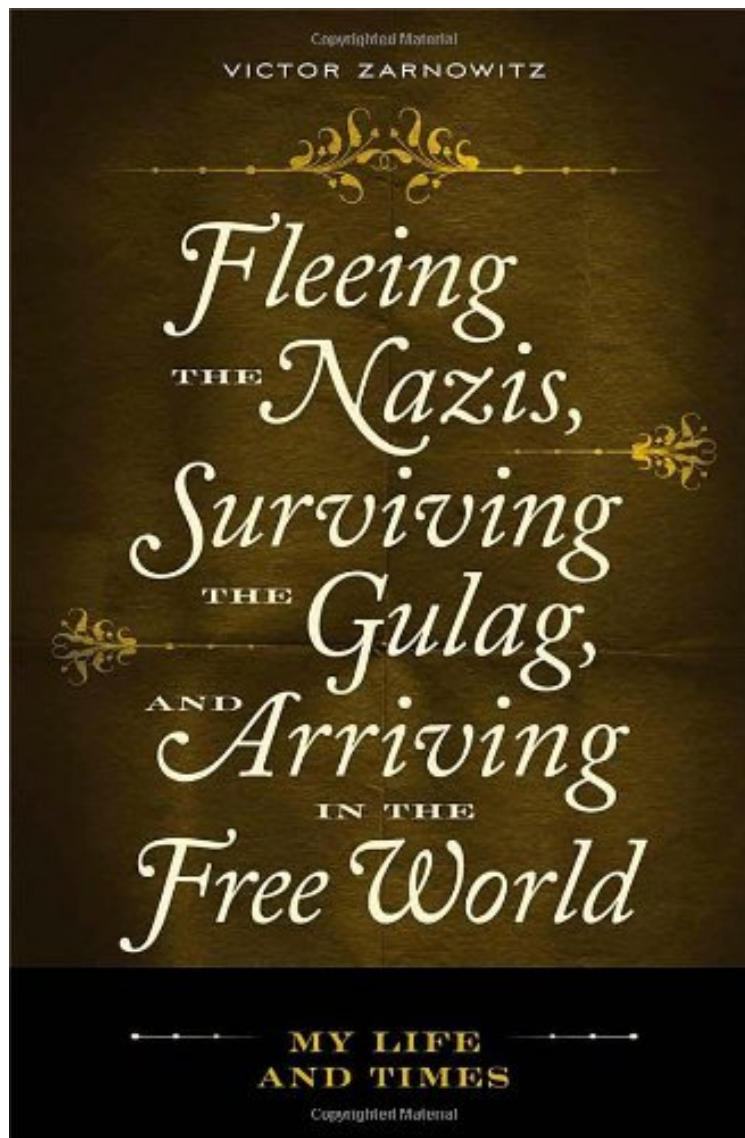


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Fleeing the Nazis, Surviving the Gulag, and Arriving in the Free World: My Life and Times

Victor Zarnowitz

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Victor Zarnowitz : Fleeing the Nazis, Surviving the Gulag, and Arriving in the Free World: My Life and Times before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Fleeing the Nazis, Surviving the Gulag, and Arriving in the Free World: My Life and Times:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Truth Is Stranger (And More Inspiring) Than FictionBy DWriteThis slender but powerful memoir is a book I return to time and time again, for between its covers lives a tale of

indomitable human spirit made all the more inspiring because it is true. Victor Zarnowitz was ten years old when his father died of a heart attack. His mother moved the boy and his beloved brother, Tadek, back to her hometown of Oswiecim, Poland. It was 1929 and within weeks the stock market crashed in New York City and the depression spread to Europe. The greatest economic dislocation in history began. Within a year, one third of Poland's industrial workers had lost their jobs. The agricultural economy went to seed. Fear and terror spread. And from the rabble arose a tyrant. For Victor and his family, life as they knew it in their town was over, better known by its German name, Auschwitz. Hitler's invasion of Poland began on the morning of September 1, 1939. Victor, his brother, mother, and grandmother fled on foot the very next day because they knew firsthand about atrocities aimed at Jews; earlier, Victor's uncle had been killed at Dachau by Nazis. Therein begins the heart of Victor's story, for his real-life escape conjures images found in Dante's *Inferno*; and Homer's *Odyssey*. He and his brother are forced to leave their mother and grandmother on the side of the road, never to be seen again. The Nazis chased Victor and Tadek across the breadth of Poland as they tried to reach sanctuary in Russia only to be caught by the Red Army and sent to a labor camp in the far north; Karelia is one of the oldest and most notorious islands in Stalin's Gulag archipelago. For two years Victor survived on a starvation diet as he was forced to cut trees. In 1942, a diplomatic window opened that allowed Victor to go, but to do so he had to leave his hospitalized brother behind. It was the last time they ever saw each other. From there, Victor cheated death multiple times as he made his way to a refugee camp in Kazakhstan. There he fell in love with another Jewish refugee from Poland, Lena Engelman. Victor's travails continued but things finally turned for the better as the war wound down. Survivors of a holocaust that destroyed their homeland and wiped out their families, Victor and Lena moved to the United States to build a new life. They had two sons and settled in Chicago where Victor earned a reputation as one of the world's foremost economists. Despite undergoing unspeakable horrors and experiencing unrelenting tragedy and loss, Victor not only survived but thrived, held aloft by the strength of his character, courage, and an undying belief in the power of social justice. It's a story that truly should never be forgotten. 3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A personal story of survival that you can't put down. By C. Nelson Here is the astonishing story of someone who grew up in Auschwitz when it was an unknown small town in Poland before the war. Zarnowitz escaped behind Soviet lines to survive and later become a famous economist. He tells his story in a personal tone, as if he were telling you about his life over coffee. This first hand account lends a sense reality that can't be found in fiction.

Victor Zarnowitz is a world-famous economist. Victor Zarnowitz is also a man who grew up in the Polish town of Oswiecim, known in German as Auschwitz. Zarnowitz and his brother fled the area as the Nazis advanced in September 1939. Moving eastward, he landed right in the arms of the Soviets and was sent to a Siberian Gulag. How did this brilliant young man, who nearly died at the hands of the Soviets, end up a renowned University of Chicago economist? That's exactly what this inspiring, lyrical memoir told in simple, captivating prose is all about. The recipient of many prizes and honors, Zarnowitz is still, at age eighty-seven, one of the six economists who decide officially that the U.S. is in a recession. He is also a captivating writer and his memoir a thrilling page turner: -In September 1939 Victor and his brother walked the entire width of Poland with the blitzkrieg just behind them. They ran right into oncoming Soviet troops. Zarnowitz was trapped at the junction of the two most fearsome armies the world had ever seen. He was literally standing in the center point of history.-The Soviets considered Polish refugees prisoners of war. In 1940, they transported Zarnowitz and his brother thousands of miles north and put them to work in Stalin's oldest Gulag. They earned their daily gruel and bread crusts by trying to meet impossible work quotas. The last third of the book brings the story up to date, telling, in a non-technical manner, of Zarnowitz's life in America and his professional career. It includes his observations of other economists and their ideas, his own contributions to business-cycle theory and economic indicators, and his thoughts on more than a half-century of American history. While memoirs of the Holocaust are plentiful, the Jewish experience in Stalin's Gulags has been virtually forgotten. Weaving politics and economics into the harrowing tale of his personal journey, Zarnowitz's inspiring life story provides a priceless perspective on some of the most traumatic upheavals of the 20th century and on the resilience and power of the human spirit.

"Prize-winning economist Victor Zarnowitz is internationally known for his professional contributions to his field -- particularly his insights on business indicators and economic forecasts -- but this book reveals that he is also an excellent storyteller. After sharing his Holocaust memories, Zarnowitz describes his life in America and his professional career. His observations of other economists, his contributions to economic theories, and his perspectives on recent American history make this an educational read." - Catholic Library World "Victor Zarnowitz is an economist--an absolutely first-class economist. He is one of the few totally at home both with masses of data and with sorting out that data in ways that cast fresh light over the way the economy works. But this memoir is not a statistical book. Rather, it's a uniquely personal story. It's a human story and a quintessential American story: the triumph of the human spirit in the context of freedom and opportunity." (Paul Volcker, Former Chairman, U.S. Federal

Reserve)"Victor Zarnowitz is a national treasure--and, having survived the Nazi invasion, he's an American national treasure. He probably knows more about business cycles than anyone alive. But even such a monumental store of knowledge is just a part of Victor--as this book beautifully demonstrates." (Alan S. Blinder, Professor, Princeton University, Former Vice Chairman, Board of Governors, Federal Reserve)"Victor Zarnowitz stands among the great business cycle researchers of the past half century. His work as an economist helped his adopted nation navigate uncertain times. This very personal story of how he navigated war and economic calamity is a moving and important tale. From a youth in the Polish town of Auschwitz, to Russian gulags, to his research in Heidelberg and Chicago and New York, he is a survivor who lost much in his journey. He has also given very much back." (Jon Hilsenrath, Wall Street Journal)"Victor Zarnowitz, probably the world's pre-eminent scholar of business cycles, has written a fascinating account of his life up to now, mostly in the turbulence of the 20th Century. The book is not only a narrative of triumph over many evil forces and events, but is also illuminated by the warm, kind, and thoughtful personality of the author, familiar to those who have known him for many years. It is partly that personality that comes out in his love for democracy and freedom, evident throughout the book." (Robert E. Lipsey, Director, New York Office, National Bureau of Economic Research)About the AuthorVictor Zarnowitz is one of the world's leading authorities on business cycles, business indicators, and forecast evaluation. He is Senior Fellow and Economic Counselor to the Conference Board. Dr. Zarnowitz is also Professor Emeritus of Economics and Finance, Graduate School of Business, The University of Chicago, and Research Associate, National Bureau of Economic Research. The recipient of many awards and honors, he is the author of *Business Cycles: Theory, History, Indicators, and Forecasting*.