

READING

Discovering Jewish Blood

The Nuremberg Laws turned Jews from German citizens into “residents of Germany.” Technically, the law made intermarriage between Jews and German citizens a criminal offense, but existing marriages were not dissolved or criminalized, perhaps in order to maintain public support.

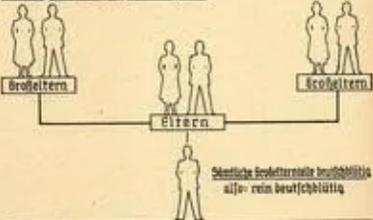
The laws transformed the lives of Jews all over Germany, including thousands of people who had not previously known their families had Jewish heritage. Among them were Marianne Schweitzer and her siblings.

Das Gesetz unterscheidet :

			
Deutschblütige Schließen bei bestimmten Ehepaarverbindungen auch können Kinder geboren werden.	Juden Schließen niemals Ehen mit Nichtjuden ab.	Mischlinge 2. Grades können Nichtjuden heiraten.	Mischlinge 1. Grades können Nichtjuden heiraten.

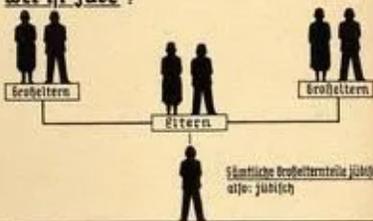
Erkennungsmerkmal für die Zugehörigkeit zu einer dieser Gruppen ist die rassistische
Zugehörigkeit der Großeltern

Wer ist Deutschblütiger ?



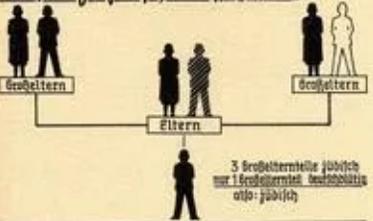
Alleinige Großelternteile deutschblütig
also: rein deutschblütig

Wer ist Jude ?



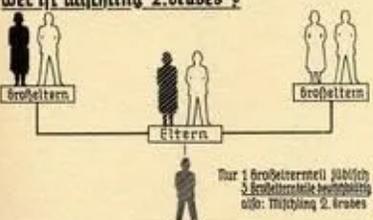
Sämtliche Großelternteile jüdisch
also: jüdisch

Ebenfalls zur jüdischen Rasse gehörig :



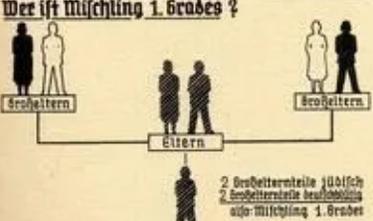
3 Großelternteile jüdisch
nur 1 Großelternteile deutschblütig
also: jüdisch

Wer ist Mischling 2. Grades ?



Nur 1 Großelternteile jüdisch
3 Großelternteile deutschblütig
also: Mischling 2. Grades

Wer ist Mischling 1. Grades ?



2 Großelternteile jüdisch
2 Großelternteile deutschblütig
also: Mischling 1. Grades

Als Jude gilt auch:

- ein Mischling, der der jüdischen Religionsgemeinschaft angehört.
- ein Mischling, der mit einem Juden verheiratet ist. Kinder werden Juden.
- ein Mischling, der aus einer Ehe mit einem Juden stammt, die nach dem 17.9.1935 geschlossen ist.
- ein Mischling, der aus verbotenem außerehelichen Verkehr mit einem Juden stammt und der nach dem 31.7.1936

Welche Eheschließungen sind verboten ?

Es ist zu beachten, daß bereits bestehende Ehen unberührt bleiben. Als Rassen, deren Blut dem deutschen Blut nicht verwandt ist, gelten z.B. auch Negern (Fall 4) und Zigeuner.

-  Zwischen Deutschblütigen und Juden
-  Zwischen Juden und Mischling 2. Grades
-  Zwischen Mischlingen 2. Grades
-  Zwischen Mischlingen 1. Grades und Juden

Chart Illustrating Nuremberg Laws

This chart was designed to help Germans determine their racial status as outlined by the 1935 Nuremberg Laws.

CREDIT: Stadtarchiv Bielefeld

Although we were not a churchgoing family, we observed Christmas and Easter in the traditional ways and belonged to the Lutheran church. My parents, my three siblings and I were all baptized and I took confirmation classes with Martin Niemöller, the former U-boat commander and his brother who substituted when Martin was in prison for anti-Nazi activities.

It was in 1932 that my [older] sister Rele provoked my father to reveal our Jewish ancestry for the first time. She played the violin and rejected a violin teacher because he “looked too Jewish.” Our father had responded in a rather convoluted way by saying, “Don’t you know that your grandmother came from the same people as Jesus . . . ?”

Our mother’s side, the Körtes, were “Aryan” by Hitler’s standards. But our father’s parents, Eugen Schweitzer and Algunde Hollaender were Jews born in Poland who had been baptized as adults. My father and his two brothers were considered Jews by Hitler’s laws. Though all were married to non-Jewish wives, our lives were dramatically changed. The whole family was devastated and worried about our future. My mother’s “Aryan” side stood by my father. My Körte grandmother said, “If Hitler is against Ernst [my father], I am against Hitler.”

We heard no anti-Jewish remarks at home, but the antisemitism of that time was so pervasive and the images in periodicals such as *Der Stürmer* so ugly, that Rele later wrote of her shock at learning her relation to “monsters.” She considered herself “the typical German girl with blond, curly hair.” I took the news more in stride. I was happy to be able to stay in school and glad not to be eligible to join Hitler Youth. . . .

In September of 1935, the Nuremberg Laws were introduced. My “Jewish” father was barred from treating “Aryan” patients, employing “Aryans,” attending concerts or the theater, or using public transportation. Rele had passed her *Abitur*, the certification of completing a high school degree, but as a Mischling, was ineligible to attend university. She couldn’t marry her “Aryan” boyfriend Hans, a medical student.¹

The Schweitzers were certainly not the only Germans to be penalized for having “Jewish blood.” By 1935, explains historian Martin Gilbert,

The search for Jews, and for converted Jews, to be driven out of their jobs was continuous. On 5 September 1935 the SS newspaper published the names of eight half-Jews and converted Jews, all of the Evangelical Lutheran faith, who had been “dismissed without notice and deprived of any further opportunity of acting as organists in Christian

¹ Marianne Schweitzer, afterword to Melita Maschmann, *Account Rendered: A Dossier on My Former Self*, trans. Geoffrey Strachan (Cambridge, MA: Plunkett Lake Press, 2013).

churches." From these dismissals, the newspaper commented, "It can be seen that the Reich Chamber of Music is taking steps to protect the church from pernicious influence."²

² Martin Gilbert, *The Holocaust: A History of the Jews of Europe During the Second World War* (New York: Holt, 1985), 47.

Connection Questions

1. How did the passage of the Nuremberg Laws affect the lives of Marianne Schweitzer and her family?
2. The Nuremberg Laws meant that Jews could no longer define their identities for themselves. What does it mean to lose the right to define yourself?
3. How was the problem confronting Germans of Jewish descent in 1935 similar to that faced by the Bear in reading, **The Bear That Wasn't** in Chapter 1? How do the two differ? How is the dilemma similar to that faced by Susie Phipps? How does it differ?
4. What did it mean in Germany in 1935 to be told that you were no longer a citizen? What rights and protections would you have lost? What would it mean to be told such a thing where you live today?