

Shadows and Symbols: The Tri-Level Importance of Memory in Jane Yolen's 'the Devil's Arithmetic' and Soon-To-Be-Published 'Mapping the Bones'

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Abstract : 'Never again' and 'Lest we forget' have long been messages associated with the events of the Shoah. Yet as we attempt to learn from the past, we must find new ways to engage with its memories. The preservation of the culture and the value of tradition are critical factors in Jane Yolen's works of Holocaust fiction, *The Devil's Arithmetic* and *Mapping the Bones*, emphasized through the importance of remembering. That word, in its multitude of forms (remember, remembering, memories), occurs no less than ten times in the first four pages and over one hundred times in the one hundred and sixty-four-page narrative *The Devil's Arithmetic*. While Yolen takes a different approach to showcasing the importance of memory in *Mapping the Bones*, it is of equal import in this work and arguably to the future of Holocaust knowing. The idea of remembering, the desire to remember, and the ability to remember, are explored in three divergent ways in *The Devil's Arithmetic*. First, in the importance to remember a past which is not her own - to understand history or acquired memories. Second, in the protagonist's actual or initial memories, those of her life in modern-day New York. Third, in a reverse mode of forgetting and trying to reacquire that which has been lost -- as Hannah is processed in the camp and she forgets everything, all worlds prior to the camp are lost to her. As numbers replace names, Yolen stresses the importance of self-identity or owned memories. In addition, the importance of relaying memory, the transitions of memory from perspective, and the ideas of reflective telling are explored in *Mapping the Bones* -- through the telling of the story through the lens of one of the twins as the events are unfolding; and then the through the reflective telling from the lens of the other twin. Parallel to the exploration of the intersemiosis of memory is the discussion of literary shadows (foreshadowing, backshadowing, and side-shadowing) and their impact on the reader's experience with Yolen's narrative. For in this type of exploration, one cannot look at the events described in Yolen's work and not also contemplate the figurative shadows cast.

Keywords : holocaust literature, memory, narrative, Yolen

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