

Donovan's Bookshelf

Donovan's Literary
Services

Recommended
Reading

Pick of the Month

Author, Author!

Title, Title!

Author Comments &
Accolades

How to Get
Reviewed

Recommended
Resources

Other Services

About

Copyright and
Permissions

Contact

October 2017 Review Issue

Table Of Contents

Prime Picks
 Biography & Autobiography
 Fantasy & Sci Fi
 Mystery & Thrillers
 Novels
 Reviewer's Choice
 Young Adult/Childrens

Biography & Autobiography

Coaching for Life

Paul Annacone

Irie Books

978-1633843820 \$19.99 Paper; \$25.99 Hardcover

https://www.amazon.com/Coaching-Life-Guide-Playing-Thinking/dp/1633843823/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1501949376&sr=8-1&keywords=coaching+for+life+annacone

At first glance, *Coaching For Life: A Guide to Playing, Thinking and Being the Best You Can Be* looks like a how-to guide for living well; but it moves well beyond self-help as it combines an autobiography of coach and author Paul Annacone's life with a discussion of how the rules and methods of tennis apply outside of the sports world. Anecdotes of players and moves are thus paired with best practices firmly rooted in real-world encounters.

As chapters provide game descriptions and focus on how to bring excellence into general life decisions and efforts, readers are given a formula for success for everything in life. The process-oriented focus moves between the playing court and the greater world, linking tennis in particular and sports in general to wisdom obtained from learning discipline and applying its rules to life.

Paul Annacone adds anecdotes and his personal encounters to illustrate these points, immersing readers in his life experience as well as his methods: "*The variety of shots, slices and angles you see in a player like Roger is strategically important to his game. But not initially. Not even for him. The mechanics of tennis, the building blocks of skill, come first. Once those are understood, then it becomes easier to understand how to execute the arsenal of shots that are the signature of the skilled player. But how can we—in any endeavor—*

move forward in a direct and uncomplicated way? Well, to put it bluntly, the more variables we create for ourselves at the outset, the harder it is to execute our plan. Repetition and well-designed drills are the answer. Strategy? As I've been saying, it must come later. First the body needs to learn how to think on its own, and this can only happen when the primary skill-set— the tool box, so to say—is put in place. With proper physical mechanics, good habits grow and become basic reflexes. Once the body has memorized the drill, then the mind can add an overall strategic plan."

This is not to say that his coaching perspective is just an ethereal commentary on life. Tennis is the foundation of all; and black and white and color photos of players and teams supplement tennis-specific assessments of success that players will appreciate: "*However, there have also been great tennis players who seem to lack what most textbooks portray as "classical form." These are players of very high quality who've handled pressure well due to the high level of shot repetition executed in practice after practice. Such players have their moves almost ingrained on the competitive match court. This repetition, combined with an incredible amount of focus and determination (and not to mention endurance), has helped these types of players develop tremendous self-confidence.*"

The result is thoroughly grounded in the sport but reaches out to athletes and general-interest readers alike, adding strong visuals to make it a top recommendation for sports and general-interest lifestyle collections alike.

Coaching for Life

Return to Index

Henry

Katrina Shawver

Koehler Books

Softcover, \$19.95, 978-1-63393-520-4

Hardcover, \$29.95, 978-1-63393-523-5

Ebook, \$9.99, 978-1-63393-521-1

www.koehlerbooks.com

Henry: A Polish Swimmer's True Story of Friendship From Auschwitz to America comes from a journalist who interviewed eighty-five-year-old Henry Zguda after receiving a phone tip, discovering that his memory contained a treasure trove of experiences about the Holocaust and his world which needed to be written down and exposed to a wider audience than just herself.

And so, she did - and *Henry* is the result: an unassuming title for what evolves into a momentous series of sharp recollections about tumultuous times. What began as a series of twice-weekly interviews soon became a growing friendship as Katrina Shawver endeavored to understand not only the mechanics of Henry's transformations and survival, but his ability to live in the modern world without bitterness and anger about the past.

These are lessons and examples that could be employed by any survivor, revealing stories and encounters backed by images and newspaper accounts which are reproduced in this book for maximum impact, much as the author experienced in the course of her conversations with Henry.

Lest one think this singular experience was somehow inconsequential, given the bigger picture, it should be pointed out that not only did Henry possess a huge collection of original documents and images, but his encounters with others during his experience, paired with his struggles as a former champion swimmer turned political prisoner, make for an unusual perspective unequalled in Holocaust survival chronicles.

Henry's original photos and some unique documents, such as his letters, form the foundation of this account; but many of the other photos and documents included were the result of Katrina Shawver's substantial research. They come from multiple museums and other sources, many not seen elsewhere.

The historical background that's included adds significantly to the context and setting, something else that sets *Henry* apart from most Holocaust memoirs.

Underlying this survivor's encounters is a sense of not just how he survived, but how he later lived his life; developing principles that continued to guide him long after the Holocaust was over.

It's these facets that all coalesce to make for a unique series of stories that form a different kind of story: one that takes the macrocosm of the greater Holocaust experience, synthesizes it into one man's life and perspective, and adds an overlay of life values that reflect a powerful saga filled with personal moments, vividly recalled: "*We had a little freedom, not much, but we could walk outside the barracks. The Germans just watched as we gather a little wood, or catch a few frogs. I met my two good friends there Yost Slagboom and Hubert Lapailles. We have the nice frog legs, we cooked them in a small iron oven, cooked with wood from the forest. We take the frog legs, put them in red-hot oven, they are very nice piece of meat. So, I survived the quarry; I was strong from the milk and frog legs and bread.*"

The treasure trove of documents and images, from vintage photos from the Buchenwald Memorial to Henry's letters (some 70 original photos and rare German documents) is just one more thing that sets *Henry* apart from any other survivor's story, making it a top 'must have' acquisition for any collection strong in Holocaust survival accounts. *Henry* is especially recommended for any holding strong in Polish community heritage, World War II history, and the world of competitive swimming.

Henry

Return to Index

The Mother I Imagined, the Mom I Knew

Paul Alan Fahey

Mindprints Literary Press

978-0-9992092-1-9 (print) \$14.99

978-0-9992092-2-6 (e-book) \$ 9.99

<http://a.co/iKqsF0n>

The Mother I Imagined, the Mom I Knew blends a memoir format with fiction and poetry for an unusual multi-faceted discussion that carries readers through Paul Alan Fahey's life and his relationship with his mother, creating a fine testimony to single mothers raising sons on their own.

Fahey's mother died when he was almost fifty: an event that affected his life and led him into therapy, where he started a journal reflecting on his relationship with her and his memories of her life. These entries turned into vignettes, short fictional pieces, and insights surrounding the realities of the mother he knew and the mother figure he envisioned.

Perhaps of necessity, the structure of *The Mother I Imagined, the Mom I Knew* is a 'hybrid' creation that changes formats and perspectives in the course of its journey. As the story unwinds, starting in the 1950s when mother and son led a 'gypsy' life roaming the San Francisco peninsula as drifters, to how he came out to his mother as a gay man, her reaction ("*I know," she said, "and I don't approve." She got up and walked over to me with a slightly inebriated gait. I felt her lips brush my cheek, heard a whispered "I love you, that's all that matters..."*"), and how he pieced together his mother's past from her stories, journals, and insights ("*Mother told me stories mostly to entertain me, but also to take the edge off my nomadic childhood. Monday nights might have found us in a motel room with kitchenette, and a free continental breakfast, and then Wednesday we'd be in a furnished studio apartment. I never knew where we'd end up.*"), this story is filled with not just lifestyle and personality insights, but the evolving relationship of mother and son against the backdrop of cultural changes in the San Francisco Bay Area from the 1950s through the eighties and nineties.