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LERNER PUBLISHING GROUP PULLS *ANGEL GIRL* CHILDREN'S BOOK FROM MARKET

MINNEAPOLIS—Lerner Publishing Group is shocked and disappointed to learn that the widely publicized Holocaust love story of Herman and Roma Rosenblat, which inspired the children's picture book *Angel Girl*, is not entirely true. After investigation by *The New Republic*, Mr. Rosenblat and his agent, Andrea Hurst, released statements on December 27, 2008, saying parts of his story were fabricated.

Mr. Rosenblat first told his story in the mid 1990s, when he entered a newspaper contest. Over the years his story—which he consistently represented as being true—has been covered by countless newspapers, magazines, and online media. He also appeared on *Oprah* in 1996 and 2007.

In *Angel Girl*, published in September 2008 by Carolrhoda Books, an imprint of Lerner Publishing Group, author Laurie Friedman retold the portion of Mr. Rosenblat's story about surviving a work camp during the Holocaust by receiving food from a girl from the other side of the fence, and then meeting this same girl many years later on a blind date in the United States and marrying her. According to Ms. Hurst's statement, although Mr. Rosenblat's stories from the concentration camps are true, "(he) invented the crux of this amazing love story—about the girl at the fence who threw him an apple." Mr. Rosenblat also revealed that he made up the chance reunion with this girl on the blind date.

Ms. Friedman first read Mr. Rosenblat's story in an online newspaper. She was so moved by the article that she contacted the Rosenblats. Over a period of several months, she spent many days interviewing the couple and gathering as many details about their Holocaust experiences as possible. "After reading Herman and Roma Rosenblat's story, I wanted to find a way to share what I felt was an important and inspiring message for children," says Friedman. "My goal in writing *Angel Girl* was to communicate that even in the darkest of times, no one should give up hope."

Based on Mr. Rosenblat's consistency and level of detail, and the long-running coverage of this story in the media, Ms. Friedman and Lerner Publishing Group had trusted the accuracy of his story. "Throughout the development of this book, the Rosenblats reviewed my manuscript and assured me of the authenticity of the details of their story," said Ms. Friedman. "Unfortunately, I, like many others, am disappointed and upset to now learn of Herman's fabrications."



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“We are dismayed to learn about Herman and Roma Rosenblat's recantation of part of their Holocaust survival story,” said Adam Lerner, President and Publisher, Lerner Publishing Group. “While this tragic event in world history needs to be taught to children, it is imperative that it is done so in a factual way that doesn't sacrifice veracity for emotional impact. We have been misled by the Rosenblats, who gave us and our author what we believed to be an authentic and moving account of their lives.”

Lerner Publishing Group has canceled all pending reprints and is issuing refunds on all returned books. The company is no longer offering the book for sale and is recalling the book from the market.

For additional information, please contact Lindsay Chall, senior publicist, at 800-328-4929, x385.

About Lerner Publishing Group:

Lerner Publishing Group creates high-quality fiction and nonfiction for children and young adults. Founded in 1959, Lerner Publishing Group is one of the nation's largest independent children's book publishers and currently has nine imprints and divisions: Lerner Publications, Carolrhoda Books, Millbrook Press, Twenty-First Century Books, Graphic Universe, ediciones Lerner (a Spanish-language imprint), First Avenue Editions, LernerClassroom, and Kar-Ben Publishing. For further information, visit Lerner Publishing Group's Website at www.lernerbooks.com.