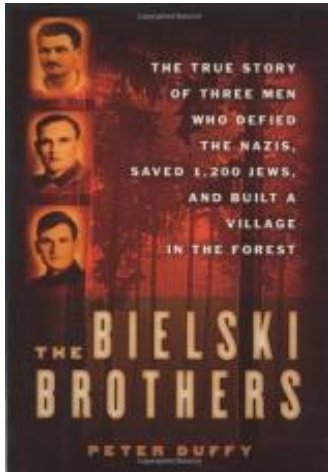


# The Bielski Brothers: The True Story of Three Men Who Defied the Nazis, Saved 1,200 Jews, and Built a Village in the Forest

by Peter Duffy

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## About the Book

In 1941 after witnessing the execution of their parents and two siblings, Tuvia, Asael, and Zus Bielski fled into the forest and sent out the word that any Jews who made it to the woods would find a safe haven there. Over time, they gathered more than 1200 Jews, who lived hidden in the Belo-Russian forest. For two and a half years, at the height of World War II, the Bielski Jews courageously fought against the Nazis and built a thriving community that included a temple, a bathhouse, and a theater. The historical role of the Bielski brothers in saving Jewish lives from the Holocaust is at least equal to that of Oskar Schindler, but their story has never been told -- until now.

## Discussion Guide

1. Members of the Bielski community had to do things they would have considered morally reprehensible outside of the forest -- lying, stealing, and even killing. Do you feel their choices were justifiable under the circumstances?
2. What activities did members of the group develop to create a sense of community and maintain their religious and cultural traditions?
3. Do you believe that the cultural and religious activities that the Jews implemented into their daily lives helped them make it through the war?
4. One amazing fact about the story is that, although many gentile neighbors knew about the Jews hidden in the forest, their experience was never revealed. Why did the townspeople help keep the Bielski's secret?

## Author Bio

Peter Duffy is the author of *THE BIELSKI BROTHERS* and *THE KILLING OF MAJOR DENIS MAHON*. He also works as a freelance journalist and writes regularly for *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *New York* magazine, *The New Republic*, *Slate* and many other outlets. He lives in New York City with his wife and daughter.

## Critical Praise

"[A] dramatic and heartfelt story of unbelievable courage in the face of unspeakable adversity."

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