

...not remarked, to a Senator named "Sheriff" Harris, that Berg could speak seven languages, a bit of information that prompted one of baseball's immortal retorts. "Yeah, I know," Harris said, "and he can't hit in any of them."

This was true. Berg stuck around for 15

...assignments and told to make of them what they could." Berg was no scientist, much less nuclear physicist, but his retentive mind and speedy grasp of complex subjects made him a natural member of the small OSS task force assigned to track down the activities of Werner Heisenberg, the eminent theoretical physicist who, though

...in 1944, Berg was told to attend a lecture by Heisenberg in Zurich and, according to a fellow OSS operator, "If anything Heisenberg said convinced him the Germans were close to a bomb, then his job was to shoot him—right there in the auditorium."

It never came to that. Heisenberg's speech was innocuous and no shots were

Dawidoff paints it very well. He has done heroic research, much of it in unlit corners, and he avoids the temptation of rehashing it to excess. For the most part he also eschews the temptations of amateur psychoanalysis; when he does succumb, it is mostly to revealing effect. Moe Berg doubtless will forever remain a mystery, but Dawidoff has brought the mystery to life.

The Two Voices of Autism

OUT OF SILENCE

A Journey Into Language

By Russell Martin

Henry Holt. 300 pp. \$22.50

By Deborah Tannen

BORN "normal," 18-month-old Ian Drummond was given a routine DPT immunization and had an allergic reaction to the P—the pertussis vaccine—that caused his brain to swell, leaving him with a bizarre oversensitivity to sensory stimuli, the inability to process information or manage emotion, the imprisoning

Deborah Tannen, author of "You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation," is University Professor of Linguistics at Georgetown University. Her book "Talking From 9 to 5" will be published in the fall.



Russell Martin (left) and Ian Drummond

need for routine, and the apparent inability to understand or use language that we know as autism. In this, he was disastrously unlucky, but he was fortunate in having a family who would devote themselves to him and an uncle with an obsession to learn all he could about what happened to Ian and the talent to write a book about it.

Out of Silence turns on an astonishing

"awakening" reminiscent of those described by Oliver Sacks. At the age of nine, Ian learned "facilitated communication": With the support of a helper to steady his hand and make it possible for him to initiate the motion of striking keys, he could type out messages revealing thoughts and feelings he was utterly unable to speak. Suddenly there emerged from the chaos of autism a boy named Ian and

the amazing revelation that language had been in there all along. Because he had possessed language, he also had had an understanding of what was happening to him, even as he was locked in silence. (Although Martin acknowledges that many people believe "facilitated communication" is a hoax, I, like him, was convinced of its efficacy in this case.)

Ian's emergence out of silence into the communicative use of language is miraculous, but also devastating. Along with the precious ability to communicate with their child, to be able to ask him why he did what he did, his parents had to confront the terrible knowledge that their efforts to meet his need for sameness, to provide the interminable "routines" which he demanded—screaming in agonized protest if they were denied—give him no pleasure, bring him no peace. His family was now faced with two Ians: the physically observable one they had long known, who desperately needed repetition (and who could kick, hit and pull his mother's hair), and another, utterly surprising one trapped inside, who begged for newness and who typed messages saying he hated the routines his parents had devoted their lives to providing (and who apologized for the hair-pulling, explaining that his body simply would not do what he told it).

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