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Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (p. [161]-170) and index.
Nota di contenuto	Representing euthanasia, reclaiming popular culture -- Heteroglossia from Grimmelshausen to the Grimm brothers -- The dwarf and Nazi body politics -- Oskar's dysfunctional family and gender politics -- Oskar as fool, harlequin, and trickster, and the politics of sanity -- Gypsies, the picaresque novel, and the politics of social integration -- Epilogue: beyond Die Blechtrommel: Germans as victims in Im Krebsgang.
Sommario/riassunto	In receiving the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1999, Gunter Grass, a prominent and controversial figure in the ongoing discussion of the German past and reunification, finally gained recognition as Germany's greatest living author, a writer of international importance and acclaim. Grass's 1959 novel 'The Tin Drum' remains one of the most important works of literature for the construction of postwar German identity. Peter Arnds offers a completely new reading of the novel, analyzing an aspect of Grass's literary treatment of German history that has never been examined in detail: the Nazi ideology of race and eugenics, which resulted in the persecution of so-called asocials as 'life unworthy of life,' their extermination in psychiatric institutions in the Third Reich, and their marginalization in the Adenauer period. Arnds shows that in order to represent the Nazi past and subvert bourgeois paradigms of rationalism, Grass revives several facets of popular culture that National Socialism either suppressed or manipulated for its ideology of racism.

In structure and content Grass's novel connects the persecution of degenerate art to the persecution and extermination of these 'asocials,' for whom the persecuted dwarf-protagonist Oskar Matzerath becomes a central metaphor and voice. This comparative study reveals that Grass creates in the novel an irrational counterculture opposed to the rationalism of Nazi science and its obsession with racial hygiene, while simultaneously exposing the continuity of this destructive rationalism in postwar Germany and the absurdity of a 'Stunde Null,' that putative tabula rasa in 1945. Peter O. Arnds is associate professor of German and Italian at Kansas State University.
