

HEILBRONNER, Bertha and Eva

2 Judenberg, 36 Radstrasse

Translated by: Katja Sonnen
Supervisor: Dr. Robynne, Flynn-Diez,
Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg,
Institut für Übersetzen und Dolmetschen Englischabteilung

DR . ANTJE KÖHLERSCHMIDT

Bertha Heilbronner, born January 19, 1877, in Laupheim,
deported to Theresienstadt August 8, 1942, deported to and killed in
the concentration camp Treblinka September 26, 1942

[Simon Heilbronner, born February 29, 1868, in Laupheim and died
June 15, 1926, in Laupheim]

Eva Heilbronner, maiden name Stern, born October 16, 1875, in
Laupheim, died February 28, 1937, in Laupheim

[- Selmar Heilbronner, born September 26, 1897 in Laupheim

- Willy Heilbronner, born August 28, 1898, in Laupheim, OO
Minna Goldsmith, born April 16, 1901 in Hersfeld

- Kurt Jakob Heilbronner, born April 2, 1926]



The two representatives of the Heilbronner family, Bertha and Eva, are closely related to the siblings Alfred Erlebacher and Bella Levy. Bertha Heilbronner was the aunt of the siblings as she was the younger sister of their mother Pauline Erlebacher, maiden name Heilbronner. Eva Heilbronner, maiden name Stein, was the widow of Bertha Heilbronner's cousin.

Bertha Heilbronner

Bertha Heilbronner was born as the tenth of eleven children of Emanuel and Louise Heilbronner, maiden name Rosengart, January 19, 1877, and grew up in Laupheim. Just like her siblings and contemporaries, she went to the Jewish primary school in Laupheim. Their teacher was Ascher. A picture of 46 Jewish children, taken at the school in 1884, shows Bertha in the fourth row between Flora and Emma Bergmann. It is the only remaining document of her life, about which hardly anything else is known.

She never married and until she was forcibly relocated and deported, she lived in her parents' house, which she shared later with her nephew Alfred Erlebacher until he immigrated to the US in October 1937. He sold the house at 26 Judenberg to the carter Theobald Lemmermeyer in the same year. Since Bertha Heilbronner continued to live there, it is probable that she had been granted a special right of residence in the contract. After Alfred's emigration, she maintained written correspondence with her nephew. One of her last postcards to him dates back to July 9, 1941. Shortly after, in October 1941, 75-year-old Bertha Heilbronner was forced

to relocate to a very shabby barrack in Wendelinsgrube because the city of Laupheim had issued the removal of all Jewish citizens from their homes. In a letter from June 15, 1942, Lina Wertheimer from the Jewish retirement home of Laupheim wrote to Emma and Gretel Gideon in Winterthur: "It's only good that Liesel (referring to Elise Friedberger, maiden name Loewenthal) is so close to Bertha Heilbronner, and also to the few other neighbors, they stick together." In their need and desperation this was all the comfort they had left. On August



19, 1942, during the fourth and last deportation, the remaining 43 Jewish men and women were carted off from the Jewish retirement home at 2 Judenberg and the barracks at Wendelinsgrube. Bertha Heilbronner was one of them. Via the mass camp on the Killesberg in Stuttgart, the Nazis deported her to Theresienstadt, where she arrived August 23, 1942. The city Adolf Hitler had ostensibly given to the Jews to demonstrate his mercy was actually an overcrowded ghetto, in which at first mainly Jews from Bohmen and Maehren were concentrated and which later housed especially elderly Jews from German and Austrian cities. For already 75-year-old Bertha Heilbronner and 20 others of the people deported from Laupheim, Theresienstadt became a transit camp on the way to the extermination camps in the east. On September 26, 1942, Bertha Heilbronner was transported to the concentration camp Treblinka, where she was led straight from the train station to the shower rooms (gas chambers) for "disinfection", and murdered.

Eva Heilbronner

Eva, called Emma by everyone, was the daughter of David and Rosalie Stern, maiden name Stern. She was born October 16, 1875, in Laupheim, where she grew up and also met her husband Simon Heilbronner. The couple married on August 11, 1896, and in the following year, their son Selmar was born in Laupheim, followed hardly a year later by their second son, Willy. Just as their parents, both sons grew up within the Jewish community. The family lived on 36 Radstrasse, in the house in which Eva Heilbronner had been raised. Simon's profession was listed as "Tradesman". However, it has proved impossible to find out in which field of trade he worked.

A picture taken at Laupheim's Israelite grammar school in 1904 shows teacher Haymann with 45 Jewish girls and boys, including Selmar. His brother Willy can be found on a picture of students from Laupheim's Latein- und Realschule (secondary school) from the year 1909/10. He and his brother looked very much alike.

Just after the end of their schooldays, after which both completed commercial apprenticeships, World War One started. Selmar was only just 19 years old when he enlisted in the 123rd grenadiers corps in Ulm, on August 21, 1916, and was deployed to the western frontlines. His younger brother Willy enlisted in the second additional field artillery regiment number 13 on December 1, 1916, to fight at the western front, too, as a gunner. On August 8, 1918, he was hit by a grenade splinter and wounded badly. He was awarded the second class Iron Cross and the Badge of the Wounded. Both of the brothers probably returned to Laupheim after the First World War, but left their hometown again soon afterwards. It has proved impossible to determine the exact time of their departure and their later residence.



Jewish primary school 1904: Hermann Obernauer, Selmar Heilbronner, Julius Bernheim (from the left).



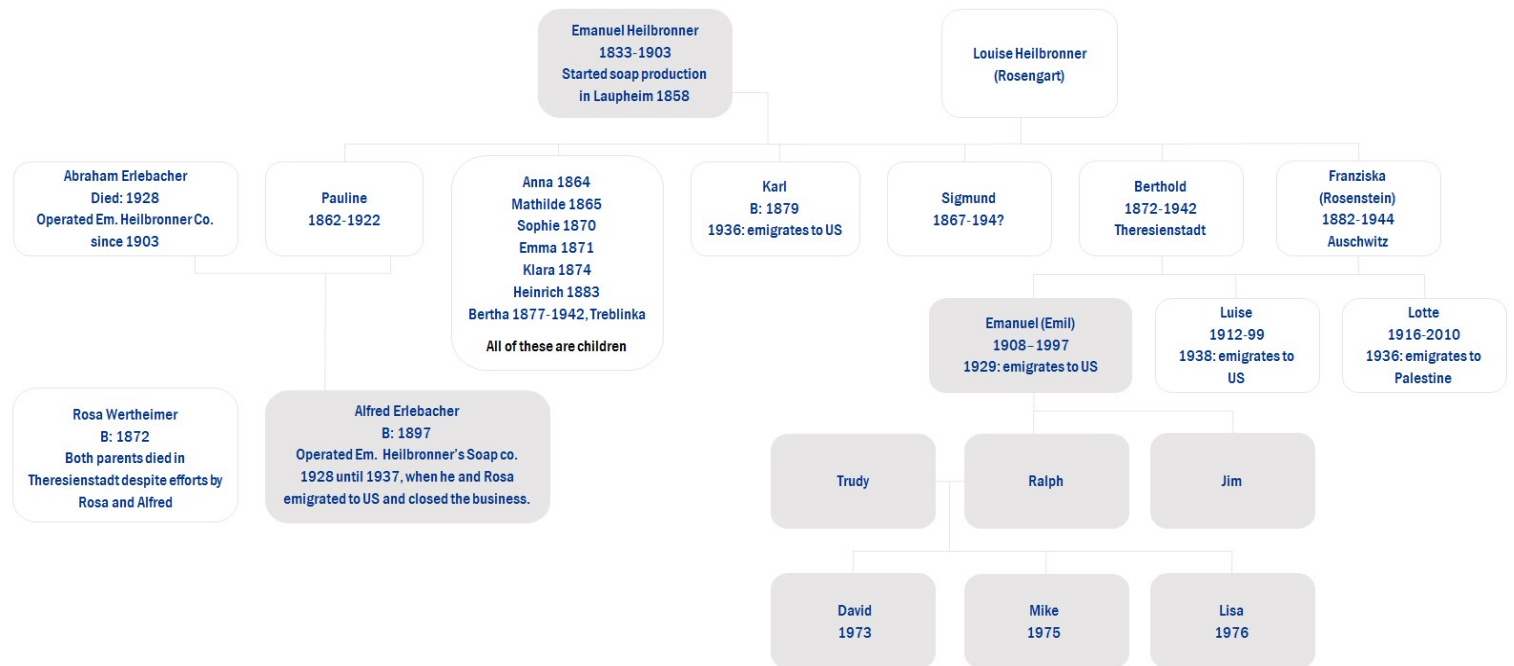
Latein- und Realschule 1909/10: Leopold Bernheimer, Willy Heilbronner, Helmut Steiner (from the left).

Thanks to a genealogy of the former Jewish community by John Bergmann, it is known that Selmar Heilbronner never married, while Willy Heilbronner married Minna Goldschmidt from Hersfeld on March 1, 1925, and their son Kurt Jakob Heilbronner was born April 2, 1926. About Kurt, it is known that on May 13, 1952, he married Elisabeth Sael, who had been born as Elisabeth Aufsesser December 27, 1931 in Nürnberg-Sebald. The couple has two sons, Soram Simon, born February 4, 1954, in Givataim, Israel, and Dan Josef Heilbronner, born January 26, 1960, in New York.

After Selmar and Willy had left, their parents Eva and Simon Heilbronner remained in Laupheim, where Simon passed away on June 15, 1926. After the time of the Weimar Republic, his wife, who was seven years younger

than him, also had to witness the early years of the Nazi government, with which came the segregation and discrimination of the Jewish population. Eva Heilbronner passed away February 28, 1937, in Laupheim at the age of 62 and was buried on the Jewish cemetery, just as her husband Simon. The house on 36 Radstrasse was sold to Franz Josef Russ by Eva's heirs, Selmar and Willy Heilbronner, on May 12, 1938.

Family Tree



Sources:

Adress- und Geschaefts-Handbuch für die Oberamtsstadt und die
Bezirksgemeinden Laupheim 1925. Braun, Josef: Alt-Laupheimer
Bilderbogen. Bd. 1. Weissenhorn 1985.

(eng: Address and business handbook for the Oberamtsstadt and the
county community Laupheim 1925. Braun, Josef: Old- Laupheims
illustrated broadsheet. Volume 1. Weissenhorn 1985.)

Hecht, Cornelia; Koehlerschmidt, Antje: Die Deportation der Juden aus
Laupheim. Laupheim 2004. Huettenmeister, Nathanja: Der Juedische
Friedhof Laupheim. Laupheim 1998.

(eng: Hecht, Cornelia; Koehlerschmidt Antje: The deportation of Jews
from Laupheim. Laupheim 2004. Huettenmeister Nathanja: The Jewish
cemetery in Laupheim. Laupheim 1998)

Update:

Homepage der Firma
Dr. Bronners

Familien und
Firmengeschichte

Homepage der
deutschen
Firmenzentrale

Video zum 150.
Firmenjubiläum

[Dr. Bronner´s All-One Magic](https://www.drbronner.com/our-story/timeline/)

<https://www.drbronner.com/our-story/timeline/>



Homepage of Dr.
Bronner´s

Timeline

Homepage of Dr.
Bronner´s of
Germany

Video from Dr.
Bronner`s 150
Year of
Soapmaking

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eFbT04ucAug&feature=youtu.be>



Emanuel Bronner (1908-1997)

Emanuel Bronner was a pioneer of natural cosmetics. Coming from a traditional German soap maker family, he founded Dr. Bronner's Magic Soaps in 1948. While the business remained small in terms of turnover and profits, its liquid peppermint soap was one of the first all-natural products available on the post-World War II American market.

Introduction

Emanuel Bronner (born February 1, 1908, in Heilbronn; died March 7, 1997, in Escondido, CA) was a pioneer of natural cosmetics.^[1] Coming from a

traditional German soap maker family, he founded Dr. Bronner's Magic Soaps in 1948. While the business remained small in terms of turnover and profits, its liquid peppermint soap was one of the first all-natural products available on the post-World War II American market. Bronner, while a trained chemist, insisted that his product contained all natural ingredients. From the late 1960s Dr. Bronner's soap slowly developed into a well-respected brand that was particularly popular with the American counterculture movement and other politically active groups.

Emanuel Bronner, however, did not consider himself primarily a businessman. Instead, he saw his calling in political, pacifist, and religious activism. Born into a Jewish-orthodox family, he developed his own religious thinking, combining beliefs and moral dogmata of different world religions into his very own and highly peculiar "Moral ABC." Every bottle of soap he sold had a label displaying a variety of short religious and ethical statements as well as other non-religious thoughts and ideas designed to inspire his customers and promote his world peace plan. His children and grandchildren, while pursuing different goals than the company's founder, have carried on this tradition of political activism and use the Dr. Bronner's company to probe new forms of social, ethical, and ecologically sustainable business.



Family and Ethnic Background

Emanuel Bronner was born as Emil Heilbronner into an orthodox German-Jewish family in Heilbronn on February 1, 1908. His father, Berthold Heilbronner (born 1872, died 1942), was a traditional soap maker. His mother, Franziska Heilbronner, née Rosenstein (born 1882, died 1944), came from an affluent business family.^[2] Emanuel had three sisters: Luise (born 1912, died 1999), Lotte (born 1916, died 2009) and Helene Gertrud, who died at only nine months of age in 1917.^[3]

Emanuel's family had been in the soap-making business for at least two previous generations. His grandfather, who was also called Emanuel (born 1833, died 1903), owned a soap-making business in Laupheim, a small town one hundred miles south of Heilbronn.^[4] After his death in 1903 his son-in-law Abraham Erlebacher, husband of his oldest daughter Pauline, continued the Laupheim family firm, which was still in business after World War I as "Emanuel Heilbronner Seifensiederei Inhaber Abraham Erlebacher."^[5]

In the meantime, three of the founder's twelve children—his sons Sigmund, Berthold, and Karl—started a new soap-making company in Heilbronn around 1922.^[6] The three brothers managed the company

jointly. Sigmund, who was the only one of the three brothers with a higher education, supervised the technical and strategic development of the company. The youngest brother Karl had significant practical experience in soap manufacturing. He had visited the United States during adolescence, where he familiarized himself with the innovative process of manufacturing liquid soap. Emanuel's father Berthold, who had learned as an apprentice at his uncle's company in Munich, was in charge of bookkeeping.[7] The company started as a partnership under the name of "Heilbronner und Cie." and was later reorganized as a joint stock company called "Madaform AG," manufacturer of the "[Madaform Lanolin Seife](#)," a kind of wool wax [soap](#).[8] Emanuel Bronner learned the soap-making business in the family company with his father and as an apprentice with his uncle's firm in Laupheim. He attended the guild system trade school and received his soap-making master certificate.[9]



Family Picture of the Heilbronners, ca. 1920

Emanuel's family was religious, fairly well integrated into German society and politically active. His father Berthold was a member of the German Democratic Party (*Deutsche Demokratische Partei*), a social liberal party of the Weimar Republic. Having lived in Germany his entire life, he was deeply enmeshed in German culture and society. While Berthold practiced Judaism, he strictly opposed Zionism as the answer to Jewish discrimination in Europe.[10] This was an ongoing conflict between Berthold and his son Emanuel, who believed in more radical responses to anti-Semitic discrimination.[11] Looking back at his years in Germany, Emanuel later repeatedly recounted an episode from his childhood: When he was five years old and other children invited him to play with them, they ganged up on him and poured a five-gallon pail of urine on his head while calling him a "damn Jew." According to the story, he ran back home

and asked his mother, "Jude, Jew, what is that?"^[12] Threatened by the rising anti-Semitism in Germany and tired of the conflict-riddled relationship with his autocratic father, Emanuel left for the United States in 1929.

The Heilbronner Family during the Nazi Regime

While Emanuel was beginning a new life in the United States, the situation in Germany deteriorated for the Heilbronner family. Emanuel's sisters both decided to leave Germany in the 1930s after the Nazis seized power. Lotte immigrated to Palestine in 1936 and Luise followed her brother to the United States in 1938.^[13] The Heilbronner family made a strong effort to help all family members flee Germany. Emanuel's uncle Karl, co-owner of the Madaform company, emigrated to the United States in 1936.^[14] Emanuel's cousin Alfred Erlebacher, son of his father's older sister Pauline, his wife Rosa, and their son Albert left for Milwaukee in October 1937, where Emanuel was living at the time.^[15] Emanuel's parents, however, decided to stay in Germany despite their children's repeated pleas—during a vacation in Switzerland in 1938, for example—to flee. Like many Germans of Jewish faith, they believed that the Nazi regime would not last and that they would eventually return to having a normal life.^[16]

During the night of November 9, 1938, which became known as the Night of Broken Glass (*Reichskristallnacht*), Jewish community buildings and synagogues all over Germany were destroyed and many Jews arrested. Shortly afterwards, a law was passed stipulating that German Jews would have to pay for the damages incurred during that night. All Jewish taxpayers with assets higher than 5,000 reichsmark (approximately \$31,400 in 2010 USD) were forced to pay 20 percent of their income by August 1939.^[17] The Heilbronners had to cope with this financial burden in addition to the obstacles posed to Jewish businesspeople, who were largely excluded from German economic life and who saw their businesses being boycotted. As of January 1, 1939, Jews were officially forbidden to own retail stores and to sell merchandise under the "Decree on the Exclusion of Jews from German Economic Life" (*Verordnung zur Ausschaltung der Juden aus dem deutschen Wirtschaftsleben*).^[18] Approximately at the same time, on May 4, 1939, Berthold's older brother and Madaform co-owner Sigmund died, and with his younger brother's emigration a few years earlier, Berthold was left as the sole owner of the company.

During the following months, Berthold, like many other Jewish businesspeople, became the victim of Aryanization. Jewish business owners were forced to sell their companies to "Aryan" businessmen at prices far below market value or their property was confiscated by the state and transferred to German ownership.^[19] Berthold Heilbronner had

to sell his company to [Dr. H. Bauder](#) who became the new owner of [Madaform](#) in the summer of 1939.[20]

Under immense pressure, Emanuel's parents eventually took the difficult decision to leave for the United States in 1941. Emanuel's sister Luise paid an unknown sum of money for the steamship passage and other transportation costs to the Transmigration Bureau to enable her parents' emigration. The Transmigration Bureau was a non-profit service agency established in New York City in 1940 by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee to organize the emigration of Jews.[21] Emanuel's parents received the necessary documents on December 5, 1941, but never got a chance to embark on their journey.[22] Only a few months later, [Berthold and Franziska Heilbronner](#) as well as Berthold's sister-in-law Friederike, the wife of the late Sigmund, were [deported to concentration camps on March 31, 1942](#). Friederike and Berthold were taken to Theresienstadt, where they both died shortly after their arrival. The death certificates list "pneumonia" (Berthold) and "enteritis," an inflammation of the small intestine (Friederike), as the causes of death.[23] Franziska Heilbronner was deported to Auschwitz, where she was killed on May 16, 1944, at the age of sixty-two.[24] In a page of testimony submitted by her daughter in 1999 to Yad Vashem, a center for research, education, documentation and commemoration of the Holocaust, the circumstances of her death were described as "Gas!"[25]

Social Status and Personality

Emanuel Bronner [arrived in New York in December 1929](#) on the "S.S. Deutschland" coming from Hamburg.[26] He then turned to his cousin Ludwig Brunner who had emigrated three years earlier and lived in Watseka, Ill.[27] Ludwig, born 1904 in Adelsheim, thirty miles from Heilbronn, was the son of Klara Heilbronner, one of Emanuel's father's sisters. Like Emanuel he was a soap maker and chemist.[28] This family connection facilitated Emanuel's beginnings in the United States.

From Watseka Emanuel moved one hundred miles north to [Milwaukee, where he lived](#) from 1930 to 1941. Milwaukee was a popular destination for German immigrants. A hub of German life and culture, it had the third largest German-born population of the United States in the 1930s, after New York City and Chicago. The 1930 federal census listed 40,787 German-born residents out of a population of 587,000, equaling approximately 7 percent. Many others, born in the United States, still shared the language and culture of their German-born parents.[29] Bronner became integrated in this large German community. He was a member of different German groups and in particular enjoyed the Bavarian club, despite being from Württemberg. He regularly participated in German dances, and at one of those occasions met his [first wife Paula Wolfahrt](#), also of German descent. Paula worked as a maid at the Schroeder Hotel, and the two married in 1933. Emanuel and Paula had

three children, Ellen (born 1934), Ralph (born 1936), and Jim (born 1938).^[30]

Emanuel Bronner had a quirky personality. He was religious but believed that all religions of the world should unite in one. While he was born a Jew, his wife was a Catholic and they had all three children baptized Lutheran.^[31] He also was known for holding strong political opinions. He began to publicly speak about his plans for global peace advocating a world where all humans peacefully lived together. In 1932, he even turned to President Herbert Hoover trying to convince him of the advantages of his ideas for peace. With other activists, he organized the so-called “brotherhood of man.”^[32] While their concrete program and aims remained obscure, Bronner told reporters that he had a “plan for reemployment,”^[33] “a universal brotherhood plan,”^[34] and a “world economic plan,”^[35] suggesting in the absence of much detail a moral and economic agenda with the ultimate goal of global peace.

On October 6, 1936, Bronner was naturalized as a U.S. citizen and changed his name from Emil Heilbronner to Emanuel Theodore Bronner. The reasons for changing his first name are unknown. Emanuel was the name of his grandfather, suggesting that he may have wanted to honor him and his family roots. Both of his chosen first names also have meanings related to faith—Emanuel meaning “God is with us” and Theodore meaning “God’s gift”—which may relate to his deeper engagement with religion. Bronner made it very clear, however, why he chose a different last name: “Because of Hitler, I changed my name from Heilbronner to simply Bronner. You know, the Heil Hitler stuff.”^[36]

In 1941, Bronner moved from Milwaukee to Chicago where he lived until 1946. He struggled greatly with the death of his parents in 1942. At the very last minute, they had been able to write to their son in the United States the three simple words “you were right,” acknowledging his repeated attempts to convince them to flee and letting him know about their fate.^[37] In this difficult situation, Bronner’s wife Paula got sick and needed to be hospitalized, leaving him alone with three children, fighting to make ends meet.^[38] In 1944, Paula died. While the cause of death is unknown, Bronner retrospectively considered this moment a pivotal turning point. “What really [...] got me out of the ordinary was on August 30, 1944, when I buried the mother of my three children in a potter’s field, sixty-one pounds, her jawbones broken. I, frankly speaking, tried to forget that terrible experience as fast as I could, because no man can live with something like that.”^[39]

Following these tragic events, Bronner’s eccentricities grew more extreme. He said about this moment that he quit his job as chemist “and became a searcher for truth,” claiming this to be his true calling.^[40] He started calling himself “Dr.” without ever having received a PhD. He claimed that his earnings of allegedly \$60,000 (approximately \$743,000 in 2010

USD)[41] from licensing six patents were a “sign of God” telling him to focus on his spiritual message. From then on he referred to himself as “the servant of God.”[42]

Bronner also made the acquaintance of Fred Walcher, who had emigrated from Austria in 1922.[43] The two men shared the common interests of maintaining the culture of German-speaking Europe and promoting global peace plans. On March 9, 1945, an unusual incident occurred. Fred Walcher was nailed to a cross in Chicago, crowned with thorns and left bleeding for passersby to see.[44] In the end, he survived with hand injuries. When the police came to question him in the hospital, Emanuel Bronner was sitting next to his bed. Although not directly involved in the incident, Bronner talked to the police and the press, handing out copies of their peace plan.[45] He also explained the crucifixion by saying that Walcher had repeatedly said “that people were so stupid and ignorant that something violent was needed to awaken them (...) He always said a crucifixion would do it. I believe that some of the men Walcher had been talking to got so aroused that they decided to crucify him. I don’t believe they understood that he did not intend to be the victim.”[46] Bronner stayed friends with Walcher until the latter’s death in 1964.[47] Looking back at the crucifixion, Bronner was upset that the media did not report extensively on their peace plan.[48]

After one of his many public speeches at the University of Chicago in 1946, Bronner was jailed for unknown reasons. According to Bronner’s description of the event, he was arrested because he opposed water fluoridation experiments which he considered a danger for public health but officials of the university were allegedly eager to initiate.[49] Worried about his mental health, his sister Luise committed him to Elgin State Mental Hospital, twenty miles from Chicago.[50] According to Bronner, he was strapped to a concrete slab, received electroshock treatments, and had to mix cement as a part of the work program.[51] This led him to publicly call Elgin State a concentration camp.[52] Bronner tried to escape the institution multiple times and eventually was successful when his sister Luise visited him in 1947. He took some money out of her pocket and fled through the bathroom window.[53]

Bronner made his way to Los Angeles, a city to which he had no obvious prior connections.[54] He continued his political activism, giving speeches at least once a week on Friday nights.[55] World peace and interreligious tolerance were only two of many topics Bronner addressed on a regular basis. In the late 1940s two new topics began to play a dominant role in his speeches: anti-communism and anti-water fluoridation. In a time of emerging Cold War rhetoric, Bronner identified communism as a political threat to the American state and democracy. He wanted to have his speeches understood as a “mental attack on communism, an army of American principles spread over this earth.”[56] The fear of a communist infiltration of American society shaped his speeches as well as his letters

and telegrams, which he sent out to political leaders and the FBI. As Bronner wrote to Vice President Richard Nixon in 1957: "Beginning 1929 over 6100 such telegrams were sent to Washington by our builder of three American soap plants, inventory of 53 chemical processes, [...] your loyal chemist Better Health Foundation Dr. Bronner and Associates, Escondido, Calif[ornia]." [\[57\]](#)

Closely linked to his anti-communist stance was Bronner's opposition to water fluoridation. In the early 1940s the U.S. government discovered that cities with a high natural content of fluorides in their water supply registered less teeth decay among their inhabitants. [\[58\]](#) Acknowledging this correlation, many cities began to add fluoride to their drinking water. Bronner opposed water fluoridation arguing that "sodium fluoride is a deadly poison, to which no effective antidote has been found." [\[59\]](#) He was especially afraid that the fluoridation of drinking water could be a weapon for a communist attack, providing for "quick national liquidation." [\[60\]](#)

With his political activism, Bronner had little time for his family. After the premature death of his wife in 1944, his children spent most of their lives in foster care. Ralph, Emanuel Bronner's oldest son, remembered living in various foster homes before permanently staying with a Bavarian immigrant family in Milwaukee. [\[61\]](#) His father justified abandoning his children by arguing: "What is more important—uniting Spaceship Earth or raising your own family?" [\[62\]](#) He would visit his children a few times per year. Bronner's choice of priorities led to a difficult relationship with both his sons for most of their lives.

Emanuel Bronner remarried but there is no information on his second wife, who—according to the Bronner family—died shortly after the wedding. On September 20, 1953, Bronner wed a third time. May A. Thornton was twenty years his senior and their marriage lasted until her death in 1961. [\[63\]](#) Shortly thereafter Bronner met his fourth wife, Gladys Peschelke, on a health food convention in Los Angeles. [\[64\]](#) Gladys shared Emanuel's passion for health food and was a dedicated animal lover. [\[65\]](#) In 1963, Emanuel and Gladys moved to Escondido, California, a town of about 17,000 inhabitants at the time, thirty miles northeast of San Diego. They lived there until Emanuel's death in 1997.

After the move to Escondido, Bronner advocated an ecological lifestyle even more strongly, and the couple lived it themselves. The former "brotherhood of man" now became the "better health foundation." [\[66\]](#) Bronner also brought his political activism to Escondido, hosting a weekly forum at the local women's club. [\[67\]](#) According to longtime employee and friend Fran Pitrone, the discussions with him were very open, but always guided by his strong persona: "He listened as well as he preached." [\[68\]](#) In 1963, Bronner visited his hometown of Heilbronn in Germany and hosted a discussion forum at the Insel Hotel, debating his and his family's past

during the Nazi regime and presenting his All-One-God-Faith as a new world religion to the audience.[69]

Business Development

As an entrepreneur Emanuel Bronner was unusual in that he often prioritized his political activism over his business career. Spreading his political and social messages was at least as important to him as founding and managing a successful business. In the end, both realms of his life—his political activism and the development of his business—were highly intertwined. Bronner developed his soap business to support his social activism, and his social activism inspired and shaped his company.

Bronner started his business career in the United States as a director of research for the “Wrisley Soap and Perfume Co.” in Milwaukee, a position he held from 1930 to 1941.[70] The company was founded in 1862 by the brothers Allen and George Wrisley and became successful in the 1930s, especially with the sale of colognes.[71] Bronner also worked as a consultant specializing in the planning of new factories. He helped plan the construction of three factories in Milwaukee, Easton, and Chicago.[72] He was also an active inventor, filing for fifty-three patents, most of them soap related, which made for a large percentage of his income.[73]

As early as the 1930s, when he was a consultant to the soap industry, Bronner emphasized the necessity to stick to natural soap formulas instead of using synthetic detergents, which were becoming more and more popular in the United States at that time. The first synthetic detergent was developed in Germany during World War I as a response to a shortage in fat. In the United States, the manufacturing of synthetic household detergents began in the early 1930s but did not take off until after World War II. Research on detergents was stimulated by the war-related lack of fats and oils as well as the military’s need for cleaning agents that, unlike soap, would not combine with the mineral salts in water to form an insoluble substance. At that time, they were primarily used for hand dishwashing and laundering but their use became more widespread in the following decades.[74] It remains unknown what prompted Emanuel Bronner, despite his training as a chemist, to reject the trend toward using synthetic detergents and instead insist on natural ingredients for the most part. His family background may partly account for it. Coming from a traditional German soap maker family he had seen and learned the manufacturing of all-natural soaps since childhood. He also was a strong advocate for a healthy lifestyle and greatly concerned with his personal food and cosmetic choices.

In 1947, after his brief stay at a mental health institution and subsequent move to Los Angeles, Bronner started his health food and soap business from scratch. At first, he gathered spices from local hills and sold them to health food stores.[75] He then started producing health foods—most

prominently mineral salts—in his hotel room.[76] One of his first customers was a health store in Palmyra, PA, which sold “Dr. Bronner’s Organic-Mineral Salt” as early as 1953.[77] At the same time Bronner began to mix peppermint soap using a formula that he had come up with during his time as a consultant in 1935. According to Bronner, the soap was originally intended as “diaper soap for his own children.”[78]

Unlike the food supplements, the soap was not initially meant for sale. Instead, Bronner distributed samples when giving speeches about world peace and interreligious tolerance. After receiving much positive feedback, Bronner launched his “Dr. Bronner’s Pure Castile Soap” in 1948. In the name, Bronner linked his product to the Spanish region of Castile, thereby highlighting that the soap was an all-natural product, made from olive oil rather than synthetic detergents. Synthetic detergents had first been tested for soap production during the interwar period. In 1946, with the introduction of so-called “builders,” the efficiency of synthetic detergents increased significantly. By 1953, sales of detergents surpassed those of soap in the United States, and most bars and liquid soaps for personal hygiene contained detergents, alone or in combination with soap.[79] The biggest manufacturers of soap at the time were Colgate-Palmolive, Unilever, Avon, Shulton (Old Spice), Andrew Jergens, Johnson & Johnson, Gillette, Bristol-Myers, and Procter & Gamble.[80]

Bronner’s product was markedly different than the available soaps. At a time when soap manufacturers all over the country manufactured in large-scale factories, he produced his soap in a small apartment and sold it to a local customer base.[81] He continued selling it out of his garage, even when it slowly became more popular and was also available at different specialty stores during the early 1950s. Unlike most soap companies, Dr. Bronner’s did not advertise in newspapers, on the radio, or on TV. Soap had become a heavily advertised product during the interwar period and even more so since the end of World War II.[82] Soap manufacturers were among the first to use innovative marketing tools already in the late nineteenth century. Colgate-Palmolive began regularly advertising Palmolive soap on the radio in 1927 and P&G was the first firm to use “soap operas” on the radio for advertisement.[83] Lever Brothers launched its luxury bar soap Lux in 1925 specifically for the American market, and advertised it as the soap most used by Hollywood stars, which proved to be a highly successful marketing campaign.[84] With the increased popularity and availability of television services, marketing costs in the industry reached new heights. By the early 1960s the American beauty industry as a whole spent \$152 million (more than \$1 billion in 2010 USD) on television advertising, more than any other industry except food.[85] In contrast, Bronner’s soap was advertised by word of mouth and by Emanuel Bronner himself in his public speeches. The small-scale business would not have been able to shoulder the financial burden of heavy advertising, which forced many other beauty companies in the 1950s to go public or merge with competitors.[86]

Instead, Bronner profited from another trend in post-World War II America. Consumer activists, feminists, and environmentalists began criticizing the beauty industry for its misleading and often manipulative advertisements, for the health risks related to certain products, and for the negative effects that synthetic chemicals, such as detergents, had on the environment. Growing consumer skepticism led to a renewed interest in the use of natural ingredients. Dr. Bronner's rediscovered natural cosmetics, which used plants, fruits, and flowers instead of synthetic detergents or other chemical additives. Other small companies, mainly in Europe, also supported this trend. The two French companies Biotherm and Clarins, founded in 1950 and 1954 respectively, sold natural cosmetics made from mineral water from thermal springs and plant-based skin care. In Switzerland, Edmund Georg Locher founded Juvena in 1954, selling skin creams made from natural ingredients.^[87] All of these businesses sold niche products, operated at low costs, and grew very slowly, if at all.

Marketing and the "Moral ABC"

In 1956, Emanuel Bronner asked his son Ralph, who at the time was studying at the University of Milwaukee, to support him in the business.^[88] Despite their estrangement, Ralph decided to join his father and support him in administering the firm. He also spent much time typing the first label for the soap bottles, on which Bronner collected his spiritual thoughts and ideas. They included "Absolute cleanliness is Godliness!", "Teach the Moral ABC that unites all mankind free, instantly 6 billion strong & we're All-One," "Balanced food for body-mind-soul-spirit is our medicine! Full-truth our good, half-truth our enemy," and "Enjoy only 2 cosmetics, enough sleep & Dr. Bronner's 'Magic Soap' to clean body-mind-soul-spirit instantly united One! All One!" ^[89]

The labels evolved slowly over time and Bronner added more and more religious, philosophical, and ethical thoughts to the bottles, eventually making the label a compendium of over five thousand words (on a 24oz. bottle).^[90] Bronner's "Moral ABC" included suggestions for the use of the product:

For facial packs, scalp& soothing body rub, add dash on bath towel in sink of hot water. Wring out. Lay over face and scalp. (...) Within 9 minutes you feel fresh and clean, saving 90% of your hot water & soap, ready to help teach the whole Human race the Moral ABC of All-One-God-Faith!

In this manner, Bronner suggested eighteen different uses for his product, including facial masks, toothpaste, and shampoo. The label was very important for Bronner, who was more concerned about spreading his pacifist ideas than building a profitable business. When his son Jim joined the company in the early 1990s, he recalled thinking: "It seemed like a very Mickey Mouse business operation. [...] Every time he got into a

conversation with a customer, we wouldn't sell if the guy wouldn't listen to him.”[91] Despite these problems, Bronner's philosophy also made the product unique. The label developed over time into an advertising tool with high recognition value, and his children and grandchildren largely preserved it, making only very minor adjustments to the text and layout over the following decades.[92]

During the 1960s the growing concern for the environment and a new appreciation of all things “natural” opened up a niche in the soap market for Dr. Bronner's. The hippie youth culture embraced not only the all-natural soap but also the pacifist ideas Bronner was spreading, the lack of advertising (which many criticized for being corporate and manipulative), and the small-scale business organization of the company. Bronner continued to sell the soap out of his garage. Small quantities were also sold directly to individual stores, but only on occasion, not as part of a concerted marketing effort or an established distribution network.

As Bronner offered his [phone number](#) and [address](#) on the soap bottle and on signs in front of his house in Escondido, consumers were able to contact him directly.[93] Bronner had a phone in every room of his house and was happy to discuss his political and religious ideas with people who called. He regularly got into conversations with total strangers which made him very accessible and presumably also enhanced customer loyalty to the product. With his eyesight impacted—he was slowly turning blind—speaking on the phone was easier for him than giving public speeches in unknown surroundings. When asked about Bronner's soap marketing techniques, daughter-in-law Trudy Bronner said: “The phone number was the marketing. He was always on the phone.”[94] On several occasions, Bronner also provided visitors with food, shelter, and lectures on his religion and world view. Some of the visitors temporarily worked at the plant, others bought the soap to resell it among their peers. “Originally we were distributed by people, who were selling the soap out of the back of a Volkswagen bus. . . [So] the first distribution channels were hippies with VW buses driving across the country,” Dr. Bronner's head of public relations, Adam Eidinger, explained retrospectively in 2012.[95] Emanuel Bronner's grandson Michael later identified this period as the turning point in the company history: “The product became successful for all the reasons that it wasn't successful before. The quality was always good, but you had this packaging that included my grandfather's spiritual message that was completely anti-corporate.”[96]

The Ups and Downs of Dr. Bronner's Soap

The base soap for Dr. Bronner's was produced in Los Angeles under the supervision of a chemical specialties company.[97] When Bronner took residence in Escondido in 1963, he moved the supply of further ingredients and the filling to a small facility on the outskirts of this small town in San Diego County.[98] At that time, Bronner had about twelve

employees working at the facility.^[99] It is unknown what ultimately prompted him to choose Escondido but many health pioneers settled there, and it was a good place for an advocate for ecological living.^[100] Bronner himself once remarked whimsically: “Do you know why I picked Escondido? [...] Because the biggest avocado-packing plant in the world is here, and when you eat them with my mineral salt, avocado is almost perfect nutrition.”^[101]

In 1965, Emanuel’s son Jim Bronner, who had served in the Navy since the age of seventeen, terminated his military career and began working as vice president and technical director for the chemical specialties company that provided Bronner with base soap. Despite the difficult relationship between father and son, Jim’s choice of career initiated a new business relationship between the two. Jim continued to work for that Los Angeles-based chemical company until 1988, providing his father with the base soap called for by the Dr. Bronner’s recipe.

With the counterculture movement reaching its peak in the late 1960s, sales of Dr. Bronner’s soap saw a temporary increase.^[102] During the following years annual revenues increased from about \$1 million to at least \$3 million (roughly \$6 million to \$19 million in 2010 USD). Then, in the mid-1970s, annual revenue fell again to about \$1 million (roughly \$4 million in 2010 USD).^[103] Simultaneously, many of the larger soap manufacturers also began showing an interest in natural products, often adding natural ingredients to the chemical formula they had been using before. Michel d’Ornano founded the luxury brand Sisley in 1976 and used botanical ingredients to make expensive skin care products; the green shampoo Herbal Essences by Clairol, based on the essences of herbs and wildflowers, captured a large share of the shampoo market.^[104]

With more and more manufacturers entering the market for natural cosmetics, some of the problems related to the new trend (and the labeling of its products) became apparent. The absence of chemical preservatives increased the risk of spoiled ingredients. For that reason, several manufacturers mixed chemical preservatives with natural ingredients, calling the resulting product “green” or “organic.” This was possible in part because there was no clear definition or regulation specifying the percentage of natural ingredients necessary for a product to be labeled that way.^[105] For Bronner’s soap business, which in many respects had been a trendsetter, the growing interest was simultaneously a blessing and a curse. While Bronner’s tiny original market niche slowly grew into one of great potential, the business was also confronted with new competition and—in the absence of clear regulation what constituted a “green” product—had a hard time defending the unique quality of its product.

Nevertheless, sales of Dr. Bronner’s natural soap were picking up. Just as business improved, however, Emanuel Bronner got into severe trouble

with the Internal Revenue Service. In April of 1971 he founded a church, the "All-One-Faith in One God State Universal Life Church."^[106] Bronner claimed all revenue of his company belonged to this church and would therefore be tax exempt.^[107] When he lost his case in the United States Tax Court in February of 1983, he had already accumulated a large amount of debt. In August of 1985 Emanuel Bronner owed \$1,602,790 in taxes (\$3.25 million in 2010 USD). In 1988, his son Jim came to Escondido to help with the liquidation of debts, which he eventually achieved in 1991.^[108]

During the 1980s Emanuel Bronner developed health problems that impacted his work. His eyesight got progressively worse, eventually rendering him fully blind. In the late 1980s Bronner fell ill with pneumonia as well as Parkinson's disease, leaving him no choice but to ask his children to run the business. In the early 1990s Ralph Bronner, Emanuel's oldest son, became president of the company. In 1994, he in turn handed the firm over to his brother Jim, who seemed a better fit for the position due to his prior experience in the soap industry.^[109] Jim Bronner introduced much-needed business logic to the company by working on a more systematic distribution system and revising the discount system for repeat customers. He helped to increase the annual revenue to \$4.8 million by 1997 (about \$6.5 million in 2010 USD).^[110]

On March 7, 1997, Emanuel Bronner passed away at the age of eighty-nine. Around the same time Jim was diagnosed with cancer. Looking for a successor, Jim turned to his son David, a biologist who had graduated from Harvard University in 1995 and was working as a mental health counselor in the Boston area at the time. He had previously shown an interest in the soap business when he supported his father in his soap industry consulting activities during summer holidays. David joined the family firm and learned the business from his father who eventually passed away in June of 1998.

Jim left the business to his wife Trudy and to David. The latter introduced a number of new business measures and innovations, fully committing to the idea of an ecologically sustainable product and business. He initiated, for example, the development of a fully post-consumer recycled PET bottle for the liquid soap. He is also an active supporter of the "Vote Hemp" movement fighting for the legalization of industrial hemp production in the United States. Hemp oil is now used as a "superfatting"^[111] ingredient in all of Dr. Bronner's soaps. With the all-natural product being the company's main selling point, CEO David Bronner went to great lengths to fight against the dilution of organic standards. The company sued a number of competitors for falsely promoting their products as "organic," which led Whole Foods—one of the biggest retailers of organic products in the U.S.—to give these companies a twelve-month ultimatum to clean up their products before being moved off the shelves.^[112]

In 2001, David's younger brother Michael joined the company as vice president. A graduate of Brown University with a degree in English, he had worked as an English teacher in Japan for three years. At Dr. Bronner's he was responsible for the international expansion of the company's products. Between 2001 and 2012, international sales rose from 1 percent to 12 percent of the company's overall revenue. In Japan, the country that Michael Bronner knows best, Dr. Bronner's is the top-selling natural brand of soap and the most-used natural lip balm today.^[113]

Since 2008, the year of the company's sixtieth anniversary, Dr. Bronner's has been on the German market, too, where the products are available in selected food stores and through online shops.^[114] For the German-language market the iconic label by Emanuel Bronner was partly translated and redesigned.

Dr. Bronner's was not only innovative in terms of its product but also in its way of doing business. While Emanuel Bronner was a socially-minded employer who cared for his employees beyond the business—on occasion helping them find accommodation or providing them with a car, for example—the younger generation introduced more formal and wide-reaching ethical guidelines. Most unique is the salary cap that David, Michael, and Trudy imposed. It prohibits the highest-paid employee, including the owners of the company, from earning more than five times what the lowest paid employee earns.^[115] The company also took a strict stance against animal testing and continuously monitored its suppliers in different parts of the world. Furthermore, in 2003, Dr. Bronner's was one of the first brands to certify its products under the USDA National Organic Program, which regulates organically produced products. In 2005, Dr. Bronner's began sourcing soap ingredients from producers worldwide that operate under fair trade and organic standards. The raw materials include coconut oil from Sri Lanka, palm oil from Ghana, and olive oil from Palestine.^[116] Even though these changes increased the price of the product by 30 percent, the annual revenue between 1997 and 2011 rose from \$8 million (roughly \$11 million in 2011 USD) to \$44.6 million.^[117] At least one-third of before-tax profits go to philanthropy: Dr. Bronner's supports a range of charities, both nationally and internationally.

Conclusion

Emanuel Bronner was a pioneer of all-natural soap and other cosmetic products on the American market. While he was never a competitor of the big American soap companies, his firm today is a well-established manufacturer of organic soap products, and has successfully expanded internationally over the last two decades. His top-selling product in particular, Dr. Bronner's liquid peppermint soap, has a loyal customer base.

Dr. Bronner's and other early green ventures became successful during the late 1960s and 1970s when customers rediscovered that natural ingredients can be as effective as those with chemical additives and may have health advantages over the latter. With his anti-corporate and pacifist ideology, which the company published on every bottle of soap, Bronner was especially popular with the American counterculture movement and its supporters. His unique label, overflowing with religious, ethical, and personal hygiene statements, became iconic over the years and added to the high recognition value of the soap bottle.

Emanuel Bronner left Germany during adolescence but was influenced by his home country in many respects throughout his life. He learned the soap-making business in his German-Jewish family, who had been soap makers for at least two generations. The invention of his famous peppermint soap was built on years of experience with liquid and solid soaps in the German company and as a consultant to American soap manufacturers. Moreover, several members of his family were trained chemists and immigrated to the United States in the 1920s and 1930s, allowing Emanuel to build on an extended family network even after emigration. Arriving in the United States, he turned to relatives and lived in cities with large German communities, where he enjoyed going to clubs and social gatherings of fellow Germans.

The murder of his parents in Nazi concentration camps left deep scars and may have changed his outlook on Germany at least temporarily. While he had previously been a political activist, the experience of losing his parents to the Holocaust changed his views and made them more extreme. Believing that one god and one religion should unite all people on earth, Bronner promoted his peace plan in talks and lectures, on soap bottles, and in regular letters to U.S. presidents and other political leaders. For Bronner his soap company was more than a business enterprise. It was a means to promote his ideas for world peace, which were shaped at least partially by the horrors his family experienced in Nazi Germany.

During his lifetime, the Dr. Bronner's company experienced moderate success but it was the second and third generation of the Bronner family that expanded the business considerably. Focusing more strongly on the quality of an all-natural product in combination with standards of ethical behavior and ecologically sustainable business practices, the company's profit and market share reached new heights during the 1990s and 2000s. At a time when "green" products enjoyed new popularity, Dr. Bronner's could already look back at several decades of experience in this market. In legal battles, the Bronner family also fought for organic standards defending the unique quality of their soap. Similar to the company's founder, his successors also understand the firm as a business which can generate profits while promoting ecological, social, and political change at the same time.

Emanuel Bronner offered one of the first “green” products on the American soap market. He thus helped create and design a new product category which slowly grew into one of great potential and in which his family continues to excel. Motivated by larger ideas of global peace and healthy living Emanuel Bronner was a pioneer in this line of business despite the fact that he never achieved much commercial success during his lifetime.

Notes

[1] We are deeply indebted to David, Mike, and Trudy Bronner of Dr. Bronner’s Magic Soaps, who supported our research every step of the way. We would also like to thank Adam Eiding of Mintwood Media Collective, and Fran Pitrone, former employee of Dr. Bronner’s Magic Soaps, for their time and insightful comments as well as Peter Wanner, Stadtarchiv Heilbronn, for his helpful support in researching this article.

[2] Norbert Jung and Luise Helene Bronner, *In order that might be* (Helene-Lang-Realschule Heilbronn, 2003).

[3] Stadtarchiv Heilbronn, Familie Heilbronner aus Harburg, Version 2, 1.

[4] [Jüdischer Friedhof Laupheim](#), digitale Edition (Inv.-Nr. 0766, 1903) (accessed November 16, 2012); Dr. Bronner’s Magic Soaps, [timeline](#), (accessed November 16, 2012).

[5] Stadtarchiv Laupheim, Antje Koehlerschmidt, “Familie Alfred Erlebacher, Judenberg 26,” 196-203.

[6] Arthur Katz-Foerstner, “Handbuch der württembergischen Wirtschaft,” (Berlin: Deutscher Handels- und Industrie-Verlag, 1931), 84.

[7] Stadtarchiv Heilbronn, untitled text by Luise Heilbronner, 6-13, here 6.

[8] The exact date is unknown. Most likely the company went public during the inflation years 1918-1923 to raise money. It definitively existed as Madaform AG in 1931. Hans Franke, *Geschichte und Schicksal der Juden in Heilbronn* (Stadtarchiv Heilbronn: Heilbronn 1963), 305.

[9] There is no record of him attending a university, although he later called himself “Doctor” and sometimes claimed to have obtained a degree in chemistry at Heidelberg University. E-mail correspondence of the authors with Universitätsarchiv Heidelberg, Dr. Dagmar Drüll-Zimmermann, August 13, 2012.

[10] Eldon Knoche, “[On his soapbox](#),” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, June 8, 1997, 1 and 6 (accessed November 16, 2012). Dr. Bronner’s Magic Soapbox, [film](#), directed by Sara Lamm (2006), (accessed November 16, 2012), minute 12:30.

[11] Dr. Bronner's Magic Soapbox film, minute 12:30.

[12] Ibid., minute 12:50-13:05.

[13] Jung 2003, 12. "List or Manifest of Alien Passengers for the United States Immigration Officer at Port of Arrival," May 16, 1938, Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, NY, 1897-1957, National Archives microfilm serial T715, microfilm roll 6154, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Washington, DC.

[14] *Heilbronner Tageblatt*, February 23, 1937, 12.

[15] Stadtarchiv Laupheim, Antje Koehlerschmidt, "Familie Alfred Erlebacher, Judenberg 26," 196-203.

[16] Dr. Bronner's Magic Soaps, [timeline](#), (accessed November 16, 2012).

[17] See <http://www.history.ucsb.edu/faculty/marcuse/projects/currency.htm> for the conversion of reichsmark to 2010 USD (accessed November 14, 2012). On the Night of Broken Glass, see Hans-Jürgen Doescher, *Reichskristallnacht. Die Novemberpogrome 1938*, 3rd ed. (München: Econ-Ullstein-List-Verlag, 2000); Dieter Obst, *Reichskristallnacht: Ursachen und Verlauf des antisemitischen Pogroms im November 1938* (Frankfurt/Main: Lang, 1991).

[18] Cf. Werner E. Mosse, *The German-Jewish Economic Elite 1820-1935: A Socio-Cultural Profile* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).

[19] On the process of Aryanization, see Frank Bajohr, "The Beneficiaries of Aryanization: Hamburg. A Case Study," in *Holocaust: Critical Concepts in Historical Studies*, ed. David Cesarani (London, New York: Routledge, 2004), 13-33. Ingo Koehler, *The Aryanization of Private Banks in the Third Reich* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

[20] Stadtarchiv Heilbronn, Madaform Seifenfabrik Heilbronn, letter by Dr. Bauder (ZS 2433) and Zeugnis Herrn Gottlob Loeckle, dated July 31, 1939. See also Franke, *Geschichte*, 136-7.

[21] Jewish Transmigration Bureau Deposit Cards, 1939-1954, see [Ancestry.com](#) (accessed September 18, 2012).

[22] Jung 2003, 12.

[23] See Berthold Heilbronner, [death certificate](#), Theresienstadt Ghetto, and Friederike Heilbronner, [death certificate](#), Theresienstadt Ghetto, (accessed November 16, 2012).

[24] http://www.stolpersteine-heilbronn.de/stolpersteine2010_informationen.pdf (accessed November 16, 2012).

[25] <http://db.yadvashem.org/names/nameDetails.html?itemId=1106729&language=en#!prettyPhoto> (accessed November 16, 2012).

[26] "List or Manifest of Alien Passengers for the United States Immigration Officer at Port of Arrival," December 22, 1929, Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, NY, 1897-1957, National Archives microfilm serial T715, microfilm roll 4649, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Washington, DC.

[27] Ibid. Regarding Ludwig Brunner also see "List or Manifest of Alien Passengers for the United States Immigration Officer at Port of Arrival," October 3, 1926, Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, NY, 1897-1957, National Archives microfilm serial T715, microfilm roll 3940, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Washington, DC. Ludwig Brunner did not change his last name. His mother Klara Heilbrunner was married to Hermann Brunner, thus the family name was Brunner.

[28] Iroquois County Genealogy Society. Ludwig Brunner. Transcript of Declaration of Intention, December 8, 1926.

[29] Kathleen Neils Conzen, "Germans," in *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*, ed. Stephan Thernstrom (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 1980), 405-425, here 413.

[30] Knoche, http://www.drbronner.com/drb_press_story8.html (accessed November 15, 2012). and Dr. Bronner's Magic Soaps, [timeline](#), (accessed November 16, 2012).

[31] Ibid.

[32] "Crucifixion Victim slated to undergo lie detector test," *Charleston Daily Mail*, March 11, 1945, 2. *Bronner v. Commissioner*, 45 T.C.M. 738 (1983). Filed February 9, 1945 T.C.M 740.

[33] "Man crucified on Chicago El," *Washington Post*, March 10, 1945, 7.

[34] "Crucifixion case may be result of victims own plan," *Dunkirk Evening Observer*, March 10, 1945, 8.

[35] "Was crucified for publicity," *Traverse City Record Eagle*, March 10, 1945, 1.

- [36] "Soap Maker puts Peace Plan on Label. All One! All One", *Albuquerque Journal*, March 2, 1977, B2.
- [37] Dr. Bronner's Magic Soapbox film, minute 14:00.
- [38] Stadtarchiv Heilbronn, untitled text by Luise Heilbrunner, 6-13, here 9.
- [39] "Dr. Bronner's Magic Soap," *Esquire*, December 1973, 218-221 and 314-316, here 219.
- [40] Dr. Bronner's Magic Soapbox film, minute 15:45.
- [41] All 2010 USD amounts calculated by using [MeasuringWorth](#) (accessed November 14, 2012).
- [42] Dr. Bronner's Magic Soapbox film, minute 15:30.
- [43] *Esquire*, December 1973, 219.
- [44] "Man crowned with thorns found hanging on cross," *Nevada State Journal*, March 10, 1945, 1 and 3.
- [45] *Esquire*, December 1973, 221.
- [46] *Dunkirk Evening Observer*, March 10, 1945, 8.
- [47] Ralphs Tales from a crazy, wonderful life 2 (2012): [The second crucifixion](#), (accessed November 16 2012.), minute 1:33.
- [48] *Esquire*, December 1973, 221.
- [49] "Fluorides' use Hit as a Plot by Reds," *Lawrence Daily Journal-World*, October 12, 1955, 1 and 9, here 9.
- [50] Ralphs Tales from a crazy, wonderful life 14 (2012): [Visit to an insane asylum](#), (accessed November 16, 2012), minute 0:20.
- [51] "Soap opera," *Chicago Tribune*, December 7, 1999, 1 and 4, here 4. *Esquire*, December 1973, 221. "Mit Lebensweisheiten unter die Dusche," *Heilbronner Stimme*, July 14, 2007, 3.
- [52] *Lawrence Daily Journal-World*, October 12, 1955, 9.
- [53] Ralphs Tales from a crazy, wonderful life 14 (2012): [Visit to an insane asylum](#), (accessed November 16, 2012), minute 3:00.

- [54] Nell Newman and Joseph D'Agnese, *The Newman's Own Organics Guide to a Good Life. Simple Measure that Benefit You and the Place You Live* (New York: Villard, 2003), 133-137, here 134-5.
- [55] *Esquire*, December, 1973, 316.
- [56] "Atom Tests in Salt Beds," *Oakland Tribune*, December 7, 1961, 12.
- [57] Richard Nixon Presidential Library: Folder Bronner, E.H. (Dr.), in: Pre-Presidential Papers of Richard M. Nixon. General Correspondence, Series 320, Box 104.
- [58] *Lawrence Daily Journal-World*, October 12, 1955, 1.
- [59] "Letter to the Editor," *Kingsport Times*, May 28, 1953, 4.
- [60] "No Stand on Fluoridation Taken by Catholic Diocese," *Pittsfield Berkshire Evening Eagle*, January 25, 1952, 2.
- [61] *Chicago Tribune*, December 7, 1999, 4.
- [62] <http://www.jefffleischer.com/dr-bronnens-magic-soap> (accessed November 16, 2012).
- [63] E-mail to the authors by Trudy Bronner, October 18, 2012.
- [64] "Leaving a legacy of compassion," *North County Times*, January 8, 2012, B1-B2, here B1.
- [65] "[In Memory of Gladys Bronner](#)," online obituary at (accessed November 16, 2012).
- [66] *Bronner v. Commissioner*, 45 T.C.M. 738 (1983). Filed February 9, 1945, T.C.M 750.
- [67] Interview of the authors with Fran Pitrone, longtime employee and friend of the Bronner family, August 16, 2012.
- [68] *Ibid.*
- [69] "Dr. Bronner bringt neue Weltreligion," *Heilbronner Stimme*, January 10, 1963, 8.
- [70] *The San Diego Union*, December 14, 1981.
- [71] Nigel Groom, *The New Perfume Handbook*, 2nd ed. (London: Blackie Acad., 1997), 357.
- [72] "Soap salvation," *Vogue*, September 1997.

- [73] *Chicago Tribune*, December 7, 1999, 1 and 4, here 4.
- [74] <http://www.chemistry.co.nz/deterghistorypart2.htm> (accessed November 16, 2012).
http://www.cleaninginstitute.org/clean_living/soaps_detergent_history_3.aspx (accessed November 16, 2012).
- [75] *Esquire*, December 1973, 314.
- [76] Newman/D'Agnesse, *Organics Guide*, 134-5.
- [77] "Dr. Bronner's Organic-Mineral Salt Advertisement," *Lebanon Daily News*, October 29, 1953, 37.
- [78] *Esquire*, December 1973, 218.
- [79] Luis Spitz, "History of Soap," in *SODEOPEC: Soaps, Detergents, Oleochemicals, and Personal Care Products*, ed. Luis Spitz (AOCS Press: Champaign, Ill., 2004), 1-72.
- [80] Geoffrey Jones, *Beauty Imagined: The History of the Global Beauty Industry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 369.
- [81] *Chicago Tribune*, December 7, 1999, 4.
- [82] Jones, *Beauty*, 78, 80-3.
- [83] *Ibid.*, 111-2.
- [84] *Ibid.*, 103.
- [85] *Ibid.*, 157.
- [86] *Ibid.*, 158. Heather Jenkins, "[Dr. Bronner's All-One-God-Faith. A Soap messenger success story and the marketing that wasn't](#)," 1997, 1 (accessed November 16, 2012).
- [87] Jones, *Beauty*, 280.
- [88] *Chicago Tribune*, December 7, 1999, 4.
- [89] Dr. Bronner's Magic Soap label.
- [90] Knoche, http://www.drbronner.com/drb_press_story8.html (accessed November 15, 2012).
- [91] Dr. Bronner's Magic Soapbox film, minute 23:25.

[92] Interview of the authors with Adam Eiding, Mintwood Media Collective, marketing consultant and friend of the Bronner family, July 19, 2012.

[93] "Who is Dr. Bronner, anyway?" *New Age*, September 1976, 43-47, here 46.

[94] Interview of the authors with Trudy Bronner, August 16, 2012.

[95] Interview of the authors with Adam Eiding, July 19, 2012, minute 65:40.

[96] Richard Seireeni with Scott Fields, *The Gort Cloud: The Invisible Force Powering Today's Most Visible Green Brands* (White River Junction, Vt.: Chelsea Green Publ., 2008), 32-51, here 35.

[97] "James Albert Bronner," *Change Lives. Newsletter for the Boys and Girls Club of Greater San Diego*, Winter 2012, 1.

[98] *Bronner v. Commissioner*, 45 T.C.M. 738 (1983). Filed February 9, 1945, T.C.M 739.

[99] This is an estimate provided by Emanuel Bronner's daughter-in-law and current CFO Trudy Bronner in conversation with the authors, August 16, 2012.

[100] "A longtime Passion for Health, Advertising Supplement," *North County Times*, April 1, 2012, 4-5.

[101] *New Age*, September 1976, 46-47.

[102] *Ibid.*, 46.

[103] "The Undiluted Genius of Dr. Bronner's", *Inc. Magazine*, April 2012, 1-4, here 2.

[104] Jones, *Beauty*, 282.

[105] *Ibid.*

[106] *Bronner v. Commissioner*, 45 T.C.M. 738 (1983). Filed February 9, 1945, T.C.M 739.

[107] "If cleanliness is next to godliness, why not put your creed on a soap label. Tax Report: A Special Summary and Forecast of Federal and State Tax Developments", *Wall Street Journal*, April 13, 1983, 1.

[108] Interview Trudy Bronner, August 16, 2012. E-mail correspondence between the authors and Mike Bronner, September 27, 2012.

[109] Ibid.

[110] Dr. Bronner's gross sales by month, unpublished document in possession of the authors.

[111] "Superfatting" means adding more oil than needed to a batch of soap. The usually small amount of extra oil left over in the soap enhances the moisturizing qualities to the soap.

[112] *Inc. Magazine*, April 2012, 3.

[113] Dr. Bronner's Magic Soap Box, [press kit](#), available online at (accessed November 16, 2012).

[114] http://www.organic-market.info/web/News_in_brief/Cosmetics_+_Bodycare/Dr._Bronner/176/183/40/8217.html (accessed November 16, 2012).

[115] [Dr. Bronner's: Activism overview](#), (accessed November 16, 2012).

[116] [Dr. Bronner's: Fair Trade](#), (accessed November 16, 2012).

[117] Dr. Bronner's gross sales by month, unpublished document in possession of the authors.

Cite this Entry

APA Style

"**Emanuel Bronner**." (2016) In *Immigrant Entrepreneurship*, Retrieved June 16, 2016, from Immigrant Entrepreneurship:
<http://immigrantentrepreneurship.org/entry.php?rec=134>

Chicago Style

Lubinski, Christina and Marvin Menniken. "Emanuel Bronner." In *Immigrant Entrepreneurship: German-American Business Biographies, 1720 to the Present*, vol. 5, edited by R. Daniel Wadhwani. German Historical Institute. Last modified October 25, 2013.
<http://immigrantentrepreneurship.org/entry.php?rec=134>

MLA Style

"**Emanuel Bronner**," *Immigrant Entrepreneurship*, 2016, Immigrant Entrepreneurship. 16 Jun 2016
<<http://immigrantentrepreneurship.org/entry.php?rec=134>>