

FACING THE DEADLIEST RACISM:

Jewish Response to the Holocaust

The murder of close to six million Jews by Nazi Germany and its accomplices during World War II stands as the utmost horrifying testament to humanity's inhumanity. The events which would later become known as the Holocaust continue to cast a shadow over today's world. This course focuses more on how Jews lived than how they died. The diverse spectrum of Jewish responses to the Holocaust is the main topic of this class. Students will become familiar with different forms of collaboration and resistance among European Jews. We will also reflect on what Italian Jewish Holocaust survivor and author, Primo Levi, termed "The Gray Zone": Levi argued that among the victims in the ghettos and death camps were people who collaborated with their oppressors to varying degrees. Yet he also cautioned against judging individuals who found themselves in a hellish environment. Many of those life-or-death moral dilemmas exemplify the difficulty in passing judgment.

In addition, the course explores the responses of Jews who lived elsewhere, away from Nazi rule: American Jews and Jews in the British-ruled Land of Israel/Palestine faced less deadly forms of antisemitism, yet had to cope with different challenges, including attempts to rescue Jews from Nazi-occupied Europe. This class will also examine literary and theological attempts to wrestle with the horror during the Holocaust and its immediate aftermath.

Note: This course has asynchronous meeting times; there are no set class meetings.

For more questions contact Jackie Schmidt, Outreach Coordinator at jan1@arizona.edu or visit our website at www.judaic.arizona.edu.



From the top left, clockwise: Children at a Purim party at the Łódź Ghetto, Poland (undated) – by 1944, nearly all of them were murdered; armed Jewish Partisans (partisans who operated behind enemy lines) in Vilna, Lithuania (1944); an advertisement by the Jewish War Veterans of the United States to boycott German goods (1933); and "Fascism must be destroyed", an underground publication in Yiddish of a socialist (Bundist) Jewish youth group, Warsaw Ghetto, Poland, 1943.



Instructor: Professor Gil Ribak
Email: gribak@arizona.edu



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The Arizona Center
for Judaic Studies