



How Do You Explain The Holocaust?

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JUDY GREENWALD

Noted author and historian slated to speak at Holocaust Memorial Center.

As part of its ongoing series of lectures designed to further understand the Holocaust, the Holocaust Memorial Center (HMC) in Farmington Hills will welcome award-winning professor of history, author and lecturer Dr. Peter Hayes as guest speaker at a Sunday, June 10, program sponsored by Wayne State University's (WSU) College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the Guy Stern Endowment in Exile and Holocaust Studies, the *Jewish News*, the Cohn-Haddow Center for Judaic Studies and Hillel of Metro Detroit.

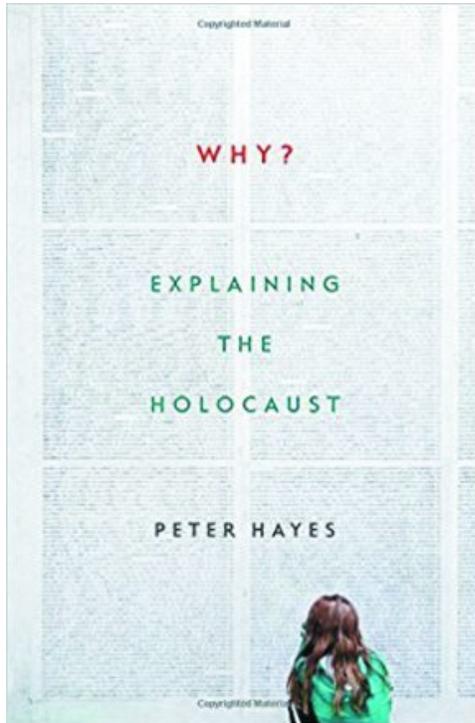


Dr. Peter Hayes

Why did the Holocaust happen? Why were Jews persecuted, instead of another ethnic group? Why did such a swift extermination occur? Why didn't the Jews get more help?

Seemingly unanswerable questions like these will be fielded by Hayes, a graduate of Bowdoin College, and Oxford and Yale universities and recently retired Holocaust Educational Foundation professor at Northwestern University, whose newest book, *Why? Explaining the Holocaust*, describes the circumstances that led to this tragic event and challenges the accepted explanations for its occurrence. He has published numerous articles and books on the Holocaust, and his latest work educates readers about the horrors perpetrated by the Nazi regime on Jews and non-Jews alike.

“I’m a child of the 1960s, who grew up watching the civil rights movement on television,” said Hayes, 71. “I was appalled by the segregation and racial violence and wanted to grasp where such hatreds came from. I was drawn back to the cataclysmic example of ‘racial’ violence in 20th-century Europe, namely the Holocaust, and I set out to understand how and why that catastrophe could have occurred.”



Although not Jewish (he is an agnostic of Irish Catholic and Scottish Protestant descent), Hayes, who lives in Chicago, has lectured in Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Scotland and Mexico, and at more than 50 U.S. colleges and universities as well as many Holocaust memorial and study centers. He supports the work of the Jewish Foundation for the Righteous and serves as chairman of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum’s Academic Committee.

Series organizer Gina Horwitz, WSU associate director of Philanthropy and Alumni Relations, said the university partnered with the HMC to garner a larger audience for these lectures, part of a series that began in 2013.

“There’s a fascination with the Holocaust, and the goal is for us to continue to learn about it from scholarly sources,” she said. “Dr. Guy Stern, a revered Wayne State professor emeritus who serves as director of the Harry and Wanda Zekelman International Institute of the

Righteous at HMC, helps choose the guest speakers, people like Dr. Hayes who can offer new insights and new information on Holocaust studies.”

HMC Events Director Sarah Saltzman said its mission is to engage, educate and empower through Holocaust remembrance.

“The partnership between the HMC and WSU is integral to honoring Dr. Stern’s achievements and furthering the goal of providing educational lectures about the Holocaust in the Metro Detroit community,” Saltzman said.

“Dr. Hayes is one of the most prestigious scholars of the history of WWII and the Holocaust. He has a deep, critical knowledge of Holocaust literature and English and German history. His experience teaching college students about the Holocaust gives him unique insight; his background makes him eminently qualified for this special lecture series.”

Hayes said, “I am always glad to engage audiences with the complexities of and new discoveries in Holocaust studies. Mine is a fascinating and enduringly relevant field, and I am grateful for every opportunity to demonstrate that.”

The public is welcome to attend this event, featuring a 10:30 a.m. breakfast of bagels and coffee with the lecture and a Q&A session following at 11:15 a.m. There is a \$5 charge for HMC members; \$10 for non-members. Seating is limited, so RSVP by June 6 to (248) 536-9612 or rsvp@holocaustcenter.org.