

The HC's **Adult Education Program** provides educational experiences for adults of all ages, professions, and backgrounds. Programs are typically 30-60 minutes in length and are offered both in-person and virtually. We also offer guided museum tours of The HC's permanent exhibits. The cost per session is \$50 for a virtual or in-person presentation, or \$6 per person for a museum tour. If costs are prohibitive, fees may be waived on a case by case basis. Browse our options to learn more about available topics.



Understanding the Holocaust

The Escalation to Genocide

The Holocaust was one of the darkest times in human history, and many wonder how it could have happened. The Holocaust was the culmination of a decade-long, government-sponsored campaign of antisemitic propaganda. This evolved into legalized segregation, physical violence, and, ultimately, to genocide. Using artifacts and victim/survivor perspectives, we will discuss the escalation of hate from biased attitudes to bias-motivated violence during the Holocaust.



Spreading Hate

Propaganda and the Holocaust

Many people chose to support the Nazi regime during the Holocaust, and propaganda played a significant role in their thinking. Propaganda is false or biased information used to mold the opinions and actions of an audience to promote a particular objective. During the Holocaust, that objective was the attempted annihilation of the Jews. You will learn about the dangerous consequences of propaganda and antisemitism through The HC's artifacts and survivor testimonies.



Under the Cover of War

The Holocaust and World War II

World War II shaped the Holocaust during its most lethal years. We will focus on how the war impacted the pace, intensity, and reach of the Holocaust by following the frontlines of the war in Europe. Drawing from primary sources and artifacts, you will explore the role of military personnel in both perpetration and rescue and the impact of their choices. We will also highlight testimonies from Jewish military veterans of WWII to show the Allied military response to Nazi oppression.



The Camp System

The Holocaust and the Final Solution

This session focuses on the process of deportations into the different types of camps within occupied Europe. We will emphasize the human story of the Holocaust by explaining Jewish experiences living in the camps. You will explore various aspects of camp life, including work, food, resistance, violence, and community. By examining testimonies and artifacts of those who survived the camp system, you will gain a deeper understanding of these atrocities.



Escaping Genocide

Jewish Refugees During the Holocaust

During the Holocaust, thousands of Jewish refugees attempted to flee from Nazi-occupied Europe, hoping to find freedom and safety across borders. Immigration was often made extremely difficult by political and practical obstacles. Learn about several Holocaust survivors who immigrated to Michigan to rebuild their lives during and after the war. We will also share stories of many heroic people who risked their lives to help refugees escape.



Resistance

Jewish Responses to the Holocaust

While many people chose to spread hate during the Holocaust, some people chose to resist the Nazi regime and its destructive ideology. Cultural, spiritual, and armed resistance were important types of opposition used to undermine Nazi power. Resistance of these kinds inspired hope among the persecuted Jews. You will learn about these different types of resistance through the use of artifacts, testimonies, and survivor art from The HC's permanent collection.



Women and the Holocaust

Highlighting Underrepresented Histories

The Holocaust was not a gender-neutral genocide. Women experienced the Holocaust differently and were targeted specifically as women. Explore women's particular experiences under Nazi control through the stories of Jewish victims and survivors of the Holocaust, and learn about women who risked their lives to resist hatred and help others. By centering women's experiences, you will gain a more nuanced understanding of the Holocaust and its impact.



Liberation

Soldiers and Survivors Bear Witness

When Allied troops encountered survivors at Nazi concentration and death camps, they were shocked by the depth of human suffering and many were moved to help survivors in any way they could. Some provided humanitarian aid, others collected evidence for postwar trials, and still more found small ways to help survivors return to life. Learn about the experiences of liberation through first-hand testimonies of soldiers and survivors, focusing on compassion and returning to life.



Life After the Holocaust

Postwar Survivor Experiences

The effects of the Holocaust lasted long after the end of WWII. Survivors had to find ways to cope with their experiences and rebuild their lives and families. We will highlight survivor experiences after liberation, including life in Displaced Persons (DP) camps and life-long efforts to persevere and remember. Using artifacts and testimony from survivors in our Michigan community, we will discuss the ongoing process of returning to life after the Holocaust and the importance of learning from personal stories.

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Corporate Complicity

Profiting from the Holocaust

We will examine the role of corporations during the Holocaust, beginning with the Nazification of industry in Germany and the destruction of Jewish businesses. You will hear stories about those who were sent to camps and forced into slave labor and learn about individual business professionals who chose to stand up against hate. While reckoning with the role of businesses in enabling industrialized mass killing, we will reflect on the importance of social responsibility and diversity in business ethics today.



Unethical Medicine

Eugenics, Pseudo-Science, and the Holocaust

The Nazis wrongly believed that the Germans were a “master race” and wanted to eliminate the threat of “inferior” genes. The German medical field was a willing partner in carrying out this ideology. We will examine the evolution of eugenics in Nazi Germany, which enabled everyday German citizens to dehumanize others and justify genocide. Learn about medical ethics during the Holocaust by understanding the choices made by doctors, nurses, and other medical professionals.



Policing and the Holocaust

State-Sponsored Violence

During the Holocaust, police forces in Germany and other occupied countries were often ordered to conduct round-ups and violence against the Jewish community. While most obeyed these orders, some heroically chose to defy them. We will explore the choices made by people in uniform to commit or resist hate-based violence during the Holocaust and examine the factors that led so many to abandon their duty to protect and serve.



Weaponizing Law

The Legal System During the Holocaust

The law can protect fundamental freedoms and rights or it can undermine them. During the Holocaust, the law was weaponized as a tool to legitimize and perpetrate genocide. By analyzing the responses of legal professionals to Nazi radicalization, we will discuss how the law intersected with the crimes of the Holocaust and its impact on Jewish life. You will also learn about the postwar Nuremberg Trials, which sought to hold Nazi perpetrators accountable and rehabilitate the rule of law.



Art as Power

Aesthetics and Expression During the Holocaust

Art was a powerful form of resistance against Nazi oppression during the Holocaust. Although the Nazi regime cracked down on art that it considered degenerate or subversive, artists used creative expression to foster humanity, preserve dignity, and as a form of resistance during this time. You will explore art created by victims and survivors during and after the Holocaust and examine their message and meaning for us today.



American Nazis

Antisemitism in the United States

How did America respond to the rise of Nazism in Europe? What actions did the United States take during the Holocaust? By exploring these questions, you will gain awareness of the history of antisemitism in the US and understand the impact of antisemitism on individuals and institutions. We will encourage you to think critically about the US response to Nazi ideology and the Holocaust and make connections to ongoing antisemitism at home.



The Ritchie Boys

Jewish American Soldiers During WWII

The Ritchie Boys were a select group of soldiers during WWII who trained at a secret US military intelligence camp. Among them were many German-Jewish refugees, chosen to help counter the Nazi war effort because of their intimate knowledge of German culture and language. You will hear the testimonies of local Holocaust survivors and learn more about the Ritchie Boys, who played a critical role in winning the war while fighting antisemitism at home and abroad.



Responding to Genocide

Learning from the Holocaust

Genocide, or the targeted extermination of a group of people, became an international crime after the Holocaust. However, genocide continues to happen around the world. We will discuss tools and approaches to contemporary genocide prevention, looking at the United States' responses to the Holocaust and the genocides in Rwanda, Bosnia, and Guatemala. Through deepening your understanding of the Holocaust and its broader lessons, you will be empowered to counter hatred and prejudice today.



Antisemitism Today

Enduring Hate After the Holocaust

Antisemitism did not begin or end with the Holocaust. Unfortunately, it remains a serious problem today as antisemitic incidents continue to climb. We will provide an overview of historical antisemitism before analyzing contemporary manifestations of antisemitism and its current scope and scale. Through historical context and modern-day examples, you will learn how to recognize antisemitism in your community and what actions people can take to respond to hatred and prejudice.