

UNIVERSITY of NORTH TEXAS

The Jewish Studies Program, the Peace Studies Program, the Departments of English,
Foreign Languages, History, and Philosophy and Religion Studies, and UNT Hillel

present

A Lecture By

Dr. Alan Udoff

The Sanctification of Life: Spiritual Resistance in the Holocaust

Dr. Udoff will examine the phenomenon of spiritual or cultural resistance during the Holocaust. He will begin by surveying the idea of spiritual resistance as it is traditionally found in Judaism, namely, the notion of *kiddush hashem* (or martyrdom; literally, “sanctification of the Name [of God]”). He traces this idea from its Biblical roots through its Talmudic and medieval development.



The Rabbis that played a key role in the latter were not only familiar with the tradition of *kiddush hashem*, but also aware that it needed to be re-interpreted so as to accommodate the altered moment in history in which European Jewry found itself. That is to say, they held that the sanctification of God would have to take the form of the “sanctification of life” (*kiddush hachayim*). Dr. Udoff goes on to examine this notion in more detail.

The lecture will conclude with a recorded presentation of a song composed in Auschwitz.

Dr. Alan Udoff was born in 1943 in Brooklyn, NY, has an M.A. in Philosophy from the Catholic University of America and was a Louis L. Kaplan Professor of Philosophy at Baltimore Hebrew University from 1983-1999. He currently holds a joint professorship in the Departments of Philosophy and Religious Studies at St. Francis College.

The principal areas of his research and writing are in the histories of philosophy and Jewish thought, literary theory, and the Holocaust. He has written on Kafka, Strauss, Buber, Rosenzweig, Celan, the Holocaust, and various aspects of Jewish thought. He is currently at work on a book-length commentary on Jean Améry's *At the Mind's Limits*.

Thursday, March 10, 4:00 in ESSC 255

Dr. Udoff will also be giving a lecture “From Worldless Silence to Engaged Speech: How Jean Améry’s Auschwitz Book Came to Be” on Wednesday, March 9, 3:30 in EESAT 110.

This lecture is free and open to the public.

**For special accommodation, contact us at 565-2266 or
philosophy@unt.edu**