

Dr. Stephen Berk

Dr. Stephen M. Berk is a professor of history at Union College and holder of the Henry and Sally Schaffer Chair of Holocaust and Jewish Studies. He is also the recipient of the Florence B. Sherwood Chair in History and Culture and a consultant to the Wiesenthal Holocaust Center.



A gifted presenter, Dr. Berk has lectured on the Holocaust at distinguished higher education institutions such as Princeton University, Vanderbilt University, The University of Texas at Austin, and Williams College. In addition, he has lectured extensively in the former Soviet Union, Israel, Egypt, and Poland.

Professor Berk is the author of *Year of Crisis, Year of Hope: Russian Jewry and the Pogroms of 1881-1882* and numerous articles on Russian history, Russian-Jewish history, anti-Semitism, and American policy in the Middle East.

A native of New York City, Dr. Berk received his B.A. in history from the University of Pennsylvania, his Master's degree from the University of Chicago, and his Ph.D. from Columbia University.



Dr. Stephen Berk Lecture Series

2014 Dates

Sept. 8, Sept. 15, Sept. 22,
Sept. 29, Oct. 6, and Oct. 20

Cost

Complete Series: \$45
(may be purchased in advance or at
the first two lectures)

Single Lecture: \$10

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**Congregation Agudat Achim
presents:**

The Great War and the Jews

**Professor
Stephen Berk
Lecture Series**



A series of six fascinating lectures with Dr. Stephen Berk, professor of history at Union College and Scholar-in-Residence at Congregation Agudat Achim for over 30 years.

**Sept. 8, Sept. 15, Sept. 22,
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Tel: 518-393-9211

The Great War and the Jews

All Lectures begin at 7:30 p.m.

I. The Lights Go Out: August 2014 marks the 100th anniversary of World War 1. The war changed everything. It is the seminal event of the 20th century. The accession to power of Lenin, and the Communists in Russia, the creation of a Fascist Italy by Mussolini, and the emergence of Nazi Germany can all be traced to the Great War. The beginnings of decolonization and major social and economic changes also have their origins in the war.

II. Stalemate: The Schlieffen Plan goes awry. The French hold at the Marne, and the Germans have a great victory in the East. The Germans, the French and the British try to outflank each other. The results are a 400 mile line of trenches, and the horrors of trench warfare ensue.

III. The Yanks Are Coming: 1916 was the time of two of the greatest battles in the history of warfare: Verdun, and the Somme. The Germans rolled the dice at Jutland and made very serious diplomatic mistakes such as unrestricted submarine warfare. An angry American president moves the United States to a declaration of war.

IV. Changing Jewish Destinies: The war was a catastrophe for everyone involved, but a case can be made that the Jews of Eastern Europe suffered more than anyone else, with the possible exception of the Armenians. At the same time the seeds of a future Jewish state were planted. French and British duplicity would also have dramatic consequences.

V. "With Our Backs to the Wall": Ludendorff set "Der Tag" for March 21, 1918. He told the Kaiser that Germany had to win the war before the Americans arrived. Sir Douglas Haig made the famous statement urging British soldiers to fight to the death. The Allies hold and go over to the offensive. At the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month the Great War was over.

VI. Versailles and the Seeds of a New War: The social and economic consequences of the war were tremendous. The peoples and governments of Britain and France rejected all calls for a lenient peace treaty with Germany. At Versailles they made the possibility of a new war very likely. It was the greatest political blunder in modern history. The repercussions of Versailles resonate down to the present day.

Don't miss any of these
exciting lectures!



To reserve tickets, complete this form, enclose a check (payable to *Congregation Agudat Achim*), and mail to: **Jack Mintzer, 2117 Union Street, Schenectady, NY 12309, by September 5th.** Remaining and reserved tickets will be available at the door.

Complete series \$45

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