

Jewish Federation to host panel discussion to commemorate 80th anniversary of Kristallnacht

By Reece Ristau Tulsa World 10 hrs ago



The Jewish Federation of Tulsa will host a panel discussion to commemorate the 80th anniversary of Kristallnacht on Sunday. MIKE SIMONS/Tulsa World file [Buy Now](#)

A panel discussion to commemorate the 80th anniversary of Kristallnacht is scheduled next month at the Jewish Federation of Tulsa.

The discussion, titled "Laws of the Holocaust: Discrimination, Segregation, Extermination," will examine how the Nazi government took traditional antisemitism and created a bureaucratic superstructure whose goals were to disenfranchise and eventually exterminate its own citizens ... according to a news release from the federation.

Jesse Ulrich, director of Jewish learning and engagement, Holocaust education at the Jewish Federation of Tulsa and The Sherwin Miller Museum of Jewish Art, said the panel will scrutinize how the Nazi party used the law to achieve their goals.

"A lot of times when people study the Holocaust they don't always talk about the legal aspect and how laws themselves are really only useful when everybody agrees with them and agrees to follow them," Ulrich said.

He noted that the Nazis studied Jim Crow laws "the legislation that enforced racial segregation and discrimination" to establish anti-Jewish law.

Panelists Janet K. Levit, provost and executive vice president for academic affairs at the University of Tulsa, and Carsten Schapkow, associate professor of modern Jewish history at the Schusterman Center for Judaic and Israel Studies at the University of Oklahoma, will discuss the legal path and consequences that led to the extermination of European Jewry.

Schapkow also is the L.R. Brammer Jr. Presidential Professor in History at OU. Joli Jensen, Hazel Rogers Professor of Media Studies at the University of Tulsa, will moderate.


Kristallnacht occurred the night of Nov. 9, 1938, when violent anti-Jewish demonstrations broke out across Germany, Austria and the Sudetenland region of Czechoslovakia, according to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. During a 48-hour period, mobs destroyed hundreds of synagogues while burning or desecrating Jewish religious artifacts.

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Some 7,500 Jewish-owned businesses, homes and schools were affected, and 91 Jews were murdered, according to the museum. The violent period came to be known as Kristallnacht, or The Night of Broken Glass, because of the thousands of shattered windows that littered the streets afterward.

Ulrich said some of the discussion will draw ties to practices being witnessed in modern times.

“A lot of our democracy is built not just on laws, but on norms — norms that have to be followed for them to be effective,” he said.

The discussion is scheduled for 2 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 4, at the Sylvan Auditorium in the Jewish Federation of Tulsa, 2021 E. 71st St. The program is free and is suitable for adults and youths in the sixth grade and above.

The panel is presented by the Jewish Federation of Tulsa’s Council for Holocaust Education and the Tulsa City-County Library.

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