American Jewish Responses to the Atomic Bombings

of Hiroshima and Nagasaki

This seminar will examine American Jewish responses to the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, and American Jews' involvement in the peace movement and humanitarian activities in the postwar era. Like the majority of their fellow Americans, Jews approved of the use of atomic bombs on Japan in the immediate postwar years. Nevertheless, some rabbis, leaders, and individuals responded to the bombing with remorse, and spoke against U.S. nuclear policy, calling for peace. Not all of these figures protested for the same reason, but their responses were often based on a sense of responsibility and moral obligation both as Americans and Jews in the postwar period.