

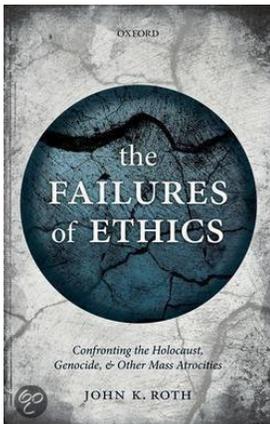


BERKELEY INSTITUTE FOR JEWISH LAW AND ISRAEL STUDIES

A hub for student, faculty, and community engagement at the University of California, Berkeley

THE FAILURES OF ETHICS

Confronting the Holocaust, Genocide, and Other Mass Atrocities



Defined by the intention to encourage human action that fits sound understanding about what is right and wrong, just and unjust, good and evil, virtuous and corrupt, ethics arguably is civilization's keystone. At its best, ethics emphasizes careful deliberation about the difference between right and wrong, encouragement not to be indifferent toward that difference, cultivation of virtuous character, and action that defends what is right and resists what is wrong. With those themes forming the context, John Roth will grapple with what he calls the failures of ethics. His talk will emphasize that the Holocaust did not have to happen — nor did any other genocide or mass atrocity. Such disasters have emerged from human choices and decisions. That fact suggests that nothing human, natural, or divine guarantees respect for the ethical values and commitments that are most needed in contemporary human existence, but nothing is more important than our commitment to defend them, for they remain

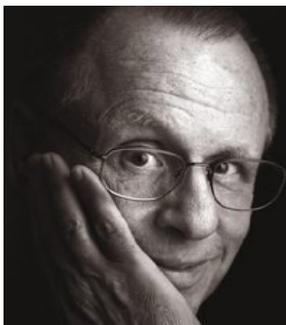
as fundamental as they are fragile, as precious as they are endangered. Ethics may not be enough. It may be what the American poet William Stafford called a "forlorn cause." Nevertheless, ethics remains and persists. An irreplaceable safeguard, it still possesses the indispensable corrective for its own failures.

February 23, 2016 | 5:30 pm | 295 Boalt Hall

Food and Drinks Provided

Reception at 5:30 pm, Lecture at 6 pm

Please RSVP HERE or email us at berkeley_institute@law.berkeley.edu



John K. Roth is the Edward J. Sexton Professor Emeritus of Philosophy and the Founding Director of the Center for the Study of the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights (now the Mgrublian Center for Human Rights) at Claremont McKenna College. In addition to service on the United States Holocaust Memorial Council, he has published hundreds of articles and authored, co-authored, or edited more than fifty books, including *Approaches to Auschwitz*, *Ethics During and After the Holocaust*, and *The Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies*. In 2012 he received the Holocaust Educational Foundation's Distinguished Achievement Award for Holocaust Studies and Research.



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