

Author and Nobel Laureate to speak at UCSD

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ELIE WIESEL, AUTHOR AND NOBEL LAUREATE, WILL SPEAK AT UCSD ON FEBRUARY 21

Elie Wiesel, author and survivor of the Holocaust, will speak at the University of California, San Diego at 8 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 21, in the UCSD Main Gym.

Wiesel is the winner of the 1986 Nobel Peace Prize, and the French Legion of Honor medal in 1984. He has written more than 30 books, including "Twilight," "Messengers of God," and "Souls on Fire." Since 1976 he has been a member of the faculty at Boston University.

A teenage inmate of Auschwitz and Buchenwald, Wiesel is adamant about not having the Holocaust devaluated. "For 25 years or 30 years, the Holocaust shielded us. It wasn't nice to be anti-Semitic because automatically the person who hated us was in the same class with Hitler. Today it is very easy to come out and say, 'I'm against Israel.' To me that means, 'I'm against three million Jews in Israel.'"

Wiesel gives more than 30 lectures yearly, speaking "around" the Holocaust, not "about" it. The distinction is significant for him, he says. "It used to be a sacred topic. It must be seen as a special event, meaning a special event which requires a special style, a special approach, a special level...it must not become simply a subject among other subjects."

His books, he says, are about the impossibility of writing about the Holocaust. "Something happened during the Holocaust, and we don't know what. We never will know what. We cannot even talk about it. What I try to show is that one cannot write about the event. I try to show the incommunicability of the experience."

In his works, his heroes are trapped and confined men--almost always Holocaust survivors--engaged in protracted soul-searching over the existence of God in the face of human suffering.

Wiesel thinks that simple things are the most important lessons to be learned from what happened in the Holocaust, "such as the importance of words. If we had taken Hitler's words as seriously as he did, I think that would have prevented it (the Holocaust)."

Tickets for the Elie Wiesel lecture are \$9 for general admission, \$8 for seniors and \$5 for students, and may be purchased from the UCSD Box Office, (534-4559) or from TicketMaster outlets. This lecture is brought to San Diego by the University Events Office.

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