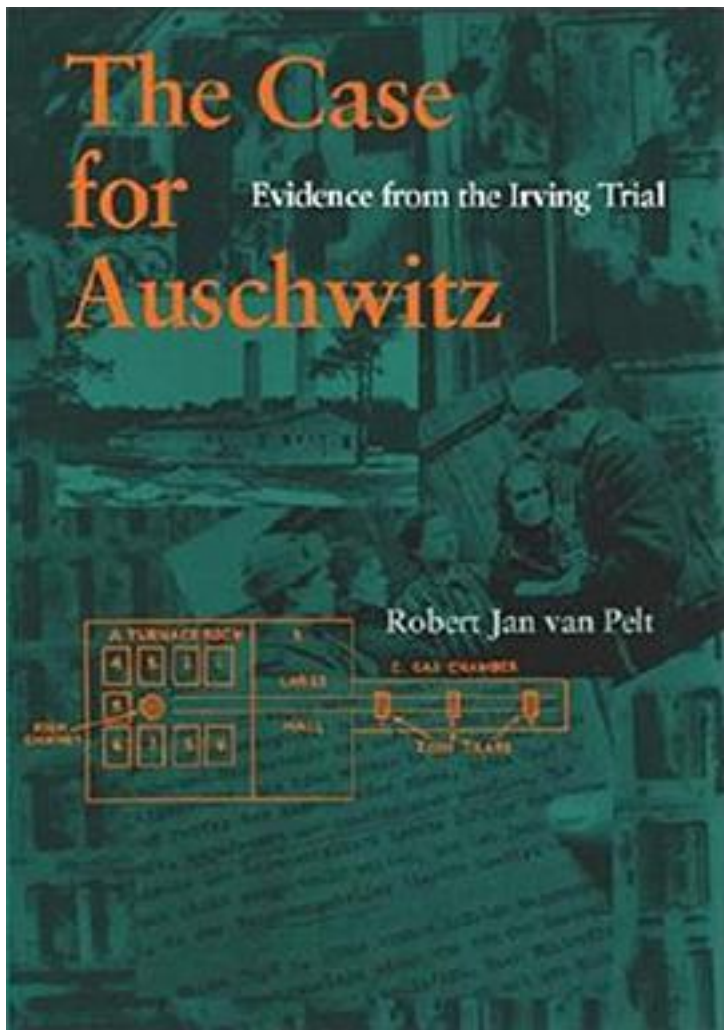


The Case for Auschwitz



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From January to April 2000, a high-profile libel case brought by the British historian

David Irving against Penguin Books and Deborah Lipstadt, charging that Lipstadt's book, "Denying the Holocaust" (1993) falsely labelled him a Holocaust denier, was tried in the British High Court. In the proceedings, the question about the evidence for Auschwitz as a death camp played a central role; Irving had based his alleged denial of the Holocaust in part on a report written in 1988 by an American execution specialist, Fred Leuchter, that claimed that there was no evidence for homicidal gas chambers in Auschwitz. As an element of the defence, in 1998 Penguin and Lipstadt engaged Robert Jan van Pelt to prepare for the court an expert report presenting the evidence for our knowledge that Auschwitz had been an extermination camp where up to one million Jews were killed, mainly in gas chambers. Employing painstaking historical scholarship, van Pelt submitted an exhaustive forensic report, which he successfully defended in cross-examination in court. In his verdict in favour of the defendants, Mr. Justice Charles Grey concluded that "no objective, fair-minded historian would have serious cause to doubt that there were gas chambers at Auschwitz and that they were operated on a substantial scale to kill hundreds of thousands of Jews." "The Case for Auschwitz" analyses why Auschwitz has become central to Holocaust denial and how it became a focus in the Irving-Lipstadt trial. It presents the compelling evidence contained in the original expert report and details the way this evidence played out at the trial. Unique in its comprehensive assessment of the historical evidence for Auschwitz and devastating in its demolition of the arguments of Holocaust deniers against Auschwitz, van Pelt's book is essential reading for anyone interested in the history of the Holocaust and for those who seek to combat Holocaust denial.

作者介绍:

Robert Jan van Pelt is Professor in the School of Architecture, University of Waterloo, Canada. He is coauthor (with Debrah Dwork) of Auschwitz: 1270 to the Present and winner of a National Jewish Book Award, 1996, and of the Spiro Kostof Book Award of the Society of Architectural Historians.

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