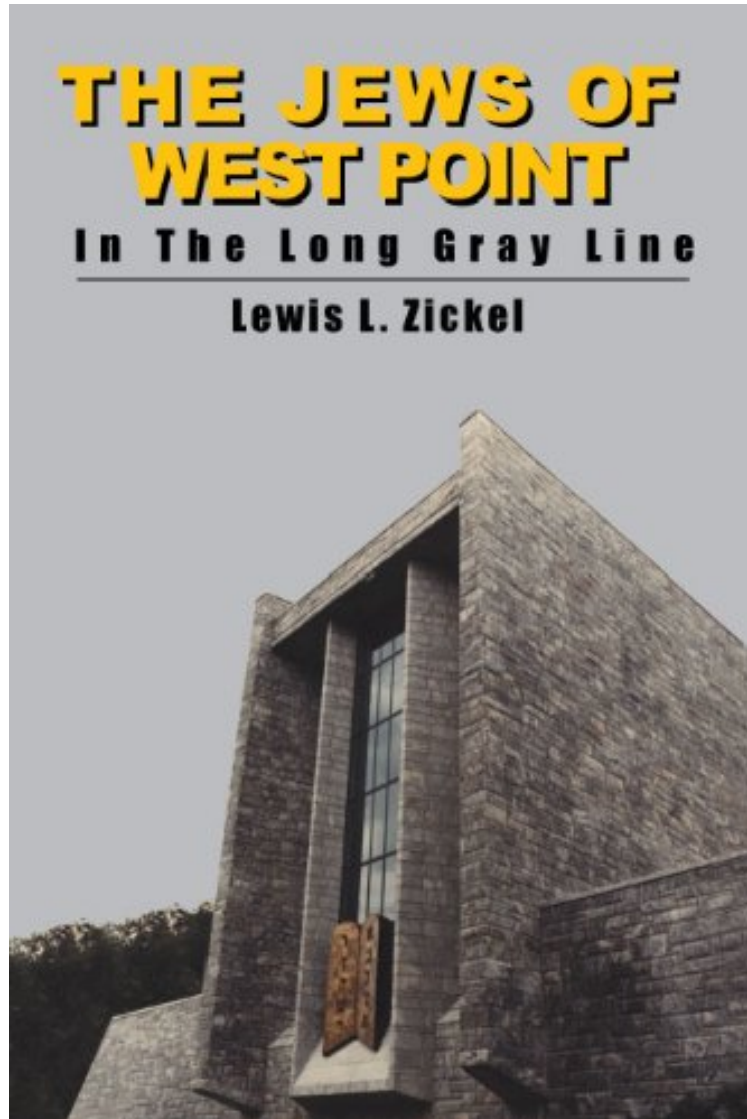


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The Jews of West Point in the Long Gray Line

Lewis Zickel

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Lewis Zickel : The Jews of West Point in the Long Gray Line before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Jews of West Point in the Long Gray Line:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. It is a little known fact that there is a ...By MarinaIt is a little known fact that there is a Jewish chapel at West Point. Money was raised to construct this magnificent building which houses incredible Jewish art artificats. Yes, there are Jewish cadets at Westpoint. One of my relatives significantly contributed to the realization of the chapel, and I greatly admire his efforts and achievement.3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A down-to-earth human examination of the two-way influence that West Point has had upon Jews, and

that Jews have had upon it

By Midwest Book Review

Written by 1949 West Point graduate Lewis L. Zickel

The Jews of West Point: In the Long Gray Line consists of three portions: a studious look at the role of Jews in military history, specifically as connected to the prestigious United States Military Academy at West Point; an autobiographical portrayal of Zickel's adolescence in New Jersey and his years of service as a cadet, and then as a member of the Army during and after the Korean War; and a selection of excerpts from a questionnaire that Zickel sent to each of the 630 living Jewish graduates of West Point. Few of the graduates recounted any personal experiences of anti-Semitism at West Point; many even reported that West Point helped bring them closer to their Jewish roots because of activities connected to the Jewish Chapel. A down-to-earth human examination of the two-way influence that West Point has had upon Jews, and that Jews have had upon West Point, especially recommended for college library Judaic studies or military history shelves.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

Terrific account of an American institution

By Hammock Man

The book offers a perspective on the military academy at West Point that is known to very few. Jews have played an important role in the history of the academy, beginning with the very first graduating class. Though at times subject to anti-semitic remarks that were made out of ignorance or tasteless humor, Jewish cadets comprise a long standing tradition at West Point, a tradition of commitment, dedication, and patriotism. It is interesting to note that, not only was a Jewish cadet one of the two first graduates in the 1790's, but also a Jewish woman was part of the first class that admitted women to the academy.

The Jews of West Point in the Long Grey Line by the late Colonel Lewis L. Zickel, a 1949 graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point, is a fascinating and highly readable look at the institution that since 1802 has trained the leaders of the American Army. The book focuses specifically on the Jews who have attended West Point and gone on to serve with distinction as professional military officers. Since most American Jews have not regarded the military as potential career choice, it will probably come as a surprise to learn that West Point's first graduating class was half Jewish (admittedly it had only two members). It will be equally surprising to learn that Jews are and have been a significant if small presence at West Point.

The book is divided into three parts. The first is an account of the role of Jews in military history and at West Point. Considerable attention is given to the creation of a Jewish Chapel for cadets and to the Academy's Jewish chaplaincy. The second part is autobiographical. It tells Colonel Zickel's personal story, from his childhood in New Jersey through his four years as a cadet, and his service in the Army during and after the Korean War. After retiring from the Army he was actively involved in serving West Point as it had served him. He played a key role in the creation of the Jewish Chapel and in programs to enhance the religious experience of Jewish cadets. The final part of the book consists of excerpts from a questionnaire Zickel sent to each of the 630 living Jewish graduates of West Point. Among other things, they were asked to recount memories about their tenure at the Academy that would be of Jewish interest. Very few reported any experience of anti-Semitism. Moreover, many mentioned that West Point had brought them closer to Judaism and Jewishness, not merely because of activities connected with the Jewish Chapel, but also through contact with the chaplains, and because they so often came from homes or places where there was little Jewish content. Several of them were bar or bat mitzvah at West Point. This is a very interesting and important book, a fitting testimonial to the nearly 800 Jews who down the years have stood in the Long Gray Line and served in the defense of their country.