

Discussion questions for *Risking Exposure*

The book is a work of fiction, but as in all researched historical fiction ‘it might have been.’ These questions are designed to trigger discussion about some of the elements of the fictional story, as well as a few historical facts.

1. In the beginning of the novel, Sophie is happy to belong to a group of ‘insiders.’ She is reluctant to act in a way that may mark her as different from them, even though she doesn’t always like what they do. In what situations have you noticed people behaving that way? Have you behaved that way yourself?
2. Sophie’s photos are used as propaganda, defined by Webster’s New World Dictionary as “the widespread promotion of particular ideas and doctrines.” Think about the way today’s media promotes certain ideas. How does this promotion influence your thinking? Do you accept commonly held views as your own or do you research answers for yourself?
3. Think about courage and how Sophie showed courage at the end of the novel. Did she ‘learn how’ to show it or was it always there? What factors brought it out? Do you wonder about your ability to be brave when faced with danger or the threat of harm?
4. Some people around Sophie held true to their morals and ideals and others didn’t. Should morals influenced by the people around you, by the school you attend, or the town or country in which you live? Do you think your own morals can or should change during your lifetime, or should they always be the same?
5. The Nazi pogrom called T4 exterminated tens of thousands of residents of hospitals for the mentally ill, nursing homes, and facilities for the developmentally disabled. Were you aware of this pogrom, or similar actions taken against people who were deaf, homosexual, or Jehovah’s Witness? Why do you think pogroms against Jews and political prisoners are more widely known?