



"To Remember...and to Teach"

Fall 2008 ■ Number 33

Cohen Center for Holocaust Studies

KEENE STATE COLLEGE • 229 MAIN STREET • KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE • WWW.KEENE.EDU/CCHS

New Year's Greetings and Offerings

We tell time in many ways – with clocks, with calendars, with seasons. And time tells us many things as well, marking our lives in significant ways: from the seasons of our lives to special occasions that we celebrate in significant life passages. Time shapes our energy, our attention, and how we tend to each other and ourselves. The end of summer and beginning of fall signal such a transition. For most Americans, Labor Day signals the turn of the year from vacation time to work time, especially for families with children in school. We at Keene State typically refer to this turn of the seasons as the new academic year, anticipating the arrival of new students and an influx of energy and vision to begin again the work that calls us together as a community of teaching and learning. Our friends in the Jewish community regularly celebrate a new year with a 10-day transition time welcoming a new year with Rosh Hashanah and bringing the previous one to moral closure with Yom Kippur.

As we in the Cohen Center make our annual transition, we are aware of just how full our time is. We are in the midst of our 25th year, having set it apart with a grand event in May and planning a full course of offerings for our fall banquet of programs. But we are not alone. The College moves toward the celebration of its 100th year, and the nation is in the midst of an important presidential election. And these events are only a portion of what is happening in our midst and beyond. Our movement into the new term calls each of us to a personal season of care and responsibility, as we exercise choice and develop our own rhythms of moving forward.

As we look at our calendar for the fall, we invite you to consider our programmatic offerings as a feast of opportunities for the coming days. Where appropriate, let what we offer provide sustenance for the journey ahead. Our first major offering was our 11th Annual Holocaust Memorial Lecture, at which historian Christopher Browning spoke on "Holocaust Denial in the Courtroom: The Historian as Expert Witness." Browning is known for his groundbreaking book, *Ordinary Men* and for his role as expert witness in the libel defense of Deborah Lipstadt when she was sued by Holocaust denier David Irving. October 27 we hosted Professor Donald Bloxham, an expert in Holocaust and genocide studies with focused work on the Armenian genocide. During the academic year 2007-08, Bloxham was the J. B. and Maurice C. Shapiro Senior Scholar-in-Residence at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum for 2007-08. After both the Browning and Bloxham lectures, we held a Community Roundtable and then the following Wednesday night, Paul Vincent and I opened our course, *Rethinking the Holocaust*, an upper-level seminar, to the public in order to continue the conversation begun the previous Monday night. In addition, the Cohen Center website hosts an electronic dialogue in response to each of the September and October lectures.

November features several major events. November 6, the Cohen Center will hold its annual citywide commemoration of *Kristallnacht*

at the Colonial Theatre. The event will focus on the historic witness of the village of Le Chambon sur Lignon in southwestern France and will feature a visit from award-winning filmmaker Pierre Sauvage and President of the Chambon Foundation. From November 7 to December 8, the Thorne-Sagendorph Art Gallery will host a special exhibit of art commemorating the work and witness of the Cohen Center for Holocaust Studies and featuring the work of painter Samuel Bak and photographers Leslie Starobin and Clemens Kalischer. Later in the month, November 20, the Cohen Center will host a symposium on Samuel Bak, welcoming scholars Danna Nolan Fewell of Drew University and Gary Phillips, Dean of Wabash College.

In addition to these major public events, the Cohen Center will continue its strong tradition of providing quality outreach programs for teachers and other educators committed to the study of the Holocaust and the implications of that study for responsible engagement with our contemporary world. The Center is hosting two teaching workshops this fall. The first workshop on October 29th will address the topic of reading and teaching Elie Wiesel's *Night* and features Professor Alan Rosen from Hebrew University in Jerusalem. His workshop will follow a series of events offered at Boston University in honor of Wiesel's 80th birthday. The second workshop, scheduled for November 7, will focus on the witness and challenge of the small French village of Le Chambon Sur Lignon and will feature special guest Pierre Sauvage. Sauvage was born in Le Chambon and was a child of Jews sheltered by the people of that remarkable village during the War and the accompanying attack on the Jewish people. That workshop will follow our citywide *Kristallnacht* observance on November 6.

In other words, in the midst of a very full fall, we ask you to consider what the Cohen Center has to offer. Please join us if you can.

Hank Knight, Director
Cohen Center for Holocaust Studies

Transitions in the Center

The Cohen Center bid farewell to Theresa Masiello this past spring, as she returned to her career in banking. In her time with the Center, Theresa made her mark with students, professors, colleagues, and clients of the Center as well as with programs and activities that reflect her deep commitments to all that the Cohen Center stands for. Staff and friends of the Cohen Center thank her for her service and wish her well.

After a brief summer search, the Center welcomed Margaret Barney as its new senior program support assistant. Margaret began work on August 18, just one week before students returned for the start of classes. She brings extensive project management and supervisory experience to the Center. Her career includes almost 15 years in the

financial services industry, where she held positions in human resources, internal auditing, retail banking, as well as income and tax processing. More recently, Margaret owned and operated an online storefront and founded an international online affinity community for stepmothers. Margaret lives in Rindge with her husband, John, and their children, Stephanie and Patrick.



Margaret Barney

Kaddish Project News

This past spring, the Kaddish Project gave \$25,000 plus \$5,500 from a benefit dinner to the Cohen Center. Jan Cohen and *Kaddish* composer Larry Siegel presented a check at a brief ceremony on May 30. The funds will be invested to help underwrite the many programmatic needs of the Center. More than 85 percent of the operating funds for Cohen Center events and activities come from sources outside the KSC operating budget, and the *Kaddish* gift will be invested with a long-term goal of providing greater stability to Cohen Center's future programs.

Commissioned by the Cohen Center in honor of its 25th anniversary, *Kaddish* debuted on May 3 and will premiere in Minneapolis on November 15 as part of the 40th anniversary season of VocalEssence, founded and led by conductor Philip Brunelle. Not to be outdone by this special event, the College will perform excerpts from Siegel's stunning work at a performance on November 1 at 7:30 p.m. in the Main Theatre of the Redfern Arts Center. An inaugural event of Keene State's Centennial Celebration, the evening will showcase the talents of Keene State students and faculty in the Theatre and Dance, Music, Art, and Film Departments.

For information about the performance on November 1, visit www.keene.edu/racbp. For more information on the *Kaddish* Project, visit www.kaddishproject.org. Information about supporting the Cohen Center with your gift can be found at www.keene.edu/cchs/support.cfm.

A Growing Circle of Friends

The Cohen Center's circle of friends continues to grow. Last year, with the *Kaddish* Project, the Center welcomed many new supporters and partners to its work and mission. It was not uncommon for folks excited by the artistic dimensions of the project to discover a new passion for the urgency of the Cohen Center's work of commemoration and *tikkun olam* (repair of the world). Likewise, new bonds of friendship and common cause emerged as committees and planning teams provided opportunities for so many people of good will to meet and work. With May 3, much of that work bore visible fruit. And yet, the *Kaddish* Project continues with performances yet to happen and educational activities still being developed. In addition, the Cohen Center is eager to find ways to keep this network active and to give back to the many wonderful people who helped make *Kaddish* happen on May 3. In that regard, we ask you to communicate with us if you would like to expand your role as part of our growing circle of friends. That could mean forming a reading or discussion group, taking advantage of the many public programs we offer, volunteering to help with future projects, or identifying a need or opportunity that you see that others may not. Share your ideas with Dr. Knight by e-mail at hknight@keene.edu.



Martin Rumscheidt, son of a Nazi perpetrator, speaks with Ernie Michel, Holocaust survivor, after a roundtable at the Summer Institute: "Wrestling with Fire: Facing the Holocaust, Facing Ourselves." Rumscheidt's father had visited Auschwitz to recruit slave labor for German industry and Rumscheidt was playmates with the children of the commandant of Auschwitz-Buna. He wrestled with his parents' responsibility and his individual shame, as Michel encountered the son of someone directly or indirectly responsible for his family's suffering.

In Memoriam

We are sad to announce that Dr. Charles Hildebrandt, emeritus faculty of Keene State in Sociology and founder of the Cohen Center for Holocaust Studies, died October 21.

President Helen Giles-Gee wrote in a message to the campus, "We are grateful for his inspiration, vision, passion, and commitment to this important work. Dr. Hildebrandt's legacy extends from our campus to students, scholars, and colleagues across the country and the world."



Dr. Charles Hildebrandt

Of course, that legacy is in all we do here at the Cohen Center. On sabbatical in 1982, Dr. Hildebrandt traveled to Jerusalem to study at Yad Vashem to develop a course on the Sociology of the Holocaust and to prepare to establish a Holocaust Resource Center at Keene State. That year he traveled around the United States collecting books and materials for the center.

Keene State will host a memorial gathering for Dr. Hildebrandt Monday, November 3 at 4 p.m. in the Recital Hall at Brickyard Arts Center.

We have established an online memorial on our website to honor Professor Hildebrandt's life and work. We invite you to visit and post your personal tribute at: www.keeneweb.org/cohencenter.

From the Center Out

News from Outreach Coordinator Tom White

Summer Institute 2008

Our Fellows are the crucial link between memory and conscience. Education is our major weapon and our hope in the ongoing fight against antisemitism, bigotry, and the forces of genocidal thought and behavior. In addition to 18 New Hampshire teachers, educators from South Dakota, Massachusetts, Vermont, Israel, and Slovakia graduated the institute and became Fellows of the Cohen Center in July. To date, the Summer Institute has trained 86 Fellows: 65 from New England, primarily New Hampshire; one each from the states of New Jersey, Ohio, and South Dakota; and 18 international fellows, hailing from Estonia, Slovakia, Latvia, Israel, and Germany. Graduates of our Summer Institute become eligible for advanced training at the Jewish Foundation for the Righteous (JFR) in New York City.

The 2008 Summer Institute on the Holocaust and Genocide brought together top scholars and educators in an intensive residential experience. The focus was to use a multidisciplinary approach to wrestle with the difficulty of perceiving “the other” as human beings and not merely victims. To approach this topic, we must focus on Jews as vital, modern people, not as distant victims. This approach also applies directly to genocide studies. Our focus must be on choosing life. Survivors, in particular, often chose not to be victims but to maintain their moral autonomy.

As in past years, we were blessed this summer with an extraordinary group of witnesses. **Sibylle Sarah Niemoeller, Baroness von Sell**, set the tone with her personal reflections at the keynote dinner. Her insights proved invaluable during the five days she spent with us. **Rena Jacques** spoke of her “family remembrance of life” in Nazi Germany and her family’s involvement in the resistance to the Nazis. **Ernie Michel**, a Holocaust survivor, discussed his experiences in Auschwitz-Buna and his role as the only German reporter at the Nuremberg Trials. **Martin Rumscheidt**, child of Nazi perpetrators, wrestled with his personal shame and courageously continued a discussion during the roundtable with Michel that proved to be one of the most powerful moments of the Institute.

Michel’s testimony as a survivor of Auschwitz-Buna and his postwar reporting of the Nuremberg Trials was, in the words of one Fellow, “engaging, entertaining, tearful, thought-provoking, and definitely a highlight to the week. Such a great story to witness and inspire being retold.”

Tamar Geva and **Aya Shaham**, Israeli educators sponsored by the Jewish Federation of New Hampshire, made a presentation on a poster series based on the works of Holocaust survivor Alfred Kantor. The series was created by the Theresienstadt Martyrs Remembrance Association and is one of the few visual records of daily life in the Nazi concentration camps. The series of 27 posters as well as two books (*The Cat with the Yellow Star: Coming of Age in Terezin* and *Fireflies in the Dark: The Story of Friedl Dicker-Brandeis and the Children of Terezin*) were given to the Cohen Center as resources.

The roundtable, “Wrestling with Fire: Facing the Holocaust, Facing Ourselves,” prepared in advance, was designed to allow for an initial discussion that would then be opened to the Fellows who could join the table. There are no easy answers to this complex problem of genocide.

It is crucial that we wrestle with these issues with integrity and honesty. The roundtable discussion was a powerful and moving example of the challenges we face as educators and scholars when considering the legacy of the Holocaust.

Wisdom comes in developing richer questions for personal reflection and action. It is often more important to discover what questions to ask rather than what simple conclusions can be drawn. Answers create a false sense of closure. The Institute was designed to open the door by providing a wealth of resources, personal experiences, and support, in addition to methodological and pedagogical approaches. We are indebted to the dedication of the excellent multidisciplinary faculty who presented and are part of the Holocaust Studies minor at KSC.

We are deeply grateful for the significant support given by the New Hampshire Humanities Council and the Panjandrum Foundation to this Institute.

Finally, our deepest appreciation goes, once again, to the members of Congregation Ahavas Achim in Keene who so warmly welcomed us for Shabbat. For more information about the center’s summer institute please visit www.keene.edu/cchs/summerinst.cfm.

CCHS Fellows Corner

Rob Hamel, Gorham, New Hampshire: “The World Must Know: An Evening of Student Work.” Rob’s students will present individual projects that answer the query, “What must the world know?” regarding the Holocaust and genocide. This will be an open event for the public with a speaker to be announced. November 5, 2008.

Christina Hamilton, Hampton Academy, has initiated a book club aimed at middle school teachers. Monthly readings began in October!

Sherry Frost will be teaching freshman English at UNH and literature at McIntosh College, and will be incorporating selections from Simon Wiesenthal’s *The Sunflower* as well as speeches (and excerpts of speeches) from the Nuremberg Trials.

Seacoast Film series

In cooperation with Portsmouth Community Radio and Temple Israel (Portsmouth, New Hampshire) and the Jewish Federation of New Hampshire, and under the coordination of CCHS Fellow Deb Barry, the Cohen Center will be sponsoring a film festival in Portsmouth in the coming months. The five films will include speakers and question-and-answer sessions. Free and open to the public. (Donations accepted.)

News from the Jewish Foundation for the Righteous

We are proud of the Center’s ongoing relationship with the JFR and of being recognized as one of their 15 Centers of Excellence in Holocaust education.

Cohen Center Fellows **Peter Majoy** (Nashua High South) and **Jane Bergeron** (Villa Augustina, Goffstown) represented the Cohen Center at the 2008 JFR Summer Institute and became JFR Lerner Fellows.

CCHS/Lerner Fellow **Sharyn Seigny** attended the European Study Program in Germany and Poland.

25th
ANNIVERSARY
1983-2008



Cohen Center for Holocaust Studies

KEENE STATE COLLEGE
229 MAIN STREET
KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE
03435-3201

Forthcoming Events

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2008

Inspired by Kaddish

The Keene State College Music and Theatre and Dance Departments Celebrate the Arts at KSC

Main Theatre, 7:30 p.m., \$5-\$10

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2008

Kristallnacht Remembrance

Colonial Theatre, Keene, 7 p.m. Free and open to the public.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2008

CCHS Workshop series

Pierre Sauvage, "The Challenge of Le Chambon"
Thorne-Sagendorph Art Gallery, Keene State College, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m., \$60

NOVEMBER 7 - DECEMBER 8, 2008

Facing the Holocaust: 25 Years of the Cohen Center

Thorne-Sagendorph Art Show – featuring the works of painter Samuel Bak and photographers Leslie Starobin and Clemens Kalischer.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2008

Seacoast Film series

Telling Their Stories: New Hampshire Holocaust Survivors Speak Out

Temple Israel, 200 State Street, Portsmouth, 7 p.m.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2008

Symposium on the Work of Sam Bak

Gary Phillips and Danna Fewell
Mabel Brown Room, 7:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 15, 2009

Seacoast Film series

Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Pacifist, Nazi Resister

Temple Israel, 200 State Street, Portsmouth, 7 p.m.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 30, 2009

CCHS Workshop series

Louanne Jacobs, "Using Children's Holocaust Literature to Engage Learners, Differentiate Instruction, and Support Content Standards" (geared to elementary/middle school teachers)

CCHS, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m., \$60

FRIDAY, JANUARY 30, 2009

CCHS Workshop series

Dr. Steven Leonard Jacobs, "Facing Genocide" (geared to secondary school teachers)

Part I: "He Who Saves One Life: The Story of Raphael Lemkin and the U.N. Genocide Convention"

Part II: "Making a Difference: Addressing Genocide in the Classroom and Beyond"
Mountain View Room, Student Center, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m., \$60

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2009

CCHS Workshop series

Dottie Stone, "We Are Here!" (Jewish Resistance during the Holocaust)

C. R. Sparks, Bedford, NH
9 a.m.-3:30 p.m., \$60

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2009

Seacoast Film series

The Lost Wooden Synagogues of Eastern Europe

Temple Israel, 200 State Street, Portsmouth, 7 p.m.