



“To Remember...and to Teach”

Cohen Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies

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

Fraught!

Fraught! The word is not one we use every day, but it captures much of what we are facing in the world, whether we are looking at the current political climate engulfing the nation, the international arena and the incumbent dangers of terrorism and escalating violence, or the economic vulnerabilities that link everyone on a global scale. The word fraught harkens back to origins that also ground the word freight. Fraught means laden, indeed, heavily laden, and in often complex, entangled ways. When something is fraught, that something is typically a complex mix of intertwined layers of meaning, ambiguity, and confusion. And more often than not, we are entangled with such messiness. Life can be fraught with lots of things – danger, risk, anxiety, complexity, vulnerability – and often in ways that lead to paralysis or to oversimplification and precipitous action.

In our work in Holocaust and Genocide Studies we seek to help our students and the various communities we serve to recognize the fraught character of the subject matter we study as well as the fraught nature of the responsibilities entrusted to us. We seek to recognize the complexity of what we see. Our goal: to attend to the multiple and intersecting factors at work in any of the situations before us in order to understand the complicated issues, vulnerabilities, and needs at play in them. In this way, we seek to honor the interrelated responsibilities that come with what we do or choose not to do. Too often, however, we encounter approaches and decisions that fail to come to terms with the “fraughtness” of the times and circumstances that summon us to responsible presence and action. Nonetheless, we are convinced that the way forward in fraught times and circumstances depends on learning how to recognize this quality. One of the gifts we offer

each other is learning how to name, address, and approach the “fraughtness” without becoming tangled up in fear, confusion, or frustration. Such an approach demonstrates what we might call the power of address – a response that does not have the finality or closure of an answer, but a response that is partial and continuously evolving. That simple difference – between address and answer – signals a way of being present and active in the face of circumstances and responsibilities that overflow or confound our understanding. Recognizing and naming where we are tangled up or overwhelmed allows us to face the “fraughtness” while avoiding dangerous, reductionist reactions to it.

*“Give sorrow words: the grief
that does not speak*

*Whispers the o’er-fraught heart
and bids it break.”*

– Wm. Shakespeare
Macbeth, Act IV, Scene iii, 209f

Hopefully, we address this complexity in the programs the Cohen Center offers to the various constituencies we serve at Keene State College along with the communities of Keene and beyond. We incorporate our recognition of this complexity in the relationships we cultivate by not limiting ourselves to those who think the way we do, even when we expect them to be responsible to the same complexity we try to honor. Likewise, we seek to honor the fraught responsibilities that are present in our classrooms for our students as well as in our subject matter. We are especially aware that our students bring their own histories to subject matter that can be overwhelming to them. And so we plan our teaching accordingly. Equally important, our students

*“We look before and after,
and pine for what is not;
Our sincerest laughter
with some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those
that tell of saddest thought.”*

– Percy Bysshe Shelley
To A Skylark

look out for each other, gathering regularly to discuss their course work, organize support activities, or talk about their responsibilities as they translate what they are learning into responsible agency with each other and into engaged citizenship in their own communities.

Our goal, in this regard, includes helping those with whom we work to be better equipped to face a world – indeed a lifetime – that is fraught and will continue to be fraught. While we may not always have the simplifying answers we want, we can cultivate the strengths and resources we need to face to address a world that is, and will remain, fraught. We do that best when we do that together with each other’s help. The power of address is often the leverage that we need to face a world tangled up in violence, confusion, and ambiguity – one that needs our compassionate, careful, and yet steadfastly sustained, albeit imperfect attention.

We invite the readers of our newsletter to think about the “fraughtness” of our lives and the summons to responsibility that comes with it. Join a conversation with us, start one at home, initiate one in your own communities. The times are fraught, and I believe best served by those who can find ways to address the “fraughtness” with courage and care, insight, and compassion.

– Hank Knight, Director

The Cohen Center Adopts New Mission Statement

We are pleased to announce the new iteration of the Cohen Center's mission, which encapsulates our growing work and impact. Thank you to the Mission Statement Committee and the Advisory Council for your work and helpful insights!

The Cohen Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies advances the public liberal arts mission of Keene State College through Holocaust and genocide education, inspiring students and other citizens to take responsibility for promoting human dignity and civic responsibility while confronting the escalating violence that leads to atrocity and genocide.

Cohen Center Expands

Recent renovations have changed our space. We are pleased that the Hildebrandt Collection is now even more accessible and highlighted on the main floor of Mason Library. We now have dedicated space in the Center for our students and visitors. Samuel Bak's painting *Evidence* is on loan from the Jewish Federation of New Hampshire and informs this new space. We are grateful to the Jewish Federation and to the Patrick and Kendra O'Donnell Family Foundation for making this possible.



The 2016 Genocide Awareness Lecture

The Holocaust, Rwanda, Bosnia, Armenia – these are all the names and places we think of when we hear the word “genocide”. We would be right, of course, if we were only talking about genocide in the twentieth century. However, as Professor Ned Blackhawk told us at the Cohen Center's Genocide Awareness Lecture, North American history overlooks the attempted “eradication of an entire people” that took place in our own country.

Dr. Blackhawk, a member of the Te-Moak Tribe of the Western Shoshone Nation in Nevada, is professor of history and American studies at Yale University. In his lecture, “Genocide in Native North America and the Rise of Settler Colonial Studies,” Professor Blackhawk pointed out that all five dimensions of the United Nation's definition of genocide are present when looking at the history of Native North America. According to the definition established by the United Nations in 1948, genocide is “any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; [and] forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.” Citing examples from Canadian and United States history, Professor Blackhawk led his listeners through an unsettling review of ways that each of the five

dimensions set forth in the UN definition of genocide were carried out against the native peoples of North America. He explained that while this is an “uncommon and uncomfortable” approach to this history, it must still be done.

Professor Blackhawk is the author of *Violence over the Land: Indians and Empires in the Early American West*, a study of the American Great Basin that has received awards such as the Frederick Jackson Turner Prize from the Organization of American Historians and has been called “one of the ten most influential books in Native American and Indigenous Studies” in the first decade of the 21st century.

The Genocide Awareness lecture is an annual event designed to encourage people of good will and conscience to give vigilant, public attention to our ongoing work to combat genocide. This was the ninth lecture in the series.



Humor as a Weapon to Undermine Extremists

Did you know? In response to the fear created in Britain with Leni Riefenstahl's classic film *Triumph of the Will*, Charles A. Ridley of the British Ministry of Information made a short propaganda film, *Lambeth Walk – Nazi Style*, in 1942. The edited footage made it appear as if Hitler and German soldiers were marching and dancing

to the song “The Lambeth Walk.” The propaganda film was distributed uncredited to newsreel companies, which would supply their own narration. The short film infuriated Joseph Goebbels and effectively undermined the force of the Nazi propaganda.

From the Center Out

Education and Active Citizenship: Echoes from the Past

“How can Holocaust education encourage democratic readiness and active citizenship? This was one of the questions we discussed at the first conference about the “Holocaust in the Nordic Countries” hosted by the Danish Institute for International Studies and organized by the Association of Holocaust Organizations (AHO). These questions challenge us to utilize our work of memory and education to create a better world through respect for human dignity, diversity, justice, and civic responsibility.

In the 1930s Europe turned to radical politics and totalitarian regimes to “solve” the issues of the day. Democracies were replaced, civil rights suspended, and antisemitism and other hatreds fueled the momentum toward mass destruction. As we learned then, ideologies of identity are rarely dictated from above, but are usually expressions of attitudes already existing within society that ideology amplifies, focuses, and justifies. And, in the 1930s, ideologies of exclusion proved to be particularly dangerous.

Today the world faces yet another dangerous drift toward extremism. As we try to navigate this current situation, there are helpful reference points in our past experiences that inform how we overcame previous temptations of despair and isolation. Indeed, the refugee crisis of the 1930s is such a touchstone. American society during the Great Depression was generally inhospitable to the plight of refugees with consequences felt throughout the world. Similar attitudes of xenophobia, nativism, bigotry, and racism are prevalent in American culture today. Like then, these issues test the moral core of our society.

I am convinced that the Cohen Center's expanding work in genocide studies can foster civic engagement while rejecting ideologies of fear and isolation. Like then, extremism challenges the depth of our humanitarianism and our commitment to enlightened, constitutional values. And, it closes needed doors for refugees in need of shelter from stormy times. I am reminded of what Anne O'Hara McCormick wrote about Jewish refugees in the *N.Y. Times* on July 4, 1938: this is “...a test of civilization. ...Can America live with itself if it ... refuses to take up this gauge of battle against barbarism?”

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– Anne O'Hara McCormick

While in Denmark I visited the coastal town of Gilleleje, whose fishermen rescued and hid Jews during the October 1943 escape operation to Sweden. I was moved when I learned how Danes welcomed home returning refugees after the war in remarkably unique ways. Reparations laws were enacted to ensure their well-being while highly organized acute aid/help centers and programs were created to help them to restore their lives. These efforts strengthened both the Danish economy and Danish society by helping those most in need.



One significant challenge I struggle with today is how to separate a real enemy – a terrorist acting in the name of his or her faith – from others of the same tradition for whom the terrorist is one who betrays the identity they each claim. In this regard I am learning to expand my imagination, helped by former refugees who have become friends of

mine and of the Center's. As a young boy, Leonard Ehrlich was one of the last to escape Europe for the United States on the SS *Rotterdam* in November 1939. I remember his holding the ship's passenger book from the Cohen Center's archive which lists him and his parents as the lucky few clinging to that lifeline. Vahidin Omanovic, the co-founder and co-director of the Center for Peace Building in Bosnia, shared his story of peace building as a Muslim survivor of the Bosnian genocide at our 2015 Summer Institute, challenging many stereotypes and helping us envision what healing means in the aftermath of violence. Leonard Ehrlich and Vahidin Omanovic challenged me to rethink my understanding of refugees, recognizing how they make my world bigger and better. Given our particular responsibilities for unfolding events over the past two decades, I am convinced that prudently expanding our efforts to welcome refugees and help relieve the pressure on Europe is strategically wise, ethically imperative, and mutually beneficial to our republic and its future.

If embracing democratic citizenship is one of the competencies we cultivate in the work of the Cohen Center, then the difficult conversation about refugees is one I want to promote. I invite you to join me.

– Tom White, Coordinator of Educational Outreach



United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Trip March 4-6, 2016

This annual Keene State College trip engages Keene State students with a tour of the permanent exhibit of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The tour is guided by museum staff and Keene State professors. Participants stay in Washington, DC, and together explore Alexandria, Virginia, after the visit to the museum.

Cohen Fellows Make a Difference!

Lou Yelgin of **Hillsboro-Deering High School** presented at the **Hillsboro-Deering Middle School** just before the school visit to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC. Before class, the students read the story on the Cohen Center's website of Lou's mother's survival as a partisan and developed a list of questions. Lou writes: "Thank you for everything you and the Cohen Center do to teach about the Holocaust and promote social justice."

Beth O'Connell organized a full day in-service training by Tom White, Teaching Elie Wiesel: Trauma, Remembrance, and Hope, at **Windham High School (NH)**. What an amazing day we had in this wonderful interdisciplinary session!

Rob Hamel brought his students from **Gorham High School (NH)** to tour the Cohen Center and Keene State, and to hear a presentation by Tom White, "Law and the Rise of the Nazis."



Lynn Fawcett and her colleague **Lauren Horsfall** from **Chester Academy (NH)** (above) collected items for the children of Syrian refugee families in refugee camps all over Europe. Carry Me Home, a New England-based nonprofit organization, is dedicated to supporting children fleeing zones of conflict and is endorsed by the Brattleboro (VT) Interfaith Clergy Association.



Suciu Horatiu's class in Romania.

From Our Overseas Fellows:

Romania:

In January 2016, **Suciu Horatiu's** students from the National College "Iulia Hasdeu" in Lugoj took part in the Box of Knowledge project. This project was implemented in conjunction with International Holocaust Remembrance Day. Within this project, the students of class XI E created cardboard boxes, inside of which they glued pictures taken from the Auschwitz Album; the inner part of the lids contained the words "International Holocaust Remembrance Day." The outer part of the lids had "the 27th of January" written on them. On the 27th of January, 2016, an exposition was organized to display these boxes at the National College "Iulia Hasdeu" in Lugoj, with the other students of the school being invited to open the boxes and learn more about the Holocaust. On the web: www.centropa.org/teacher-blog/suciu-horatiu/box-knowledge-project

Croatia:

Josip Naglič writes that several things have happened since our Fellows returned to Croatia after the 2015 Summer Institute. More than half a million refugees passed through Croatia, and the country turned right on the last election, with the new minister of culture (a historian!) having mixed feelings about antifascism, especially in a time of large migrations. Despite this, our Fellows are challenging their students to think and go beyond repeating stereotypes or accepting fascism as a solution to high unemployment, corruption, and the cultural crisis. He is taking his seniors to see *Citizenfour* and *Son of Saul*. Josip writes: "They ask me, When will the gentlemen from Auschwitz that I talked about come to class? He always does. Missing you all."

Matija Čavar is a middle-school history professor in his small hometown of Vinkovci, near the eastern border of Croatia. His goal mainly is to talk with his students about the Jewish people and their culture, especially before the Holocaust, so they can see that they are also human beings who had families, childhoods, etc. He talks about Jewish life so that they can feel and see through family pictures that Jews had lives before the Holocaust (vacations, childhood friends) and that all of that was taken away from them. Attending the Summer Institute at Keene State College really helped him in his work by pushing him forward in improving his teaching methods. He writes, "Because the whole Holocaust education at Keene was so helpful for me, I decided to inform all the history professors in my Vukovarsko-srijemska County Academic Council about it. So I held a PowerPoint presentation for them about Keene and everything I had learned there and that I hope that there will be even more programs like that in the future."

Website

Check out the ever-growing Cohen Center website to discover an excellent collection of research links for the classroom as well as videos from events and lectures. www.keene.edu/cchgs



Did You Know?

Sixty-seven percent of valuable military intelligence that helped defeat the Nazis came from mostly German refugees secretly trained as Army intelligence officers known as the "Ritchie Boys." Thank you, Stephan Lewy and your comrades.

Awards Evening Shines

A highlight of the year is when we get to recognize and be inspired by the many people who contribute to the ongoing work and mission of the Center. This year's event was inspiring and allowed us to hear from a variety of voices. We are all enriched by these individuals who help us to encounter our responsibility as they share their journeys and research. Thank you!

2016 Susan J. Herman Award

The Susan J. Herman Award for Leadership in Holocaust & Genocide Awareness recognizes individuals who have, through personal leadership and actions, stimulated greater understanding of genocide, increased activism on behalf of the victims of crimes against humanity, or inspired community engagement in educating people about genocide both historically and in our contemporary world. The Herman Award recognizes a Keene State College student or students and an individual or group for making a difference in Holocaust and genocide awareness through acts of leadership and personal commitment.

Keene State recipients:

Katherine Marren, Charlotte Meyers, and Tanner Semmelrock.

Individual Leadership:

- Kati Preston, Holocaust survivor and presenter.
- Helen Fein, a founding scholar in the field of Holocaust and genocide studies.

2016 Hildebrandt Awards

This award honors Keene State College's Charles Hildebrandt, professor emeritus in sociology and founder of the Center for Holocaust Studies at Keene State in 1983. It is given in recognition of excellence in Holocaust or Genocide Studies.

Community Winner:

- Roberta Visser, "Lodged"

Middle School Winner:

- Alex Minickiello, "Chocolaterie des Martens"

Honorable Mention:

- Naomi Nunez, "Beyond the Rose Field"

KSC Winners:

- Samantha Brault, "The Barbarians of Hollywood": The Exploitation of Aurora Mardiganian by the American Film Industry
- Emily Robinson, Holocaust Education "Scavenger Hunt"

Honorable Mention:

Liam Megan, When the Rainbow Breaks – Life after Trauma

Award winning entries can be found at www.keene.edu/academics/ah/cchgs/awards/

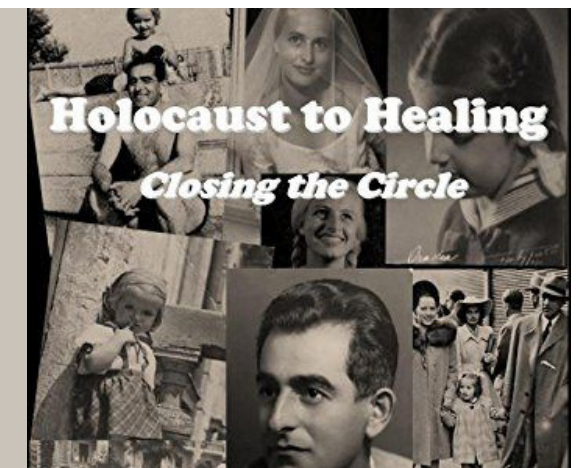


The Charles and Judith Hildebrandt Collection Grows

Helen Fein has dedicated her personal library in Holocaust and Genocide Studies to the Cohen Center. Her books will be added to the Cohen Center's Charles and Judith Hildebrandt Collection, which can be accessed on the east wing of the first floor of Mason Library. We are very proud to accept the Fein collection; it will enrich and enhance the mission of the Center!

Kati Preston Memoir Now Available

Kati Preston, a child survivor who was rescued by a neighbor in Hungary, is a regular speaker and teacher for the Cohen Center. Kati is a Holocaust and cancer survivor, wife, mother, grandmother, mentor, fashion designer, model, journalist, entrepreneur, impresario, friend, cook, public speaker, and campaigner against hate of any sort. *Holocaust to Healing: Closing The Circle* is now available at amazon.com.



Keene State and Holocaust Documentaries

Defying the Nazis: The Sharps' War to Air on PBS

On September 20, 2016, PBS will air this documentary on Martha Sharp, a trained social worker, and her husband, Waitstill Sharp, a Unitarian minister. In February 1939, both boldly committed to a life-threatening mission in Europe to assist refugees. The documentary is directed by Ken Burns and Artemis Joukowsky. We proudly recognize the Cohen Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies and the faculty in Keene State College's Department of Holocaust and Genocide Studies for their valuable contribution to this film.



New Film

The documentary *Uber-Leben* premiered at the Austrian Cultural Center in New York City last month. It is the story of a remarkable meeting in Vienna of Keene State Professor Len Fleischer's mother, Mitzi Fleischer, with Leo Josimovic, an Austrian shopkeeper, many years after the Holocaust. It was made by Mr. Josimovic's son, Josh. We have received permission to distribute it, so long as it is presented free of charge. It is in German with English subtitles. An edited clip of the film will be shown at the 2016 Kristallnacht Commemoration.

View the film at <http://bit.ly/uber-leben>.

Save the date!

On October 26 at 7p.m., please join us at the Colonial Theatre, Keene, for an additional free film event sponsored by the Cohen Center: *Defying the Nazis: The Sharp's War*. There will be a post screening Q&A with the directors: Artemis Joukowsky and Ken Burns.

Keene State and Holocaust and Genocide Studies Students Make an Impact!

Charlotte Meyers of Leicester, Massachusetts, and Tanner Semmelrock of Brooklyn, Connecticut, both Holocaust and genocide studies majors, traveled to Capitol Hill to lobby members of Congress to support bills to prevent genocide and poaching, as well as a bill that would allow the president to impose sanctions on a foreign person or entity that commits human rights violations. While on Capitol Hill, Meyers and Semmelrock met with staffers for Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, D-NH; Rep. Ann M. Kuster, D-NH; Sen. Chris Murphy, D-Conn.; Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn.; Rep. Joe Courtney, D-Conn.; and Rep. Rosa DeLauro, D-Conn.



Tanner Semmelrock '16 and Charlotte Meyers '16 at the Capitol.

The three bills they went to Washington to support are the Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act of 2016 (which maintains the Atrocity Prevention Board), the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act, and the Global Anti-Poaching Act. Each of these combines humanitarianism with important strategic and national security goals of the US.

Three Keene State Holocaust and genocide studies majors presented their research for consideration in real-world applications at the Fort Leavenworth Ethics Symposium at the Command and General Staff College in Kansas in April.

Kathleen Dougherty '17, Brett Lancaster '16, and Kathryn Gillum '16 accompanied Dr. James Waller to Fort Leavenworth, where Dr. Waller delivered the keynote speech on the ethics of humanitarian military interventions. The three students presented after the keynote. The three-day symposium explored the ethical implications of applying military forces in non-traditional roles in response to a rising number of conflicts worldwide.

Refugees: Did You Know?

In April 1938, a poll revealed that 60 percent of Americans agreed that persecution of European Jews was either entirely or partly the fault of Jews. Sixty-nine percent wanted all refugees kept out. After the destruction of *Kristallnacht*, a vast majority (94 percent) of Americans condemned Nazi actions, but only a small minority wanted to do more than give humanitarian aid. Two-thirds of Americans opposed the Wagner-Rogers bill, which would have rescued 20,000 refugee children (Jews) over a two-year period. In September 2015, a CNN/ORC poll showed that 80

percent of Republicans and 84 percent of Democrats supported increased humanitarian assistance to refugees. However, a 2015 Bloomberg poll revealed that 53 percent of Americans were against accepting Syrian refugees. Eleven percent would accept only Christian refugees. Although slightly over a majority of both Republicans and Democrats accept that we bear some responsibility for the crisis, more than two dozen governors opposed resettling the small trickle of refugees that are admitted to the US.

“The Righteous: Danish Escape Rescue – Civil Society Between Darkness and Light”

New Presentation by Tom White

In October 2015 Tom attended the Association of Holocaust Organizations conference hosted by the Danish Institute for International Studies on the role of Scandinavian countries during the Holocaust. This new presentation highlights recent scholarship from this conference.

An exploration of the German occupation of Denmark, the rescue operation to Sweden, and the postwar reintegration of Jewish refugees. What factors shaped Danes' attitudes toward their Jewish neighbors? Was the Danish government collaborating

or merely cooperating? Why was the summer of 1943 the turning point? What was different about Nazi policy in Denmark? A particular focus will be on the fishing village of Gilleleje and those captured and sent to Theresienstadt. Two child survivor testimonies recorded in October 2015 (Ole Philipson and Tove Udshott) will be utilized. Using the Jewish Foundation for the Righteous's eight “Traits that Transcend,” we introduce students to the subject of rescue during the Holocaust. We will also evaluate Denmark's unique experience and its testament to civil society before, during, and after the Holocaust.



Tom White with Tove Udshott in Gilleleje, Denmark.

Walking in The Footsteps of Generations and Sharing Their Memories

To understand and be compassionate, it is said, one should walk in another's shoes. When that is not possible, at least walking in the same places where others have walked brings us closer to understanding.

For the past five years, the entire junior class at Sanborn Regional High School has attended a presentation that includes a screening of *Schindler's List* followed by presentations from guest speakers. For the past three years, Holocaust survivor Kati Preston presented her story of survival in Hungary as a Jewish child whose family was murdered at Auschwitz. Janusz Czyzowski also spoke this year about his experience growing up in Poland as part of the first generation after the war. Both speakers had incredible and emotional stories to share.

Students wanting an even deeper understanding of this difficult period of history have often asked if it would be possible to visit these sites. This year English teacher Evan Czyzowski led 10 students and 2 teachers on a school trip to Poland in April. The

group visited the Jewish Heritage Museum, the former Jewish Ghetto Wall in Warsaw, the Warsaw Uprising Museum, Oscar Schindler's Factory, and Auschwitz Concentration Camp. Studying the Holocaust in school and hearing a survivor is a powerful experience for all in attendance. Walking in the footsteps of those who experienced these events yielded even greater depth of understanding.

One of the most powerful parts of this year's presentation was when the students who had been to Poland shared their experiences with their classmates. Their presentation was heartfelt, emotional, and ultimately hopeful in that students are now having conversations with each other about never forgetting this terrible period of history so that future atrocities can be prevented. The torch of remembrance has been passed through the generations to the present.



Cohen Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies

Upcoming Events

October 26, 2016

Defying the Nazis: The Sharp's War
7 p.m., Colonial Theatre, Keene, NH.

November 9, 2016

Kristallnacht Commemoration
7 p.m., Colonial Theatre, Keene, NH.

November 13, 2016

Brundibár
2 and 7 p.m., Redfern Arts Center,
Keene State College.

Fall Workshops

November 3, 2016

**The Words, Too, Will Nourish:
Poetry and Resistance**
Alan Rosen, lectures in Holocaust
Literature at the International School
for Holocaust Studies at Yad Vashem.

November 15, 2016

**Echoes and Reflections Advanced
Training**
Sheryl Ochayon, Program Director,
Yad Vashem.

Save the Date

July 16-22, 2016

**2017 Summer Institute on Holocaust and Genocide Studies: Identity and
Education for Democratic Citizenship**



For more information, check
www.keene.edu or call the Cohen
Center at 603-358-2490.