



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE

Spring 2010 • Number 36

Cohen Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies

Keene State College

Keene, New Hampshire

www.keene.edu/cchs

Forthcoming Events

June 7-18, 2010

Holocaust Studies European Travel Seminar

Germany, Poland and Czech Republic
Visiting Holocaust related sites

September 27, 2010

Holocaust Memorial Lecture

Mabel Brown Room
Keene State College

November 9, 2010

Kristallnacht Remembrance

Apple Hill Chamber Quartet
Choral, Dance and other
memorial activities
7 pm, Colonial Theater, Keene, NH

Facing What We Do

Faces matter. When I review my various manuscripts and program titles, I find that I return again and again to the metaphor of faces. They call me to responsibility, literally and figuratively. They beckon for attention and call out for my response. Where are you? Here I am. Faces do that. Faces matter.

I almost always begin my essays on written texts with a section in which I talk about facing the text. The double entendre is intentional. I turn toward the text to address it at the same time I look for faces in it that turn toward me and call out for recognition, especially the ones that are easiest to overlook. So I look for them.



Too easily we try to domesticate them and wrap them in a meaningful package. But the facts of atrocity resist domestication. When we face them, we let them speak to us as they are, bare and not yet interpreted. And if we dare, we let them have their own, disarming faces.

There is more, however, to facing the facts. When we face the facts, we give them the texture of a presenting side, knowing that there will always be another side hidden from our partial view. We look from an angle seeking as realistic a vantage point as possible, even when we confront the missing faces of the 1.5 million children murdered by the Nazis. Those are faces of the brutal facts. But as

Sam Bak show us in

his iconic renderings of the Warsaw ghetto boy in many of his paintings, there is more to these faces than the brutal facts.

The Cohen Center's mission is aptly captured in Chuck Hildebrandt's charge "to remember . . . and to teach." He knew, just as we do, that such a strong commitment to preserve memory and learn from its legacies is balanced by an equal responsibility to the present and to the future. That multi-faceted task is captured in the faces of children – past, present, and future.

— Continued, page 2

Photo, Above right:

Anne Frank, Michael Berenbaum, Charles Hildebrandt, Susan Herman, Gregory Stanton and Gerda Weissmann Klein

Emmanuel Levinas developed his post-Holocaust philosophical corpus on the premise that the human face is the fundamental datum of life, calling each human being into relationship with another. From our first moments of awareness human beings are attended by others who meet us in and through their faces and, thereby call us into relationship and quite literally to responsibility. Faces matter.

One of the most important and challenging aspects of studying human atrocity is facing the facts. They defy imagination, strip us of moral pretense, and challenge our indifference.

"To Remember... and to Teach"

Henry Knight, Director • Thomas White, Educational Outreach Coordinator • Michele Kuiawa, Sr. Program Support Assistant
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Continued from cover —

The faces of the missing children, the faces of our own, those of our neighbors, even those of our adversaries. We work for them and they speak to us with distinctive voices circumscribing what we do.

As we plan ahead for next year, we think about the faces of those who will come to bear witness in our midst, the faces of those for whom we plan our programs, the faces of our colleagues with whom we work, and the faces of our many friends who make our work possible. As you read through this edition of our newsletter, we ask you to put faces on the programs, faces on the names in our list of supporting friends, faces on the issues we confront, and faces wherever they call out to you for your response. They matter as we face the past, the present, the future, and ourselves together.

— Hank Knight

Cohen Center Recognition Dinner

On April 14, 2010 the Cohen Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies hosted a dinner to recognize the winners of the 2010 Charles Hildebrandt Holocaust Studies Award and the recipients of the 2010 Susan J. Herman Award for Leadership in Holocaust and Genocide Awareness.

There were 21 submissions this year for the 2010 Hildebrandt awards. The KSC winner, Shawn Ahern, performed his dance "vielleicht bin ich deshalb teilweise feige" later that evening. The Community award was given to Craig Divis of Grafton, VT; Aimee Fogg of Gilford, NH and Richard Sirvint of West Hartford, CT. Divis, who teaches at Bellows Falls Union High School, entered his Power Point Presentation entitled "Anti-Nazi Dissent, Opposition and Resistance" that he created for his European History Class. Fogg submitted her book of photography, "There Exists a Fence" which chronicles her work in 2007 with Dartmouth College's Project Preservation in Jurbarkus, Lithuania. Sirvint, who is a retired teacher who resides in Southwestern NH part time, submitted his essay, "Holocaust Dilemmas: A Practical Guide for Educators".

The Susan J. Herman Award was presented to three women who have made a difference through personal commitment to raise awareness about genocide. The KSC winner, Michelle Sigiel, is the president of the Holocaust and Genocide Awareness Club. The club, with Michelle's leadership, sponsored a number of events through the academic year including the Armenian filmmaker, Apo Torosyan. The Community recipients are two inspiring women: Marjorie Margolis, a high school English teacher, has done tremendous work to tell the story of her cousin, Rachel, who survived the Holocaust as a Jewish partisan and Gretchen

Steidle Wallace, who is the founder and President of Global Grassroots an international non-profit organization that supports conscious social change for women in post genocidal societies.

Dinner guests were treated to a special talk by Dr. Michael Berenbaum. Later that same evening, Dr. Berenbaum was the speaker at the Yom HaShoah Commemoration. Dr. Berenbaum spoke about the difficulties in teaching about the Holocaust and genocide in the 21st Century.



2010 Charles Hildebrandt Holocaust Studies Award Community winners from left to right, Richard Sirvint, Craig Divis and Amie Fogg with Hank Knight, Director. (photo by Mark Corliss)



Susan J. Herman Award for Leadership in Holocaust and Genocide Awareness recipients (from left to Right) Gretchen Steidle Wallace, Hank Knight, Marjorie Margolis and KSC Student, Michelle Sigiel. (photo by Mark Corliss)

Cohen Center Face-lift

The Cohen Center is undergoing a bit of a facelift. Our newly reworked mission statement has been captured in a form suitable for the soffit area in the Reading Room. The Reading Room, itself, has been named the Susan J. Herman Reading Room in honor of longtime friend and Cohen Center advocate Susan Herman. Artwork has been re-hung and a wall of honor is being prepared for the permanent recognition of Hildebrandt and Herman Award recipients. With the addition of accent colors and some new furnishings, the room has been re-configured to reflect the important work undertaken within its four walls. A reading/reflection nook in the back corner now complements the meeting area in the center of the room. And a new, permanent white board is framed on the west wall between posters that remind those who come to the Center that our work is a combination of facing history and coming to terms with ourselves as we respond to the ongoing challenge posed by Chuck Hildebrandt: to remember... and to teach.



Michele Kuiawa takes a moment to appreciate the Susan J. Herman Reading Room.

With a new name comes a new mission

In the Fall of 2009, the Cohen Center for Holocaust Studies became the Cohen Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies. That addition of "and Genocide" gave us the perfect opportunity to re-examine the Center's mission. Did the mission say all that we wanted or needed it to? Tom White led the charge to form a Mission Statement Committee with members of our Advisory Council. After long debates and some creative wordsmithing, here is the new mission statement for the Cohen Center.

The Cohen Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies advances the public liberal arts mission of Keene State College by studying and bearing witness to the Holocaust and genocide in the hope that present and future generations will take responsibility for building a world free of antisemitism, intolerance, and hate. To this end, the Cohen Center joins the campus community and its partners in promoting an active and informed citizenry committed to mutual respect and justice.

Yom HaShoah Reading of Names

The following teachers participated in the USHMM National Days of Remembrance initiative to read aloud names from archival documents at the USHMM of those who perished at the hands of Nazi Germany and their collaborators.

Deidre Anqwin, Villa Augustina Academy, Goffstown, NH
Matt Craven, Keene High School, Keene, NH
Rebecca Duda, Lakeview Junior High School, Dracut, MA
Katherine Franz, Milford Middle School, Milford, NH
Susan Neuman, Dover Elementary School, Dover, NH
Ellen Salmonson, Great Brook School, New Ipswich, NH
Sheila Silverman, Roth Center, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH

The Many Faces of Our Gifts

Gifts and support come in many forms: friendship, special funds to honor loved ones, general monetary gifts to support our programs, as well as special gifts of mementoes, historical artifacts, and other materials for our collection. In other words, there are many faces in our storehouse of friendship and support. This past year we have been enriched by the establishment of special funds to honor treasured friends – most notably the Susan J. Herman Fund to support the Susan J. Herman Leadership Award in Holocaust and Genocide Awareness and the Lewy Family Fund to support the annual Kristallnacht Remembrance Event we hold each year with the city of Keene. In addition, we have received numerous gifts to support our many programmatic offerings during the year. Some 285 individuals have contributed gifts ranging from \$3 to \$5,000 each. Their names are listed in our honor roll of Friends of the Cohen Center. Their gifts support our general program budget – 85% of which is dependent on gifts and contributions from our many friends.

Other gifts have included volunteer time filming events at the College for the Center, hosting discussion groups in individual homes, giving family mementoes with special significance to our work in Holocaust and genocide education. Earlier this year, Prof. Evie Gleckel, a teacher/prof. in education, donated a number of items from her mother's Judaica collection including a beautiful, silver-plated Haggadah for Passover. The Cohen Center hopes to make some of these items available for use at Congregation Ahavas Achim. Geoffrey Molina of Keene recently made available a number of photographs and archival materials on Nurnberg that were collected by his stepmother, Katherine Larabee Foster Molina. Katherine was a Red Cross nurse stationed in Nuremberg (Nurnberg) immediately following the war. Among her mementoes was a personal photograph album, a signed collector's edition of Nurnberg, by Charles W. Alexander (1946), along with programs and seating charts from some of the historic trials at Nuremberg.

Yet another friend, Bob Johnson, from Peterborough, contacted the Center this winter with an offer of photographs he had taken as a soldier at the close of World War II. As an army medical corpsman, he was part of the "liberating" forces that opened the gates of Buchenwald. Several of his photographs depicted the horrible scenes awaiting the allied forces as they entered the camps. One of them is published in this issue of the newsletter. It depicts a young boy deemed "politically dangerous" by the camp authorities. Compared to the other photographs Bob brought us, this boy's photo is less troubling to view, except when we remind ourselves that so many of the emaciated corpses in other photos would once have resembled this boy. His face reminds us of the myriad children held hostage by the war, as well as those who were abused and murdered by the Nazis and their collaborators. Indeed, his face reminds us of the many missing faces that attend our work.

We thank all our friends who help us make good things happen. Without them, we could not do what we do.

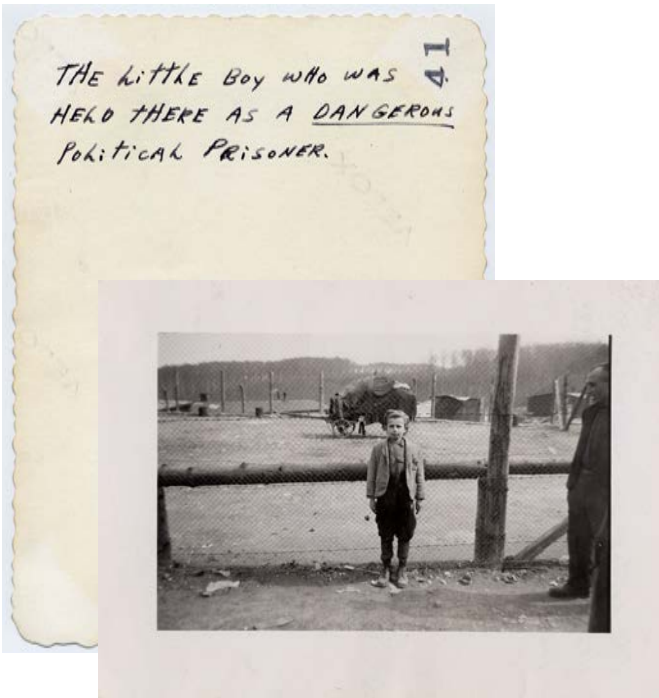


Photo of "Young Boy Deemed Politically Dangerous". Photograph by Bob Johnson of Peterborough, New Hampshire.

From the Center Out - Building a Powerpoint

Tom White, our Coordinator of Educational Outreach, has developed numerous Power Point Presentations that he uses in his visits to schools and civic organizations. At present, Tom draws on eighteen carefully crafted presentations that allow him to respond to a variety of requests on short notice.

He has even received requests to use selected presentation from several leading organizations such as the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and Yad Vashem. For example, last semester Tom spent some time putting together a script to use with his presentation on antisemitism for a private University in Virginia. This particular request led Tom to ponder what goes into creating his Power Point presentations which he shares with us now. He begins by narrowing down the topic to a manageable focus. Once he finds his focus, he conducts his research, selects appropriate images and edits the slides. Finally, he tests the finished product, revising it from what he learns in the classroom or auditorium.

His most recent presentation, "A Perfect Storm," was inspired by the USHMM traveling photo exhibit on the Nazi Persecution of Homosexuals and the Sidore Lecture by Dr. Geoffrey Giles (University of Florida) entitled "The Gay Threat and the Nazi Imagination". Tom explains "I was forced to examine issues of racism and homophobia and their manipulation by demagogues in solidifying both their political and moral authority." The Nazi's focused on pre-existing prejudices, myths, anxieties, grievances and fears (inventing nothing new) that brought together many segments of society in what became a "perfect storm" of ideas, attitudes and other factors. In other words, the antecedents of the Holocaust lay in the fertile ground of everyday bigotry and prejudice.

When creating his presentations, Tom's approach is "Always put people above statistics. Show the humanity, not simply the victimhood of individuals." In other words, portray life even in the presentation of its violation. He selects each slide with care. Since images last longer than words, he is attentive to the appropriateness of the image along with the integrity of its content. Imagery cannot be used simply as background. Any image selected for a presentation must coincide historically and must not be used simply to illustrate a concept. An image that dehumanizes must be juxtaposed with those that humanize. Even selection of the background color, fonts, font colors and placement all serve to shape and frame the interaction.

From the first idea to the completed presentation, Tom is guided by a reoccurring, core principal: never to diminish the humanity of those he represents on screen at the same time he respects the integrity of those in his occasional classroom.

For a complete listing of Power Point Presentations, please visit our website: www.keene.edu/cchs/presentations.

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Stella Rosenberg
Sharon Rousmaniere
C. Paul Vincent
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Sarah Buchalter
Patricia M. Crossan
Mary Davis
Anita Etscovitz
Katherine Hoffman Follo
Dr. Malcolm Friedman
Dr. Malcolm Friedman from The Tennis Ladies
Susan Herman
Susan Herman and her fabulous work and life
Charles Hildebrandt
Richard Horowitz
Gerald Ogan
Barbara Rumscheidt
Mildred Young

New Face to Keene State College

Dr. James E. Waller has been named Cohen Chair for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Keene State College. The College's first endowed professorship, the Cohen Chair is funded by a generous gift from Jan and Richard Cohen.

Professor Waller will play a significant role in Keene State College's new baccalaureate program in Holocaust and Genocide Studies, which offers key courses in Holocaust Studies as well as courses in genocide and comparative genocide. He has held fellowships with the Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies in Washington, D.C., and is currently an affiliated scholar at the Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation. Dr. Waller will join the KSC faculty for the fall 2010 semester.

Dr. Waller earned his Ph.D. in social psychology at the University of Kentucky and was professor of psychology at Whitworth University from 1989, holding the rotating Edward B. Lindaman Chair during 2003-07. He received the university's award for Outstanding Junior Faculty Achievement in Teaching and Research in 1993 and the Teaching Excellence Award in 1996. During 1999-2000, Waller was one of sixteen national recipients of the prestigious Pew Fellowship Award to continue his work on the psychology of human evil. In June 2007, he received the First Voice Humanitarian Award from the Chicago Center for Urban Life & Culture in recognition of his work in connecting students with urban communities, particularly communities in need.

Waller's book, *Becoming Evil: How Ordinary People Commit Genocide and Mass Killing*, is a standard text for students of genocide throughout the United States. He is widely recognized for his work on intergroup relations and prejudice, and in 1996 developed an innovative study program titled "Prejudice Across America."



Dr. James E. Waller, the new Cohen Chair for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Keene State College.



Cohen Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies

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From the Club Corner...

This has been a busy semester for Holocaust and Genocide Awareness Club! Not only have we been attending many wonderful lectures and events, but we also brought acclaimed film-maker Apo Torosyan. Mr. Torosyan has made a number of documentaries on the Armenian Genocide. He visited several Holocaust and genocide classes and gave a lecture the evening of February 22nd in the Mountain View Room. This lecture and showing of *The Morgenthau Story* focused on rescuers during the Armenian Genocide, specifically Henry Morgenthau Sr. Henry Morgenthau Sr. was a diplomat in Turkey during the time of the genocide. He attempted to draw attention and lend support and aid to the Armenian victims. His quest could be seen as a lesson to all those who study the Holocaust and genocide because of his persistence and bravery in the face of injustice and evil. Mr. Torosyan's film focused on the memory of Henry Morgenthau Sr. as remembered by his grand-daughter and living family members. It was a heartfelt memorial to a man who committed himself to helping others.

By learning to struggle with a difficult past such as the Armenian Genocide, we can work towards a more tolerant and hate-free future. Lessons of hope and courage can be found amidst horrible brutality. We can carry these lessons with us into the future and into our own personal lives. The stories of rescuers constantly cause us to re-evaluate our own lives and force us to look in the mirror and wonder- what would I have done in the same situation?

Along with re-evaluation, we can ask ourselves what can we do today. How can we make the world a more tolerant and just place? By studying the past, we can work towards such a future one day and one step at a time.

— Michelle Sigiel