



Cohen Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies

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Wisdom to make a difference.



Cohen Center Honor Wall

The Honor Wall in the Susan Herman Reading Room of the Cohen Center has been completed. Visitors will encounter beautifully framed photos of Charles A. Hildebrandt and Susan J. Herman flanked by a listing of recipients of the respective awards named to honor them. The

Hildebrandt Award in Holocaust Studies was established in 1998, and the Susan J. Herman Award for Leadership in Holocaust and Genocide Awareness was established in 2010. (More information on both these awards can be found online at www.keene.edu/cchs.)



"To Remember... and to Teach"

Spring 2011 ■ Number 38

Cohen Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies

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MARK CORLISS

Public discussion about our discourse with others often suggests that we conceive of our relationships in an either-or, binary fashion. That is, we divide ourselves into camps or teams, choosing sides between those with whom we agree and those with whom we don't. In reality, our relationships occur within a full range of difference. Even those who most agree with us remain others and those with whom we disagree differ by degree and in a mixed range of familiarity and strangeness. Being other wise would

can lead to expansive domains that welcome difference and debate. However, because a full embrace of difference includes the other who resists the promise of this rich domain, being other wise also respects the risk of walking down this path. Embracing that risk is a wager we make knowing well what is at stake in this difficult freedom we share with one another. And that, too, is why we study what we do; otherwise, becoming other wise is not wise at all.

- Hank Knight

Being other wise would mean that we understand this rich texture of relationality, and that we have learned to negotiate our differences while finding common cause where meaningful and good along the way.

mean that we understand this rich texture of relationality, and that we have learned to negotiate our differences while finding common cause where meaningful and good along the way.

Those of us who study the extremes of human animosity and cruelty know why respect for difference is vital for the human project. To be sure, the inability to understand and recognize others with their distinctive summons to responsibility and respect leads in many directions. Some of those paths can be quite dangerous and destructive. Some simply lead to small and sheltered communities that welcome only the familiar and the known. On the other hand, understanding and respecting others

With Apologies to Emmanuel Levinas – Becoming Other Wise

Each of us is other to an other. And so the tale unfolds. From most familiar intimacy to adversarial opposition, we relate to and through a rich ecology of others. To make our way in such a complex realm we must learn to face this world of others other wise. Emmanuel Levinas, a Lithuanian-born French Jewish philosopher and survivor of the Holocaust, frames the matter simply and yet profoundly: the summons to a life of responsibility resides in the face of the other, any other, for all our relating is done in the presence of others. From the very beginning, we are called into relationship by the face of a tending other. With similar profundity, Levinas observes that infinity is the distance that abides between two people. No matter how close they become, they will never be the same, even in the most intimate of unions. One's respect for the other, and the other who is oneself, is rooted in such wisdom. [See Michael Morgan, *Discovering Levinas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) for an excellent introduction to Levinas and his work.]

Upcoming Events

July 10 – 16
Summer Institute on
Holocaust and
Genocide Studies

July 18
A New England Colloquy
with Sir Andrew Burns

October 10, 7 p.m.
Holocaust Memorial Lecture
Father Patrick Desbois
Mabel Brown Room
Young Student Center
Keene State College

October 25 – 27
Civic Leadership Initiative
in partnership with the U.S.
Holocaust Memorial Museum

November 9, 7 p.m.
Kristallnacht Commemoration
Colonial Theatre, Keene



Jutta Cords

Cohen Connections . . .

A Love Story

On March 10, the Cohen Center partnered with the Lantos Foundation for Human Rights and Justice to host *Surviving Hitler: A Love Story*. The film tells the captivating and true story of a young German couple, Helmut and Jutta Cords, who met during

the Nazi era, fell in love, and eventually joined the underground resistance movement and participated in efforts to assassinate Adolf Hitler (Operation Valkyrie). The movie looks over their shoulders through the use of personal film footage shot by Helmut Cords and more familiar historical footage from documentary archives. The evening was punctuated by the presence of Mrs. Cords, who made the journey from her home in Connecticut for the evening. She joined her daughter, Claudia Damon, from Concord and greeted folks at the reception before the film, introduced the film by providing important background before viewing, and then answered questions following. During the question and answer

period participants discovered numerous personal connections with Mrs. Cords and the subject matter they study.

A Visit from Ed Asner

February 12, 2011, actor, Ed Asner, in town for his performance of *FDR*, spent a couple of hours visiting the Cohen Center, talking about his family's roots in Eishyshok, Poland and learning about the work of the Center. Eishyshok (or Ejszyszki in Polish) is the shtetl featured in the two-story Tower of Life at the United States Holocaust Museum in Washington, DC.

Hank Knight and the Cohen Center staff presented Mr. Asner with an autographed copy of *Representing the Irreparable: The Shoah, The Bible and the Art of Samuel Bak*.



ERIC EICHNER PHOTOS

Cultivating Study/Opportunities Abroad

Over spring break, Paul Vincent and Hank Knight joined Skye Stephenson, director of the Global Education Office at KSC, for an exploratory visit to Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland, the Auschwitz Museum, and the two camps, Auschwitz I and Birkenau. Their goal was to identify study opportunities for Keene State College students at the Jagiellonian in its European Studies and Holocaust Studies programs as well as course work in the Polish language along with intensive projects with *The International Center for Education about Auschwitz and the Holocaust at The Auschwitz Museum*. At the end of the spring semester, Skye was pleased to announce the development of an agreement of academic cooperation between Keene State College, the University System of New Hampshire, and the Centre for European Studies at Jagiellonian University. The agreement formally recognizes "the value of improved intercultural understanding and the enhanced educational opportunities for undergraduate students."

Explaining the significance of this agreement for the College, Paul Vincent notes:

Founded in 1364, Jagiellonian University is located in Krakow, Poland, one of the most attractive and culturally adorned cities in Eastern Europe. Once home to a vibrant Jewish community, Krakow was the location of one of the Nazis' Jewish ghettos

and, in a suburb, the infamous forced-labor camp of Plaszow, prominently featured in Spielberg's *Schindler's List*. It was also headquarters of the Nazis' Government General of Poland, a Nazi-run administrative mechanism that sought to control what remained of the former Polish state. Approximately an hour's drive west is Oswiecim, the location of Auschwitz, a Nazi facility made up of a concentration camp (Auschwitz I), an extermination camp (Auschwitz II or Birkenau), a labor camp (Auschwitz III or Monowitz), and more than 40 satellite camps. For HGS students from Keene, the university's Centre for European Studies will offer ample opportunity to deepen their understanding of the Holocaust and broaden their knowledge of the history of Poland specifically – including the chance to study the Polish language – and Eastern Europe generally. Those of us in Holocaust and Genocide Studies couldn't be more pleased with this new academic connection, augmented, as it is, by Professor James Waller's important educational role with the Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation.

For more information about this friendship agreement or opportunities it may represent, contact Professors Vincent, Knight, or Waller.

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Mitzi Fleischer
The Genocide Panel at the United Church of Christ in Keene, Sunday, May 2, 2010
Marcia Gewanter
Jeanne and James Grubman
The Houck family
The Knights' 36th wedding anniversary
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Thank you!



Top: Hank Knight, Jessica Spear, Hannah Earley, and Paul Vincent.

Above right: Hank Knight; Christopher Jennerjohn; Paul Vincent; Taylor Mitchell.

Above left: Sarah Herman, Hank Knight, Therese Seibert, Brittney Sousa, Paul Vincent

Right: Judy Hildebrandt and Barbara Mullen, Artistic Director of the New England Dance Ensemble, with cast members of "A Child's View of the Holocaust"

MARK CORLISS PHOTOS

Cohen Center Presents 2011 Hildebrandt and Herman Awards

On April 11, the Cohen Center hosted the 2011 Hildebrandt and Herman Awards.

The awards are given in honor of two former faculty members at Keene State, the late Dr. Charles Hildebrandt, emeritus professor in Sociology and founder of the Cohen Center, and the late Dr. Susan J. Herman, emerita professor in Management.

This year's **Charles Hildebrandt Holocaust Studies Awards** went to Keene State students Christopher Jennerjohn of Bedford, N.H., for his charcoal drawing, "Looking for Hope," and Taylor Mitchell, Holocaust and Genocide Studies major from Winslow, Maine, for her oral presentation, "Testimony;" the New

England Dance Ensemble of Londonderry, N.H., for the ballet, "A Child's View of the Holocaust;" Brattleboro Union High School student Hannah Early of Williamsville, Vt., for her painting, "Liberation," and Chesterfield (N.H.) School sixth-grader Jessica Spear of Spofford for her monologue, "Anne Frank."

The 2011 Susan J. Herman Awards for Leadership in Holocaust and Genocide Awareness was presented to Keene State student and Holocaust and Genocide Studies major Brittney Sousa of Merrimack, N.H., and Keene State Professor of Sociology Dr. Therese Seibert.



MICHELE KUJAWA

2011 Holocaust and Genocide Studies graduates Brittney Sousa, Levi Gershkowitz, Taylor Mitchell, and Meagan Blais. Not pictured: Carley Meyer and Forrest Parsons.

Congratulations Holocaust and Genocide Studies Graduates

On May 7, 2011, Keene State College's President awarded degrees to 1,093 students. It was the largest class in the history of Keene State. We are so proud to say that six students walked across the platform with a degree in Holocaust and Genocide Studies – quite a feat since the academic program is only in its second year!

Meagan Blais is a self-published author – submitting a paper to the online COPLAC publication *Metamorphosis*. Meagan received the Dr. J Duane Squires History Prize at the 2011 Spring Honors Convocation and will take a break from her schooling to travel this summer.

Levi Gershkowitz transferred to Keene State from Marlboro College in Vermont after attending the Cohen Center's Holocaust Memorial Lecture in 2009. He is an active member of Zeta Chi Rho (the Holocaust and Genocide Studies Honor Society), and will be traveling to Israel this summer with Birthright. Upon his return to the U.S., he will be looking for work in education.

Carly Meyer has returned home to New Jersey to work before continuing on with her studies at the graduate

level. Carly is the first Holocaust and Genocide Studies major to be a member of Keene State College's Honors Program.

Taylor Mitchell transferred to Keene State from St. Anselm's College. Taylor was the President of Zeta Chi Rho and the co-President of the Holocaust and Genocide Awareness Club. Taylor will be traveling to Ecuador for six months to do volunteer work.

Forrest Parsons is the 2011 recipient of the F. Burton Nelson Holocaust Studies Memorial Award. Forrest has been accepted to the University of Florida and the University of Vermont for Graduate studies in Holocaust and Genocide Studies. Forrest has chosen to remain close to home and will be attending the University of Vermont in August 2011.

Brittney Sousa had a busy semester as a tutor for Aspire and as the co-President of the Holocaust and Genocide Awareness Club. Brittney is continuing her studies and her love of teaching over the summer as a counselor for the Upward Bound Program here at Keene State.

Donor Honor Roll

Fiscal Year July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010

The Cohen Center is grateful for the assistance from our many donors, both those who financially help and those who help in other ways. Without you, our important work *“To Remember ... and to Teach”* would not be possible.

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Remembering the White Rose

Although the White Rose (*die Weiße Rose*) existed for only 9 months, their legacy has endured since Nazi authorities brought leaders to trial in 1943 and executed them for daring to call their fellow citizens to resist the crimes of the Nazi state.

Last year, the Cohen Center utilized the symbolism of the White Rose to frame our presentation of the Hildebrandt and Herman Awards and to remind ourselves of the difference we can make in the world when we choose to live and act on behalf of others. This year's Cohen Center Recognition Dinner and Awards evening was similarly framed as we invited our guest speaker, Dr. Jud Newborn, an expert on the White Rose, to remember their witness and to help us grasp the fuller significance of their legacy.

The White Rose was the code name adopted by a group of medical students and their sympathetic philosophy professor at the University of Munich in Nazi Germany from June 1942 to February 1943. These students (among them brother and sister Hans and Sophie Scholl) felt compelled to raise their voices to protest the frightening environment in which they lived and studied.

They met secretly to express their fears and concerns about the society evolving around them. Eventually, they wrote essays they published anonymously in leaflets that they distributed, first in Munich, where most of them were studying medicine, and later

Fifth Summer Institute Begins in July

The fifth biennial residential Summer Institute on the Holocaust and Genocide with Advanced Seminar will be held at Keene State College July 10-16. The program offers expert faculty, room and board, texts and other materials, and participating teachers may choose to apply for graduate credits.

The Institute grounds participants in basic themes of Holocaust and genocide studies while exploring multidisciplinary pedagogical approaches and applications for the classroom and other educational settings. This experience is geared towards teachers, but is open to interested individuals who are motivated by the mission of the Cohen Center and its charge, "To remember...and to teach."

Graduates of the Summer Institute become Cohen Center Fellows charged with furthering the Cohen Center mission in their schools or communities. To date, in addition to New Hampshire educators, the Institute has graduated 84 Fellows from 6 states and



Dr. Jud Newborn spoke about the White Rose Group at the Hildebrandt and Herman Awards evening.

traveling to other cities to mail them to persons they had selected from the phone book. Their essays challenged their fellow students and others to resist the propaganda they were being handed by the government and to resist the policies of the Nazi regime by distributing their pamphlets and promoting other forms of political dissent. Arrested in February 1943, the Scholls and their colleague, Christoph Probst, were tried, sentenced, and immediately executed by decapitation. The remaining core members of their group were soon apprehended, arrested, and tried for treason. According to the US Holocaust Museum in Washington, "Of the groups in Germany that opposed Hitler's dictatorship, only one, code-named 'White Rose,' openly protested the Nazi genocide against the Jews."

6 countries including Estonia, Germany, Israel, Latvia, and Slovakia. Fellows become part of a professional network of support, encouragement, and pedagogical development.

This Institute's supporters and partners include the New Hampshire Humanities Council, the Singer Family Foundation, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and the U.S. Department of State.

Special guests this summer include Sir Andrew Burns, UK Envoy for Post Holocaust Issues; Stephan Lewy, German child survivor; Tom Weissshaus, Hungarian child survivor; Martin Rumscheidt, child of the Reich; and faculty from the nation's first undergraduate major in Holocaust and Genocide studies at Keene State College.

For more information on the Cohen Center's Summer Institutes, contact Tom White at twhite@keene.edu or 603-358-2746.