

**STRASSLER  
CENTER FOR  
HOLOCAUST  
& GENOCIDE  
STUDIES**

**AT CLARK UNIVERSITY**

**2014  
2015**

**YEAR END REPORT**

Whoever  
fails to  
increase  
knowledge,  
decreases  
knowledge.

– the wisdom of the sages



Dear Friends,

“We cannot rely on memorials and museums alone,” the journalist Dan Rather observed as the tenth anniversary of 9/11 neared. Prompted to think about the history his generation saw – the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the Vietnam War, the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the massacre on Tiananmen Square – he concluded: “We can tell ourselves we will never forget and we likely won’t. But we need to make sure we teach history to those who never had the opportunity to remember in the first place.”

Teaching history and scholarship about the past, in other words, comprise the strongest and most vivid memorial to events we seek to remember. We at the Strassler Center embrace that philosophy. Indeed, we dedicated our Third International Graduate Student Conference, held in April 2015, to *Emerging Scholarship in Holocaust and Genocide Studies 100 Years after the Armenian Genocide*. For when memory is no more, when the human ties to the Armenian Genocide, the Holocaust, the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda, and all too many other mass atrocities are attenuated by time, scholarship provides a robust bridge to the past. Through scholarship, learning, and teaching, future generations will engage with these genocides anew. And thus, while the papers and presentations looked back, the conference looked forward. The young scholars who participated, 50 doctoral students and recent PhD recipients from 16 countries, carry that future.

Now part of the Center’s DNA, the graduate student conferences we host began in 2009. That initial meeting was the first international graduate student conference specifically in Holocaust and Genocide Studies held anywhere in the world, and it aimed to foster scholarly ties among the next generations of HGS scholars. Its success spurred us to hold such meetings triennially. Thanks to the support of an anonymous donor who is committed to engag-



ing scholars, activists, and policymakers, we happily broaden and accelerate our fourth conference to 2017.

The enthusiasm with which young scholars from different disciplines respond and the range of subjects and events on which they focus, mirror the engagement and diversity we experience among our own doctoral students at the Center. Starting with a class of three, we have grown a graduate program that today counts 24 people from 10 nations, and we enjoy applications from candidates on every continent except Antarctica. Happily, we have outstripped our space. Thanks to a lead gift from Clark’s newest trustee Dr Rebecca Colin, we plan to build an urgently-needed Graduate Study Wing. Reconfiguring our footprint offers a permanent hub for the ever more international and ever increasing cadre of doctoral students. Working side by side forges scholarly bonds they will take with them when they return to the countries whence they came. And it fosters comparative analysis among and

between different cases of genocide, and thus a wider view of underlying genocidal structures. Promoting greater and more nuanced understanding, their studies will inspire fresh solutions.

According to Cicero, “The life of the dead is placed in the memory of the living.” To which I would add: Through scholarship and teaching.

Please support our mission and our mandate. Please give generously. Join our Graduate Study Wing initiative.

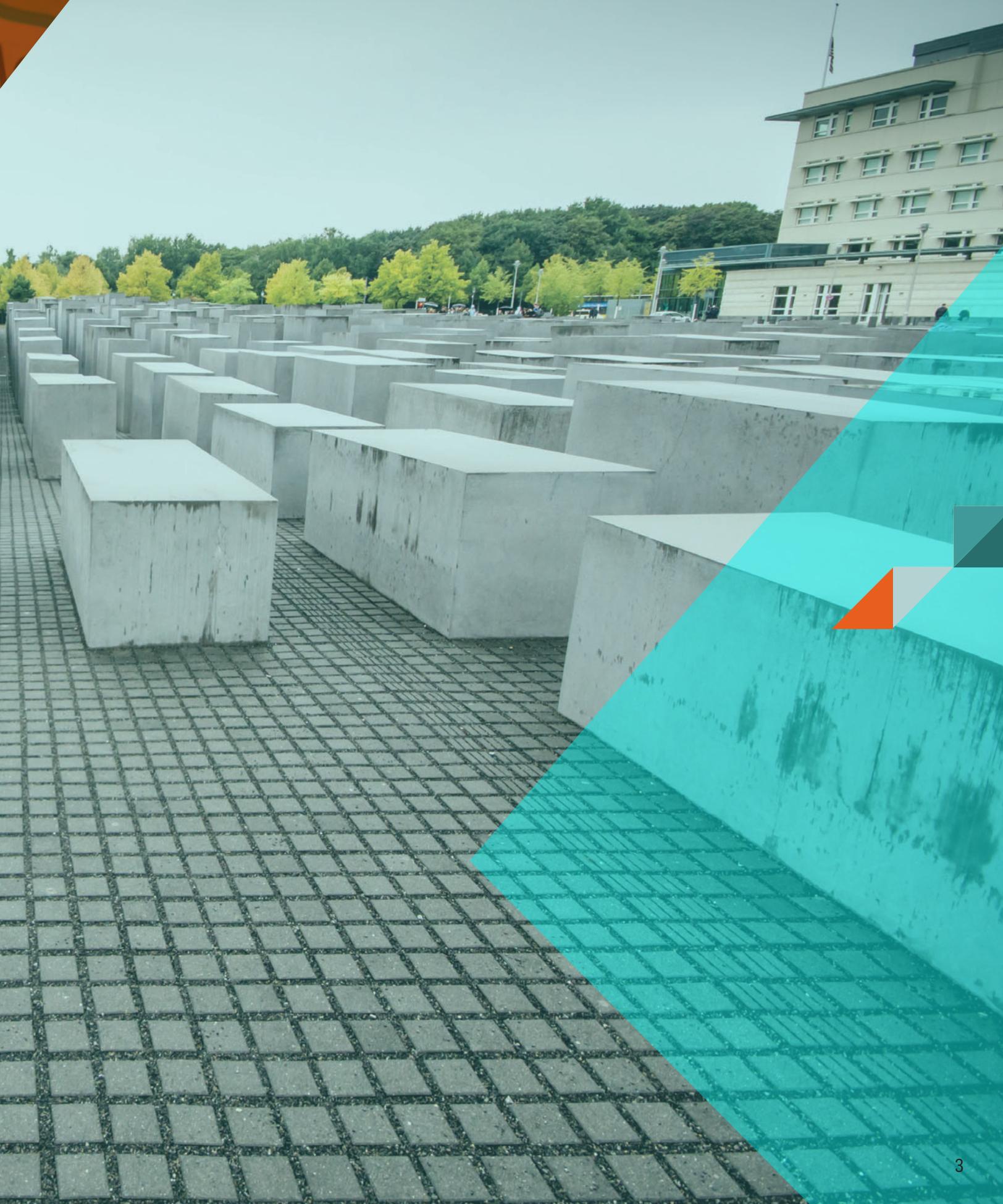
*Deborah Dwork*

**DEBORAH DWORK**

Rose Professor of Holocaust History  
Director, Strassler Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies

# EVENTS & LINKAGES

Cohen-Lasry House opened in 1999 as the Center's home. Planted beside the magnificent Rose Library addition, in a corner cleverly designed by architect Julian Bonder, a graceful Japanese maple has flourished. As the program has grown and thrived, so too has the tree. Its roots are in the earth of the library, its trunk reaches past the Center's seminar room, and its branches and leaves extend toward the graduate student offices. In years to come, student research will drop down as books to our library where they will educate future generations.



## Critical History Series: “Public History” Chris Bohjalian and Khatchig Mouradian, “Narrating Genocide”

11 SEPTEMBER 2014

The warm rapport between best-selling novelist Chris Bohjalian and Strassler Center PhD candidate Khatchig Mouradian animated a panel discussion on writing history. Mouradian researches concentration camps during the Armenian Genocide and Bohjalian mined his historical expertise when writing his novel *The Sandcastle Girls* (2012), which fictionalizes historical events in the aftermath of the Genocide. Like Mouradian, he is the grandson of Armenian Genocide survivors and he speaks frankly about how this family history informed his work and how his friend’s scholarship inspired his writing. Bohjalian describes Mouradian as the “godfather” of his novel, thanks to the stacks of research he provided and which underlie the story. (Spoiler alert: a Clark University Ph.D. student has a minor role in *The Sandcastle Girls*, which also includes a sympathetic Turk by the name of Dr. Akçam!)

The opening event in the Center’s Critical History series “Public History,” their conversation explored distinctions between writing popular and scholarly history. Strassler Center Director and Rose Professor Debórah Dwork served as moderator. Recognizing that much history learning takes place outside of formal instruction, the series examined models of public history, beginning with literature. Both the novelist and the historian spoke about how writing the history of the Armenian Genocide (whether as fiction or scholarship) is, inevitably, different from depicting other historical cases of mass violence because denial and lack of awareness shape their approach to the subject as well as delimit access to source material. Both decried the fact that so many survivors took their stories to their graves. Bohjalian quoted his narrator’s lament that the Armenian genocide is “the slaughter you probably know next to nothing about.” Denial prompts both authors to value historical accuracy. As a result, Bohjalian prefaced his novel with a brief history of the

genocide, while Mouradian routinely takes extra care to demonstrate his objectivity as a historian.

Personal history shapes how writers approach their work. In *Sandcastle Girls*, Bohjalian cast himself as a female writer coming to terms with his family’s past just as he actually did in writing the novel. Mouradian spoke about how his experience of the Lebanese Civil War while growing up in Beirut gave him a unique perspective on mass suffering. Observing the painful emotional toll that wars inflict, and, witnessing how conflict separates families, led him to reflect on the dispersion of his own family across the globe.

The panel concluded with lingering questions about how history and literature inform one another, as well as the responsibility that authorship entails. While the discussants reiterated the need for accuracy in portraying historical events, Bohjalian acknowledged that, as a novelist he can take license with facts in pursuit of his story. Thus, in *The Sandcastle Girls*, he employs characters inspired by historical figures but he brings them to the Syrian Desert where the real people never went. Mouradian suggested that the ways in which we communicate stories have value and weight, and the fictionalization of history allows the stories of survivors to be conveyed.

Bohjalian and Mouradian closed the discussion by highlighting the importance of their moral obligation in writing history.

Bohjalian described the keen responsibility he felt to produce the best novel possible, because his audience knows little about the genocide. Both authors tell the stories of those unable to speak for themselves. As Mouradian poignantly noted, these voices were left in the archive collecting dust until scholarship brought them forth. His duty as a scholar is in recognizing the value of these individuals whose voices were silenced.

India Spears '16



Author Chris Bohjalian

## Hasia Diner, “Post-World War II American Jews and the Holocaust: The Contexts of Remembering”

1 OCTOBER 2014

Professor Hasia Diner challenged the widespread belief that American Jews did not commemorate the Holocaust in the post-war period in her fascinating talk presented in the Kent Seminar Room. Drawing upon diverse archival materials from many American Jewish communities, she examined the myth that survivors kept silent and that the general public ignored the Holocaust from the late 1940s until the early 1960s. A specialist in immigration and ethnic history, American Jewish history, and the history of American women, Diner is the Paul S. and Sylvia Steinberg Professor of American Jewish History at New York University and Director of the Goldstein Goren Center for American Jewish History.

Diner presented findings from her acclaimed book *We Remember with Reverence and Love: American Jews and the Myth of Silence after the Holocaust, 1945-1962* (2009), winner of the National Jewish Book Award. Citing newspaper articles, sermons, fundraising materials, and summer camp programs, Diner demonstrated that Holocaust memory was woven into the fabric of Jewish communal life beginning immediately after the war. Since such materials are not indexed under “Holocaust,” refuting the supposed “conspiracy” of silence required true detective work. Diner found that American Jews recognized the significance of the Holocaust even before the term was universally adopted (they used such terms as “Hitler times,” “recent Holocaust,” “catastrophe,” or “tragedy”). As the world’s largest, wealthiest, and most politically empowered Jewish community, and despite divisions of class, language, and religiosity, American Jews felt a responsibility to remember and to tell the world.

In their quest for a fitting memorial, survivors and American Jews embraced the written word. They compiled *Yizkor* books memorializing Jewish communities annihilated by the Nazis. These volumes commemorated those who perished and included recollections about Jewish life before the war. Memorial markers were erected in cemeteries where *landsmannschaften* (communal welfare and cultural associations) established burial societies. Mentions of the Shoah appeared in liturgies and rituals, such as the words of Diner’s title, “we remember with reverence and love,” in a Passover Haggadah. Other initiatives dedicated to the “memory of the six million” included fundraising to aid survivors, lobbying to include the Holocaust in history curricula, and establishing a cantorial school as a sign of Jewish continuity. Responsibility to the survivors was also manifest in bring-



Professors Debórah Dwork and Hasia Diner

ing Germans to justice, winning support for Israel, reviving Jewish culture and learning, and fighting antisemitism abroad and racially biased laws at home.

According to Diner, the canard that “no one ever talked about the Holocaust” arose in the 1960s among the radical generation of civil rights activists. They demonized the postwar generation and “discovered” the Holocaust as an alleged taboo topic that their parents had stifled. In 1967, Israel’s stunning success in the Six Day War emboldened young American Jews to speak even more openly about the Holocaust. A narrative about silence materialized that journalists and even historians repeated despite the massive aid American Jews had provided to survivors.

Considering whether Holocaust memory was limited to the Jewish community, Diner cited the 1963 March on Washington, a pivotal event in postwar American history. Prior to Martin Luther King Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” speech, Rabbi Joachim Prinz, a famed orator in Germany before the war, came to the podium. He linked Jewish oppression with the African-American experience. This forgotten episode points to the centrality of Holocaust memory in American consciousness.

In the ensuing discussion, the doctoral students widened the conversation to include examples of cultural memory of genocide in Armenia, Rwanda, Israel, and Poland. As many of them deal with issues of collective remembering or forgetting the past in their dissertation research, they found Professor Diner’s talk stimulating as well as instructive.

Alicja Podbielska

## Conference: “Manufacturing Denial: The Assault on Scholarship and Truth”

24-25 OCTOBER 2014

The Strassler Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies and Worcester State University hosted a two-day conference that gathered social scientists, natural scientists, political theorists, and historians to discuss different forms of denial. The participants considered the factors that allow denial to persist in the face of objective facts and they discussed their concerns about how scholarship has become the battleground in a struggle which resonates far beyond academe. Presentations focused on genocide denial, scientific denial, and political denial. What connects these disparate examples is a willful disregard for facts motivated by politics, ideology, identity, or profit.

Worcester State University hosted the opening lecture by Professor Brendan Nyhan (Government Department, Dartmouth College), “The Challenge of Denial: Why People Refuse to Accept Unwelcome Facts.” Nyhan raised fundamental questions: Why are false and unsupported beliefs so common? Why is corrective information often ineffective? How do elites encourage or allow misperceptions? He used social science data to demonstrate that evidence is generally ineffective in changing the opinions of those committed to their beliefs. According to studies, public opinion responds best when elites speak in agreement. Professor Henry Theriault (Philosophy Department, Worcester State University) provided the formal response and emphasized the role of skepticism in approaching any new piece of information and the importance of articulating the limits of our knowledge.

Conference sessions held at Clark University visited a range of issues, including modern strategies and the rhetoric of denial, political uses of denial, and possible ways to counter denial.

In the first panel, Marc Mamigonian (Director of Academic Affairs, National Association for Armenian Studies and Research) described how “scholarly” denial of the Armenian Genocide proceeds by manufacturing controversy and creating doubt. Sara Brown (Genocide Studies PhD candidate, Strassler Center) discussed the role of women in denial of the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda. Some women falsify their testimonies during interviews with scholars, threatening the usefulness of genocide testimonies and preserving inaccurate information for future generations. Shawn Olson (Environmental

Sociology PhD student, Utah State University) examined the rhetoric and strategies of denial in Climate Science, looking at politics and the policies of contrarians.

Professor Jennifer Dixon (Political Science Department, Villanova University) began the second session with a presentation on rhetorical adaptation and international norms in Turkish state denial of the Armenian Genocide. Professor Alex Hinton (Director, Center for the Study of Genocide and Human Rights, Rutgers University) presented

a paper on the S-21 Prison now preserved as the Tuol Sleng Museum of Genocide, touching upon the politics of memory in Cambodia and the issue of ignored genocide. Mark Gottlieb (Executive Director, Public Health Advocacy Institute, Northeastern University School of Law) researches legal approaches to reducing harm caused by tobacco industry products and spoke about mass production of doubt and denial by the tobacco industry.

The third session was dedicated to historians’ ethical responsibility to convey the past accurately. History Professor Keith Watenpaugh (Director, Human Rights Initiative, University of California, Davis) discussed how students fearing to be labeled

“polemical” might avoid use of the term “genocide.” Professor Ken MacLean (Strassler Center, Clark University) explored how one defines evidentiary thresholds in compiling data. He looked at the case of Burma and how the competing rationales involved in building archives can result in the technical denial of mass atrocities. Emma Frances Bloomfield (PhD student, Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, University of Southern California) asked about the definition of “truth” and spoke about the construction of stories in various spheres, such as climate change, evolution, and Holocaust studies.

In the concluding session, Professors Johanna Vollhardt (Psychology, Clark University), Richard Hovannisian (History, UCLA), and Massimo Pigliucci (Philosophy, City College, New York) summarized the topics and themes discussed by the participants. They talked about the causes and crucial consequences of denial. And they emphasized the need for continued interdisciplinary discourse in order to establish whether denialism should become a legitimate field of study that examines deliberate indifference to factual evidence.



Professor Brendan Nyhan

Asya Darbinian

## Dyan Mazurana, “Serious Crimes, Recovery from War, and Gender Justice: the Case of Northern Uganda”

29 OCTOBER 2014

Dyan Mazurana, professor at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy (Tufts University) and Cathy Cohen Lasry Visiting Professor of Comparative Genocide Studies at the Strassler Center, is a prolific scholar of transitional justice as well as a practitioner active in humanitarian and international legal work in Africa. For more than a decade, Mazurana has conducted fieldwork in Northern Uganda, where the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) has waged a war against the government and the civilian population that has devastated the region. Presenting her research findings in a lecture to graduate students, faculty, and undergraduates, she discussed the extreme violence in Uganda and its effect on vulnerable populations, their livelihoods, their physical and emotional well-being after mass atrocities and war, and their ability to recover.

Mazurana introduced the audience to the main themes of her research on how societies transition after conflict. These include state-building, state legitimacy, state fragility, and transitional justice. Describing data from five different studies conducted over many years in the Acholi region of Northern Uganda, she focused on four main areas: serious crimes, the war wounded, youth and access to markets, and sexual violence. In each area, Mazurana ascertained that victims who had been most severely affected by the conflict and violence were least likely to receive social services and to be enrolled in or eligible for international development aid programs. Issues of livelihood, or how households get by, are central to peoples’ ability to recover from violence. Limited by what they had lost and experienced during the conflict, victims’ access to livelihood opportunities, as well as their choice in what kind of work they could do to support themselves and their families, were significantly diminished. These impacts endure; the most vulnerable populations after the war remain the neediest today. In Uganda, despite much international



Professor Dyan Mazurana

assistance, poverty, unemployment, and incarceration rates remain high and international aid workers have grown fatigued.

As Mazurana’s research focuses on a continuing conflict, many students had questions about working in present-day situations. Students asked about the importance of community in recovering from the war in Northern Uganda, about differences between male and female survivors, including female-headed households and survivors of sexual violence, and the psychological effects of horrific violence, much of it carried out by children who had been brutally indoctrinated. Mazurana discussed specific challenges faced by families living

with the war wounded. Many victims are incapacitated by their injuries, and their families dedicate a disproportionate share of resources to their care. Mazurana explained that one of her main tasks was to persuade the Ugandan government of the harmful human, social, and economic consequences if a policy to aid the war wounded were not implemented.

Following peace negotiations between the LRA and the government, Uganda became the first African nation to draft a comprehensive national transitional justice strategy. And while Mazurana expressed hope that the plan would succeed, she highlighted the many obstacles that might hinder the process, including the political leadership, governance issues, and the complexity of a long-running conflict in a country in which people speak 54 different languages. Mazurana plays a key role in these developments, as she serves as an advisor to the Government of Uganda on transitional justice. Her presentation to the Center community provided the opportunity for students and faculty to gain valuable insights into an ongoing case of transitional justice with a leading expert on Northern Uganda who is especially sensitive to survivors’ rights in post-conflict settings.

Samantha Lakin

## Anne Kelly Knowles, “Geographies of the Holocaust”

13-14 NOVEMBER 2014

To inaugurate an innovative joint PhD track in Geography and Genocide, the Strassler Center and the Graduate School of Geography hosted geographer Anne Kelly Knowles (Middlebury College), who presented a public lecture and workshop. Professor Knowles specializes in applying Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and geographic methods to subjects of historical research. Her active collaboration with undergraduate geography students carrying out her groundbreaking work is a model of faculty/student cooperation.

Recognizing the value of applying GIS to historical research, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum invited Knowles in 2007 to join an interdisciplinary collaborative exploring the Holocaust from a geographical perspective. Knowles helped to launch the Holocaust Geographies Collaborative, beginning with a workshop with four geographers and five Holocaust historians. Knowles and her colleagues collaborated on new research that examined Auschwitz, the Nazi concentration camp system, and the Nazis' campaign of mass violence in the East of Europe. Observing the potential of their work to offer fresh insights and raise new questions about the Holocaust, the participants continued to collaborate well beyond the workshop. Knowles described their interdisciplinary work, and summarized their initial findings, recently published in her co-edited volume *Geographies of the Holocaust* (2014).

Every traumatic act of the Holocaust, such as ghettoization, deportation, and concentration of its victims, was “fundamentally geographical,” Knowles stressed. By examining matters of “space” and “place,” Knowles and her team produced fresh insights. For instance, by mapping the killings of Jews by an *Einsatzgruppe* unit in Lithuania throughout the late summer of 1941, they noticed that the presumably orderly and well-planned killings “may have been more varied, and perhaps more random or chaotic, than scholars have realized.” In addition, by mapping the ongoing construction projects at Auschwitz-Birkenau, Knowles and her colleague Paul Jaskot were able to rethink the camp's evolution in the Nazi imagination.

Geographic methods supplement textual sources. Knowles and her colleagues draw on testimonies, diaries, and memoirs to visualize

victims' experiences of space, place, and time by mapping narratives. To demonstrate her method, she presented maps illustrating the boundaries of the Warsaw ghetto, which show the growing isolation and concentration of Jewish residents. Knowles's current project, supported by the USC Shoah Foundation, visually codes survivor testimony using methods of analysis known as corpus linguistics. Graphic representations of living spaces, Holocaust landscapes, recollections, and even emotions recorded by survivors communicate profound new information.

Doctoral students and faculty members from the Strassler Center and the Graduate School of Geography were privileged to participate in a private workshop with Knowles, as well. Students discussed their individual projects and reflected on how geographic methods and spatial thinking can complicate and enrich their dissertation research. Knowles urged geographically challenged students not to be intimidated by maps and large databases, and suggested everyone seek interdisciplinary allies. Indeed, even without any type of geographic training, Knowles inspired me to re-think parts of my own project regarding ethnic relations and violence in the Chelm region of occupied Poland. Adopting geographic methods and principles, e.g. mapping places of ethnic interaction and identifying particular sites of violence in the Chelm region, may show correlations and patterns between the two issues that might otherwise be overlooked, and provide a starting point for further research questions.

Knowles's presentation motivated students investigating other genocides to consider the potential for spatial thinking in their projects. Asya Darbinyan, a second-year doctoral student researching the Armenian genocide, now intends to develop a map of Armenian refugees who crossed the Russian-Ottoman border during World War I. According to Darbinyan, this will be an important tool for scholars of the Armenian Genocide. Bringing PhD students in Holocaust and Genocide Studies together with their student colleagues from the Geography department was a significant step toward achieving genuine interdisciplinarity.



Professor Anne Kelly Knowles

Jason Tingler

## Critical History Series: “La Vorágine (The Vortex)”

21 FEBRUARY 2014

On a snowy February night, concert-goers arrived in the Razzo Hall lobby to the music of the cherished Chilean folk artist Víctor Jara, murdered during the violence that ushered in the Salvador Allende regime. Legacies of cultural destruction, political violence, and harsh discrimination against indigenous populations shaped an evening of thought-provoking Latin American music. This concert by the Worcester Chamber Music Society was presented by the Strassler Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies in partnership with the Traina Chamber Music Residency. Titled “La Vorágine” or “The Vortex,” the program began with a talk by Ramon Borges-Mendez, Professor of Community Development and Planning. Introducing the evening, Borges-Mendez, urged listeners to experience the performance as a sensory rather than intellectual event.

In residence for a week, the musicians had already played in classes and performed musical selections during a panel discussion with students on “The Role of Music in Collective Action.” Borges-Mendez opened that earlier discussion by describing how music reflects the history of political unrest in Latin America. Professor of Music Ben Korstvedt, who teaches a seminar “Music and Politics,” described music as social by nature, as it is often experienced in groups. It can create social cohesion or exclusion, he noted, citing national anthems or partisan songs. Women and Gender Studies Professor Denise Bebbington described her experiences in Peru during the political upheaval of the 1980s when indigenous groups were targeted and eliminated. She recalled listening to the socially conscious music of the “New Song Movement” popular throughout Latin America. Musicians collected music from the countryside that rescued the tonalities and sounds of nature characteristic of indigenous music and as a response to the drive for modernization. Strassler Center Executive Director Mary Jane Rein highlighted that musical performance can function as a form of public history. The concert, *La Vorágine*, was designed as an opportunity for examining the political and cultural upheavals that characterize Latin American history through musical expression.

The public concert, beginning with Paquito D’Rivera’s famous

“Wapango,” eschewed the stereotypical “Latin” sound and presented diverse works with Afro-Caribbean and Cuban inspiration as well as more traditional and even indigenous elements. Light, airy pieces from Mexico and Peru followed the playful “Wapango.” Next were more experimental works, including Leo Brouwer’s “Quartet No. 2: Rem Tene Verba Sequentur” and Julián Carrillo’s “Meditación.” The audience enjoyed an original composition, “Tangodromo Suite,” by Argentina’s renowned bandoneon composer and guest artist J.P. Jofre. The bandoneon is a type of concertina invented for German liturgical music but adopted in Argentina as essential to tango. The first half of the concert concluded with a beautiful piece by Brazil’s renowned twentieth-century composer, Hector Villa-Lobos, which married traditional European chamber music with distinctly Brazilian sounds. After the intermission, Jofre featured prominently in a lush performance of “Five Sensations,” by the



famed Argentinean composer of tango nuevo, Astor Piazzolla.

*La Vorágine* underscored the Strassler Center’s ambition to address the destruction of indigenous culture and the history of political violence in Latin America. The complex history of Central and South America encompasses colonial experiences, indigenous populations, genocides, wars, and refugee crises which stand in need of further study. Topics such as the genocide in Guatemala, the Dirty Wars across South America, and various indigenous rights movements present important cases for genocide research. Pursuing comparative studies on subjects like these will surely provide invaluable perspective, broadening the Center’s expertise in the field of Genocide Studies.

Programmed as part of the Strassler Center’s Critical History series, *La Vorágine* was not a typical academic event. Rather, it provided an opportunity to engage with Latin American culture and offered an avenue to scholarly discussion. Circling around the issues of genocide, political oppression, collective action, and the resilience of the human spirit, the music of the program pulled its audience into “The Vortex” and into questions of violence, resistance, and culture across Latin America.

Abigail Miller

## Critical History Series: “Public History” Panel Discussion: Public History of the Holocaust

18 MARCH 2015

The history of the Holocaust is now widely taught. Yet, how it is taught varies according to circumstances of time, place, and audience. Simone Schweber (Goodman Professor of Education and Jewish Studies, University of Wisconsin, Madison), Harold Marcuse (Professor of Modern and Contemporary German History, University of California, Santa Barbara), and Andrew Port (Professor of Modern European History, Wayne State University) presented aspects of their research into Holocaust teaching, strategies for presentation, and the lessons learned by perpetrator societies.

Schweber studies Holocaust pedagogy, including in religious schools in the United States. These closed, often very religious institutions (founded to serve what Schweber calls “total societies”) educate students according to their adherents’ particular world views. Recently, she examined Holocaust curricula at a Lubavitch school for girls and at an evangelical Christian school. Schweber investigated student knowledge prior to the course, what teachers taught, and what students constructed from the lessons.

Schweber found that the teaching methods, textbook choices, and lessons learned were unique to these schools. The girls in the Lubavitch seminar read a memoir, written by a local survivor but edited to exclude “inappropriate” portions, as would be expected in an orthodox Jewish setting. As the course failed to address why the Holocaust happened, the students turned to religious explanations consistent with their closed environment. The Christian students read a popular memoir by a Dutch evangelical rescuer. They, too, were not educated about why perpetrators targeted Jews, and they too framed their understanding according to religious (in their case Christian) dogma and belief.

Marcuse discussed how to teach the Holocaust to the millennial generation, focusing on the recently opened Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust (LAMOTH). Holocaust museums have innovated in the 21st century with features such as experiential architecture, digital technology, local connections, displays about perpetrators, discussion of other genocides and mass atrocities, and crowdsourcing to collect content from visitors. LAMOTH’s architecture and plan are designed to



“Tree of Testimony” at the Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust (Courtesy of LAMOTH)

complement the exhibits. Visitors move from the museum’s park-like setting into galleries that use lighting and space to emphasize the process of exclusion and annihilation during the Holocaust. The visitor can select testimonies, music, and survivor narratives from an audio guide that, according to Marcuse, delivers an “isolated experience.”

Extensive artifacts illustrate the history, although the lack of accompanying text is problematic. A display of period pages from the *Los Angeles Times* relates to the museum’s home community. An innovative “touch table” allows visitors to select digitized photos

and documents to examine. The galleries culminate with the “tree of testimony,” a video monument that constantly plays survivor accounts. A memorial for children is located outside the main building.

To understand the lessons learned by a perpetrator society, Port examined the German response to the genocide in Bosnia during the early 1990s. Reports and photos of Bosnian concentration camps in the press awoke memories of Germany’s own genocidal past, according to Port, and influenced German debates about whether the Federal Republic should play a role in any future military intervention by the international community.

Comparisons between Nazi atrocities and massacres in the Balkans provoked an array of responses from German intellectuals, politicians, and journalists. Some Germans believed that Nazi activity in the Balkans during World War II was a reason not to participate; others argued that past German atrocities made it a moral imperative to intervene. Though it was clear that the mass killings, concentration camps, and forced population transfers in the Balkans constituted genocide, Germany ultimately refrained from military involvement and instead offered extensive aid to Bosnian refugees. German leaders also pushed for and participated in sanctions and embargoes that may have helped to prevent the genocide from escalating.

Many factors shape education and awareness in the public realm. These eminent scholars addressed some of the perspectives worthy of research.

Maayan Armelin

## Summer Teacher Institute

10-14 AUGUST 2015

The Strassler Center's 2013 international symposium, *Policy and Practice: Pedagogy about the Holocaust and Genocide*, revealed a gap between academic scholarship and secondary-level Holocaust and Genocide education. Then serving as Director of Youth Education at the Holocaust Memorial & Tolerance Center of Nassau County, I participated in the symposium, and particularly appreciated discussions about the goals of teaching Holocaust history. I joined the staff of the Strassler Center shortly thereafter; my mandate was to advance education outreach with the support of a newly established endowment from the Melvin S. Cutler Charitable Foundation. These outreach efforts included developing a Summer Teacher Institute, organized in conjunction with the Hiatt Center for Urban Education at Clark University and its director, Professor Katerine Bielaczyc. An innovative researcher, Bielaczyc's scholarship on teaching practices was essential to the Institute. And the Strassler Center, a leader in training Holocaust and Genocide scholars, proved an ideal venue for a cutting-edge Institute.

As Director of Youth Education, I had recognized the challenges of teaching difficult histories to educators. Most professional development is reduced to one-day workshops that depend on problematic assumptions about the extent of teacher content knowledge, the values that teachers bring to the topic, the goals of Holocaust history instruction, and what constitutes effective classroom practice. Such workshops attempt to cram in loads of information and offer little time for teachers to process and discuss. And presenters are not typically experts in Holocaust history or Holocaust education.

The Center's Summer Institute confronted these challenges and sought to bridge the gap between scholarship and practice. The Institute embraced process and discussion in order to develop a "community of practice," an international educational movement that emphasizes how learning happens. Our vision was to bring teachers together to learn in ways their students learn and to transform classroom instruction. Eschewing "correct" answers, we encouraged direct engagement with primary documents, survivor testimony, scholarly literature, and each other, to continually deepen participants' understanding of genocide, its origins, and its impact. To achieve this pedagogical shift, the Institute piloted instructional methods using a unique cache of Holocaust era letters sent between Jewish parents and the children they thought they had sent to safety. As Head of Educational Programming, I supervise the transcription and translation of these materials; they will form the basis for a secondary-level Holo-



Head of Educational Programming Sarah Cushman PhD '10

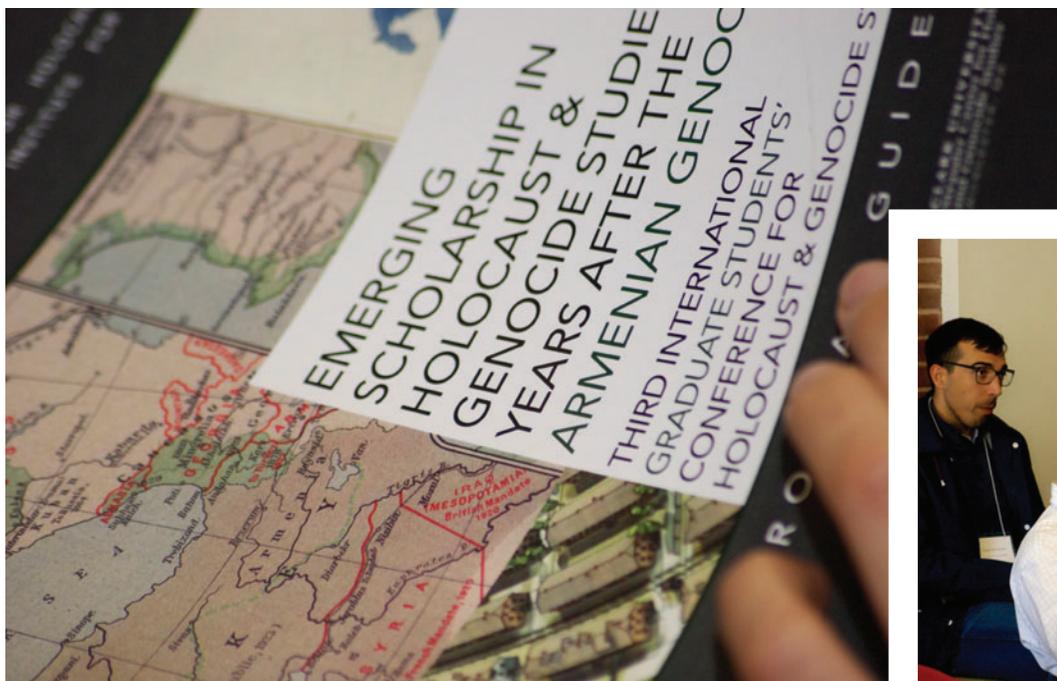
caust curriculum. As secondary history instruction is increasingly documents based, these letters are a valuable teaching resource. And written by young people, they are readily accessible to middle and high school students.

Fostering a community of learners entails maintaining participants' engagement over an extended period. The 2015 Summer Institute was module one of a three-part program to be offered as week-long workshops over successive summers. In this module, educators acquired broad content knowledge and practical skills based in sound pedagogy. Module two (scheduled for summer 2016) will expand knowledge of historical context and Holocaust literature, as most students learn about the Holocaust in Social Studies classes in the context of US participation in World War II or in Language Arts classes by reading Elie Wiesel's *Night* or *The Diary of Anne Frank*. Module three will incorporate study travel to Holocaust sites. We hope that, as we grow this program, the Institute will expand to additional modules that explore special topics or other genocides. The Strassler and Hiatt Centers will reconvene teachers to discuss and revise their educational practices. As members of this community of learners, all past Institute participants will gather periodically to support one another, build knowledge of content and effective classroom practice from each other, and advocate for Holocaust and Genocide education when needed.

Many of the Strassler Center doctoral students and recent graduates look to careers in public education. A bold addition to the Strassler Center's outreach efforts, the Summer Institute offers them opportunities to acquire skills to improve pedagogy about the Holocaust and other genocides.

**Sarah Cushman**

## Conference: “Emerging Scholarship in Holocaust and Genocide Studies 100 Years after the Armenian Genocide”



Middle: Strassler Center PhD candidates Michael Geheran and Kimberly Allar; Lower: Vahan Avedian (Lund University, Sweden) and Osik Moses (Bergische University Wuppertal, Germany)



### 9-12 APRIL 2015

Doctoral students and post-doctoral scholars traveled from 16 countries to present their research projects to peers and established scholars and to participate in fruitful discussions about new scholarship at the Third International Graduate Student Conference for Holocaust and Genocide Studies. Convened by Professor Taner Akçam and the Strassler Center doctoral students, and organized in partnership with the Danish Institute for International Studies, the conference memorialized the centennial of the Armenian Genocide. Once called the “forgotten genocide,” the systematic murder of the Armenians has become the subject of serious scholarship and hundreds of publications in a variety of languages have been written about it. Having rightfully taken its place within the field of Genocide Studies as a central case for research and comparison, the organizers recognized these and other advances by titling the conference, *Emerging Scholarship in Holocaust and Genocide Studies 100 Years after the Armenian Genocide*.

Interdisciplinary in approach and comparative in scope, the conference reflected the full range of issues, concepts, and methods in current Genocide Studies research. A committee of Strassler Center



Left: Professors Thomas Kühne, Eric Weitz (CUNY), Debórah Dwork, and Taner Akçam; right: Alberto Martí (University of Nottingham, UK) and Aminat Chokobaeva (Australian National University, Australia)



doctoral students identified the participants through a competitive selection process. In addition to examining Ottoman genocides carried out against minority ethnic-religious groups, including Armenians, Assyrians, and Greeks, the invited participants presented research about the Holocaust and genocides in Africa, Asia, and Latin America as well as on the aftermath and collective memorialization of genocides. Eric Weitz, Dean of Humanities and Arts and Professor of History at the City College of New York (CUNY), opened the proceedings. An international group of senior scholars moderated nine panels and closed the conference with a discussion about major themes that emerged and insights into the development of the field. They included Cecilie Stokholm Banke (Danish Institute for International Studies, Denmark); Matthias Bjørnlund (Danish Institute for Study Abroad, Denmark); Lerna Ekmekçioğlu, (MIT); Donna-Lee Frieze (Deakin University, Australia); Christian Axboe Nielson (Aarhus University, Sweden); and Strassler Center Professors Taner Akçam, Debórah Dwork, Thomas Kühne, and Ken MacLean.

The closing session offered the opportunity to discuss major themes that emerged in the papers and discussions. Ekmekçioğlu pointed out that many nations have been built on some form of original sin that needs to be addressed through recognition and acknowledgement.

She advocated for bringing new cases into the conversation. And, given the US context, she questioned how to incorporate slavery and the massacres of indigenous peoples. Frieze asked whether we need to concern ourselves with the label genocide. In her work on the jurist Raphael Lemkin who introduced the term genocide, she observes an openness to interpretation. Stokholm Banke spoke about the important role of scholars in raising awareness of genocide and mass violence. And she encouraged the participants to recognize the dichotomies that are inherent to scholarship about historical injustices. Weitz urged students to identify the fields they seek to influence. Many complex terms and categories emerged over the course of the conference, including empires, imperialism, resistance, colonialism, humanitarianism, women, and children, behind each of which a large historiography and social science literature exist. It is essential to engage with these broader intellectual fields and to bring genocide research to the attention of scholars in these areas. Thus, this rich and multifaceted conference closed with important advice to the participants.

The Louis and Ann Kulin Endowed Fund, NAASR's Manoog S. Young Fund, the Asher Family Fund, Debra Raskin and Michael Young, and other generous friends of the Strassler Center provided the support that made it possible to gather this exciting group of young and established scholars. The training of doctoral students is central to the mission of the Strassler Center and the International Graduate Student Conference extends that training to students from around the globe. Thanks to a gift from an anonymous donor, the next conference, planned for 2017, will reach out to early career faculty, and professionals, in addition to doctoral students, and thus foster a wider cadre of emerging scholars who will advance Genocide Studies.

## Linkages



Dr Cecillie Stokholm Banke (Danish Institute for International Studies) and Professors Debórah Dwork and Christian Axboe Nielson (Aarhus University)

As genocide research encompasses events that span years, continents, and disciplines, the Strassler Center has forged a host of institutional linkages to help address this far-reaching subject. The culminating event of the past academic year stands as an example. The Third International Graduate Student Conference, *Emerging Scholarship 100 Years after the Armenian Genocide*, not only commemorated the centennial of the Armenian Genocide; it gathered some 50 graduate students and recent PhD recipients from 16 countries, as well as six senior scholars from three continents who served as discussants. Building on conferences convened in 2009 and 2012, this iteration included new research about a growing number of cases of genocide and mass violence which will yield fresh opportunities for cooperation. A farsighted gift funds the Danish Institute for International Studies as a partner in convening these conferences and ensures the participation of Scandinavian colleagues.

The Graduate Conference also garnered support from the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR), which we had the opportunity to honor for its ongoing cooperation. NAASR generously funds faculty and doctoral student projects and has been a key partner in events that examine the Armenian Genocide. For example, the Center collaborated with NAASR in hosting the first ever gathering of natural and social scientists to discuss the phenomenon of denial, in cooperation with Worcester State University and the Armenian Genocide Program of the Center for the Study of Genocide and Human Rights at Rutgers University. A significant body of literature about genocide denial exists, distinct from the substantial literature about how industries and political operatives have used the strategy of “manufacturing doubt” to undermine scientific consensus about pollution, evolution, and global warming. Until this conference, there had been no convergence to discuss the analogous and interrelated



H. Martin Deranian '47 and Marc A. Mamigonian (Director, NAASR)

phenomena of genocide denial and persistent denial of scientific evidence.

Valuing academic cooperation, the Center established an exchange with Israeli scholars and institutions. The inaugural workshop took place in spring 2014. A second Israel Academic Exchange workshop (September 2015) will maximize discussion and the exchange of ideas, while fostering the scholarship of scholars from Israel and the US. Organized in cooperation with the Avraham Harman Institute for Contemporary Jewry at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv University, the participants hope to open new avenues of collaboration.

The April 2013 conference, *Policy and Practice: Pedagogy about the Holocaust and Genocide*, identified a gap between academic scholarship and secondary education. Seeking to span that divide, the Center hosted an *Echoes & Reflections* teacher training workshop in partnership with the Anti-Defamation League. Taking those efforts to the next logical step, the Center launched a professional development initiative with an inaugural Summer Institute. In addition, doctoral students presented their work at nearby Connecticut schools. Clark alumna Leah Abrams '96 of Temple Beth Israel Preservation Society (Danielson, CT) and Sara Dziedic, Social Studies Chair at Woodstock Academy (Woodstock, CT), are providing valuable opportunities for doctoral students to participate in public events and teacher education.

We value the connections forged with partners near and far. And we thank all those listed here.

Sarah Cushman

- Anti-Defamation League
- The Armenian Genocide Museum Institute
- Armenian National Institute
- Armenocide
- Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation
- Center for Humanistic Education, Ghetto Fighters' Museum
- Center for Holocaust, Human Rights & Genocide Education, Brookdale Community College, NJ
- Conference on Material Claims against Germany
- Danish Institute for International Studies
- Hadassah Brandeis Institute
- Haigazian University, Beirut
- Holocaust Educational Foundation
- Hrant Dink Foundation
- Institute for Contemporary Jewry, Hebrew University
- International Holocaust and Remembrance Alliance
- The Jewish Foundation for the Righteous
- Jewish World Watch
- Leo Baeck Institute
- Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture
- Mgrublian Center for Human Rights, Claremont McKenna College
- The Museum of Jewish Heritage – A Living Memorial to the Holocaust
- National Association for Armenian Studies and Research
- Per Ahlmark Foundation, Stockholm
- Polin Museum of the History of Polish Jews
- Radio La Benevolencija Humanitarian Tools Foundation
- Research Center for Contemporary History, University of Hamburg
- Rodgers Center for Holocaust Education, Chapman University
- Salzburg Global Seminar
- School of Historical Studies, Tel Aviv University
- Seyfo Center, Assyrian Genocide Research Center
- Sydney Jewish Museum
- United States Holocaust Memorial and Museum
- USC Shoah Foundation
- Yad Vashem
- YIVO Institute for Jewish Research

The background features a large, dark stone memorial structure with a map of the Caucasus region overlaid in a semi-transparent green. The map includes labels for 'Kavkaz', 'Groznyy', 'Derbent', 'AZERBAIJAN', and 'GEORGIA'. In the top left corner, there are several overlapping geometric shapes in shades of orange and teal. The bottom right corner shows a circular stone structure with a flame, surrounded by flowers.

# FACULTY NOTES

Center faculty create the core intellectual community our students enjoy. Looking to the future, we aim to grow our scholarly reach with the addition of faculty working in synergistic areas as our doctoral program branches into new areas of inquiry.

Armenian Genocide memorial, Armenia's official memorial dedicated to the victims of the Armenian Genocide.



## Debórah Dwork



Rose Professor Debórah Dwork

"This year saw the commemoration of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, and the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz as well as many other concentration camps, including Bergen-Belsen, where my mother's sister, my Aunt Sara, was near death in April 1945," Strassler Center director and Rose Professor Debórah Dwork observed. For her, these moments carry special significance and speak to the Center's mandate. "We care about the past because we are connected to it through family ties or by learning about it. With no survivors of the Armenian Genocide alive today, and ever fewer Holocaust survivors, we cannot depend upon memory. History forges the bridge we travel to the past. Education and scholarship form the most robust, longest-lasting memorial we can build."

Dwork glories in the growth of the Center. And nowhere does she see more fresh foliage than in the doctoral students' and graduate program's strides forward. The year began with her student Alexis Herr's dissertation defense. Supported by fellowships from the Claims Conference, the Holocaust Educational Foundation, and the National

Institute for the History of the Liberation Movement in Italy, Herr tackled the history of the infamous Fossoli di Carpi deportation camp. The first scholar to examine an Italian camp in relation to the town near by, Herr shone a bright light on what Primo Levi (a Fossoli inmate) termed the grey zone as it functioned in Carpi. Having developed the concept of compensated compliance, Herr revised her dissertation as a book due to be published as part of Palgrave Macmillan's Italian Studies Series. "This is a superb book . . . which Palgrave should snap up right away," an anonymous reviewer urged. Citing Herr's originality, deep research, theoretical and methodological grounding, and sensitivity to historiographical context, the reviewer concluded: "It makes an extremely important contribution to Holocaust studies in general, and in particular to studies of the Shoah and deportations in Italy."

This assessment captured what Dwork values about the Center's doctoral program: innovative scholarship that prompts new discussions and fresh engagement with the past. These qualities emerged equally clearly when her student Tiberius Galis defended his dissertation half a year later. Co-advised by Professors Eric Gordy (University of London) and Barbara Harff (US Naval Academy, emerita), Galis

explored transitional justice practices and reforms in post-military dictatorship Argentina, post-Apartheid South Africa, and post-Communist Hungary. Scrutinizing the bureaucratic apparatus and the legal and economic order of each of these three states, Galis traced the relationship between transitional justice and regime consolidation. His wholly original analysis of this process will soon find its way into book form, too; of that Dwork has no doubt.

Awarded a Visiting Scholar fellowship at the USHMM where she will bring her book manuscript to closure, Dr Herr will move on to the position of Lecturer at Keene State College in New Hampshire. Dr Galis serves as the Executive Director of the Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation, which aims to support states to develop or strengthen national mechanisms for the prevention of genocide through education and technical assistance. Dwork delights in their success. "The education and scholarship they offer are very much a piece of the 'memorial' we at the Center envision. How lucky am I to see it take shape!"

Much as she relishes mentoring doctoral students (and there are thirteen others in her pipeline), that is but one aspect of Dwork's rich professional life. Internationally renowned for her cutting edge books that have consistently opened new areas of investigation, as well as for her dynamic stewardship of the Strassler Center, Dwork is called upon to lend her expertise to many projects and organizations. "Museum work loomed large this year," Dwork reflected. As usual, she was in and out of the Museum of Jewish Heritage, teaching in their educator programs and presenting the Rabbi Ronald Sobel Lecture to a public audience. A huge fan of Chhange (Center for Holocaust, Human Rights, and Genocide Education), she was delighted to continue as historical consultant for their new permanent exhibition, *Journey to Life*. She was pleased, too, to join the advisory board for a conference hosted by the recently opened Polin Museum of the History of Polish Jews (Warsaw). Dwork's reach extended beyond the northern hemisphere. A Limmud presenter in Melbourne and Sydney (Australia) last summer, Dwork had lent her expertise to the Sydney Jewish Museum, which was developing an exhibition, *Signs of Life*, based on the museum's collection of wartime and postwar letters. As such letters are an area of Dwork's expertise, she was asked to serve as the Guest Expert Historian. "I'd been a consultant on exhibitions before; I'd served as an advisor on two mounted by the Museum of Jewish Heritage last year. And I am deeply engaged with Chhange's terrific new exhibition on the Armenian Genocide, the Holocaust, and the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda. But now, it fell to *me* to write the wall texts and the visitor brochure. The challenge was to synthesize years of scholarship into 250-word bits. I loved it!" The exhibit opened on 10 December 2014. Dwork was disappointed not to attend, but she was on her way to Israel to continue to grow the Center's Israel Academic Exchange initiative. Which she happily did through fruitful meetings with colleagues at Tel Aviv University and the Hebrew University, and by presenting talks at Tel Aviv and at the Center for Humanistic Education at the Ghetto Fighters' House Museum in Haifa.

Guest lectures claimed a chunk of Dwork's seemingly limitless energy this year. She was honored to serve as Scholar-in-Residence at Fairfield University for several days, presenting a variety of talks to a range of audiences, and at Temple Sholom in Greenwich, CT., if only for an evening. She was honored, too, to be invited to give the Schleunes Lecture at Greensboro College (NC) and the keynote address at a conference on "Memory and Commemoration" at Concordia University (Montreal, Canada). The April commemorations prompted other invitations: Middlesex Community College; the Kupperberg Holocaust Resource Center at Queensborough Community

College; "Responsibility 2015: Armenian Genocide Centennial Conference" in NY; and to serve as the host of a panel discussion on "Narrating Genocide" by Chris Bohjalian and Khatchig Mouradian.

Still, according to Dwork, "the basso continuo service this year was my work for the 31-state IHRA," (the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance). As a member of the Academic Working Group; the Holocaust, Genocides, and Crimes against Humanity Committee; and the Steering Committee of a multi-national mapping project to identify and analyze empirical research conducted in fifteen languages on Holocaust pedagogy, Dwork is very much engaged with IHRA ini-



Professor Dwork and Asya Darbinyan

tiatives. Facilitating the sharing of ideas and innovative practices across contexts and languages, the project will offer educational policy makers research-based insights in pedagogical experience to build cross-national knowledge and will enrich curricula, teaching methods, and further research. All of which, in Dwork's view, resonate with the Center's long-standing interest in Holocaust and genocide studies pedagogical practices and newly instituted outreach education programs. "If I am in a position to bring my expertise to these projects, I am equally fortunate to be able to bring what I learn back to the Strassler Center!" Dwork exclaims.

**Mary Jane Rein**

## Taner Akçam

With the centennial of the Armenian Genocide commemorated throughout 2015, Taner Akçam, a leading scholar on the subject, was in high demand. Akçam, who holds the Robert and Marianne Kaloosdian and Stephen and Marian Mugar Professorship, balanced a demanding schedule of global speaking engagements, while he served as the advisor to the Strassler Center's International Graduate Student conference, spoke and wrote widely in the media, advanced new research projects, and continued to teach and mentor doctoral students.

Akçam has long worked to document the scope of Ottoman genocides and to combat their denial. He appeared before the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, also known as the Helsinki Commission on 23 April, to testify at a hearing about the Turkish government's refusal to acknowledge the Armenian Genocide. "Turkey's denial of its past, as an essential aspect of its foreign policy, is not simply a moral abomination; it represents a threat to democracy, stability and security, not only in Turkey but in the region too," Akçam explained. Analyzing the problem in its international context, Akçam continued, "The refusal [of the US] to recognize past injustices is fundamentally undemocratic and contributes to the destabilization of Turkey and the region. How can the United States, which prides itself on its exceptionalism in supporting liberal values and human rights at home and across the world, justify a position at odds with its own democratic values?"

In a passionate address to a rally in New York's Times Square (26 April), Akçam responded to continuing Turkish denial and President Obama's disappointing decision to avoid recognition. "The nation of Turkey consists of more than simply its denialist regime," Akçam argued. "There is another Turkey, and the citizens of *that* Turkey are ready to face their history. By officially recognizing the Armenian Genocide, the United States could lend its moral and political weight to encourage Turkey to come to terms with its history, to further embrace democratization, and to contribute to its own future stability and that of the region. The citizens of *my* Turkey, the "*other Turkey*,"

and the Armenians throughout the world are waiting for the US to join us in acknowledging the truth."

Reaching out to "the citizens of *that* Turkey," Akçam published actively in the Turkish daily *Taraf*, including a series of articles, "Text-books of New Turkey." Focusing on how the Armenian Question is presented to Turkish school children, Akçam described the distortion

of history as an essential danger for Turkish national security. "These text-books are filled with hateful and racist remarks against Armenians and are steeped in distorted narratives about "treacherous Armenians." Such text-books shape a national narrative that sows hatred among young Armenians who resent the vicious portrayal of them. Akçam urged Turkish authorities to reject these lies and distortions in their officially sanctioned school books.

Akçam continued his research in the League of Nations' archives in Geneva which holds extensive materials documenting the experiences of Armenian women and children who escaped from Muslim families. Collaborating with Dicle Akar Bilgin and Matthias Bjørnlund, he prepared testimonies for publication.

They are available electronically in the Armenocide online archives.

A highlight of Akçam's year was the Third International Graduate Students' Conference, *Emerging Scholarship in Holocaust and Genocide Studies -100 Years after the Armenian Genocide*. Akçam served as faculty advisor and welcomed the opportunity to shape the conference by inviting outstanding participants to present their doctoral research and senior scholars to comment on their work. The closing panel concluded with a discussion about the value of identifying particular cases as genocide. Akçam urged students to adopt more productive approaches, such as examining genocidal structures.

The academic year culminated with a well-deserved tribute. Akçam received the Hero of Justice and Truth award at a ceremony on 9 May concluding the *National Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide Centennial*, organized by the Diocese and Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Churches of America. A fitting honor for his brave and important work!

Anna Aleksanyan



Kaloosdian Mugar Professor Taner Akçam.

## Thomas Kühne

Serious engagement with Holocaust scholarship exemplifies the many accomplishments Strassler Professor Thomas Kühne achieved during the 2014-15 academic year. Author of more than a dozen academic book reviews this year alone, he reads widely and is well-informed about developments in Holocaust research. An incisive reviewer, he is frequently called upon to assess manuscripts, journal articles, and proposals to funders. He is also committed to shepherding new scholarship into publication as a member of the editorial boards of the journals *Central European History* and *Culture, Society, and Masculinities*. As co-editor, with Professor Tom Lawson (Northumbria University, United Kingdom), of the book series “Palgrave Studies in the History of Genocide,” he has six book manuscripts under review or in print. Much to his delight, among these titles is Stefan Ionescu’s PhD ’13 newly published *Jewish Resistance to ‘Romanianization’, 1940-44*.

In addition to reviewing and publishing the work of others, Kühne is dedicated to evaluating new theoretical approaches to Holocaust history. Thus, he continues his appraisal of research into whether nineteenth century European colonialism and imperialism resulted in the Holocaust and the Nazi conquest in Eastern Europe. Having published an important review article in the 2013 *Journal of Genocide Research* examining different versions of the colonial paradigm, Kühne revisited the subject at the International Network of Genocide Scholars conference *Genocide and Mass Trauma: Rising to the Challenges of Comprehension, Intervention, Prevention and Restitution* held in Cape Town, South Africa. In “Nazi Violence and the Colonial Paradigm: Throughways, Byways, and Dead-End Streets in Holocaust History,” Kühne identifies possible continuities and discontinuities between colonial and imperial practices and Nazi projects to reorganize the demographic, social, economic, and political landscape of Europe. Concluding with conceptual thoughts about the categories of genocide, colonialism, and mass violence, his paper is a valuable contribution to the burgeoning discourse on colonialism and genocide.

Kühne continues his seminal research on masculinity and perpetrators. His 1996 essay collection, *Männnergeschichte-Geschlechtergeschichte*, established the history of masculinities as a research area in Central Europe and inspired innovative scholarship in gender studies. Cambridge University Press will release *War and Comradeship: Hitler’s Soldiers and Mass Violence in Germany’s Twentieth Century* (spring 2016), the updated version of his German volume, *Kameradschaft* (2006). The book explores how male bonding, fostered during World War I, resulted in a myth of comradeship that influenced the

conduct of German soldiers during World War II. According to Kühne, comradeship produced a moral reference system that sacrificed individual responsibility and enabled soldiers to participate in shared acts of violence and criminality. Different aspects of masculinity and war were the basis for presentations at the conferences *Gender, War and Culture* (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill) and *Moralities of War, The Combatant’s View* (University of Vienna, Austria).

Kühne’s scholarship regarding Nazi perpetrators, gender, and masculinity is essential to his work teaching and advising students. As Director of Graduate Studies, he mentors the Center’s first-year doctoral students. In addition, he serves as dissertation advisor for seven students whose dissertations cover such topics as the psychology of perpetrators, the process by which bystanders became perpetrators, sexuality during the Holocaust, interethnic violence among perpetrators and victims, the training of camp guards, and the persecution of German Jewish veterans. First-year student Gabrielle Hauth credits Kühne’s mentorship as extremely influential, “his enthusiasm about my project gives me the motivation to surpass his high expectations and his constructive criticism is vital to the positive development of my work and my abilities as a young scholar.” Indeed, all of his students are thriving as they work in diverse archives around the globe, receive prestigious awards, and produce meaningful insights into difficult subjects.

It is no surprise that four undergraduate concentrators produced outstanding honors theses under Kühne’s direction. Their sophisticated topics demonstrate his ability to inspire students to undertake challenging work. They include Elizabeth Bellos, “The Jewish Sonderkommando: Culpability and Controversy in the Midst of Genocide;” Nicholas Huzsvai, “Gemeinschaft gegen den Staat: The Meaning of Volk in Gustav Landauer’s Philosophy;” Faith Jean, “An Examination of the Postwar Lives and Familial Relationships of Former Nazi Families;” and Nathan Wuorio, “Symbolism of the Neo-Nazi Movement in the United States: Meaning, Identity, and Appropriation.”

Mary Jane Rein



Strassler Professor Thomas Kühne.

## Ken Maclean

Ken MacLean's training in anthropology and his experience working with NGOs in Southeast Asia enrich and expand the Strassler Center program. A professor in the International Development, Community and Engagement Department as well as Director of Asian Studies, MacLean offers crucial scholarly dimensions to the Strassler Center faculty. He has developed relevant coursework that examines gross human rights violations, a central focus of his research in conflict affected areas of Burma, as well as the complexities of transitional justice globally. MacLean welcomes working with doctoral students who study mass violence in Bangladesh, the dirty wars in Latin America, transitional justice in Rwanda, and public memory of the Holocaust in Poland.

MacLean is renowned within the Clark community for investing in the academic development of his undergraduate students. I had the privilege to sit with him on the panel, *Shaping the Spoon: Maximizing Your Education through Faculty Mentorship*, organized by the LEEP (Liberal Education and Effective Practice) Center in connection with a visit by Middlebury College geography professor Anne Knowles who presented a project carried out with student mentees. The panel examined discourse around the intellectual relationships that emerge between faculty mentors and their students. Speaking about MacLean's mentorship, I described how I value his skill in translating course material into meaningful concepts that are applicable to a variety of contexts.

MacLean is as active in academia as he is in the classroom. Together with Raz Segal PhD '13, he has organized the Strassler Center's second Israel Academic Exchange (September 2015) in cooperation with the Avraham Harman Institute for Contemporary Jewry at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv University. In addition, he has agreed to serve as the faculty advisor for the Center's Fourth International Conference (2017), *Emerging Expertise on Post-Conflict Societies*, which will consider truth commissions, reparations, and memorialization.

This year, MacLean published several articles and book chapters that relate to his research in Vietnam and Burma. In addition, he presented at the "Myanmar Accountability Planning Workshop" for the International Human Rights Law Clinic at Harvard University; "Humanitarian Mine Action in Conflict-Affected Areas of Burma/Myanmar: A Threat to Peace?" at the Interdisciplinary and Global Studies Division of the Worcester Polytechnic Institute; and "Evidentiary Thresholds, Hierarchies of Proof, and the Technical Denial of Mass Atrocity Crimes



International Development Professor Ken MacLean

in Burma: A Case Study in Failure," at the Strassler Center Conference *Manufacturing Denial and the Assault on Scholarship and Truth*. He published an article, "Counter-Accounting with Invisible Data: The Struggle for Transparency in Myanmar's Energy Sector." MacLean is also working on a book project that examines the production of archives related to human rights violations in Burma and transitional justice issues.

MacLean has developed coursework that adds significant strengths to the undergraduate concentration in Holocaust and Genocide Studies. His teaching addresses how human rights violations transpire, the actors who are involved with these events, and the consequences that arise in their aftermath. In fall, he will teach a first-year intensive course on "Visualizing Human Rights: Advocacy, Action, and the Politics of Representation," and an advanced seminar, "Seeing Like a Humanitarian Agency," which examines the history and politics of emergency aid, primarily in conflict-affected settings. And he seeks to explore traditional justice issues from a cross regional and cross disciplinary perspective in his newly approved seminar "Transitional Justice: Theoretical Debates, Institutional Frameworks, and Development Impacts."

Over the past two years, MacLean has contributed new expertise to the Strassler Center program. Equally important are his dedication to students and willingness to explore new subjects in his research and teaching.

Olivia Rogine '14

## Robert Deam Tobin

Robert Tobin is a professor of Comparative Literature whose scholarship on sexuality and human rights intersects with the interests of Strassler Center students and faculty. The first incumbent of the Henry J. Leir Chair, he is responsible for ensuring that the study of languages and cultures permeates intellectual discussions across the Clark campus by bringing together scholars and students from various disciplines. In fulfilling these tasks, Tobin frequently partners with the Strassler Center to present speakers.

Tobin is well known as a scholar of gay and lesbian studies and queer theory. In his latest book, *Peripheral Desires: The German Discovery of Sex*, to be published in fall, Tobin discusses the rise of a modern vocabulary and science of sexuality. Drawing on a wide range of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century literary, political, and scientific texts, he identifies important themes in the development of ideas about sexuality. Examining the cultural and intellectual landscape of Germany and German-speaking Europe, Tobin discusses how and why the writers and thinkers of the region shaped the modern conception of sexuality. While most of the writers highlighted in his book were not active in the Nazi period, their attitudes about sexual freedom surely contributed to the Nazi response to homosexuality and advocacy for sexual purity.

Tobin strives to combine his research and teaching. This year he taught “The German Discovery of Sex,” which culminated in a symposium by the same name, at which eminent scholars in German Studies discussed such topics as prostitution, homosexuality, and pornography. These subjects are central to Tobin’s teaching and research about literary and historical texts that deal with the development of sexual freedoms beginning in the Enlightenment and continuing to the present day. This year, he published several articles and a book review on sexuality that appeared in Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom, which underscores the international significance of this research. He also organized and chaired a three-day seminar, “Sexual Pathologies,” at the fall German Studies Association Conference.

With *Peripheral Desires* in press, Tobin now turns to new research on human rights and sexuality. Questions of sexual orientation, adultery, pre-marital sex, age of consent, prostitution, pornography and sex work are central to a course that Tobin teaches on the subject. When should the state intervene in sexual matters and what legal restrictions are appropriate? Tobin finds that his mostly liberal-minded students are genuinely challenged by discussions that examine, for instance, the many dimensions of sex work. According to Tobin,



Henry J. Leir Professor Robert Deam Tobin

human rights theorists have been concerned with such matters for much longer than most imagine. His new book project will chart the emergence of these ideas in literary and historical sources.

Human rights issues are a major focus of Tobin’s current coursework. In addition to his first-year seminar, “Literature and Human Rights,” he developed the course “Narratives of Human Rights” for the Henry J. Leir Luxembourg Program, where Clark and Holy Cross students participate in an intensive May semester. Among other texts, his students read Anne Frank’s *Diary of a Young Girl* in conjunction with studying human rights declarations from the Enlightenment, United Nations human rights conventions, and human rights law within Europe. They also examined non-governmental organizations and local human rights agencies. Field trips to the Jewish Museum in Frankfurt, the Luxembourg Museum of Deportation, and the European Court of Justice enriched the students’ understanding of the readings and their historical context.

In the coming year, the Strassler Center community looks forward to lectures Tobin has organized. Historian Andrew Wackerfuss (United States Air Force and Georgetown University) will discuss homosexuality and community in the Nazi party, and Professor Samuel Moyn (Harvard Law School) will speak about the history of human rights. Tobin’s engagement with topics and ideas related to the Holocaust and human rights, together with his dedication to students and teaching, make him a valuable asset as a contributing Strassler Center faculty member.

Mary Jane Rein

## Johanna Vollhardt

Johanna Ray Vollhardt, Associate Professor of Psychology in the Francis L. Hiatt School of Psychology and Director of the Social Psychology Program, focused her research during the past year on the importance and meaning of acknowledgement to survivors of genocide and historical victimization. She studies three groups: Armenian-Americans, Jewish-Americans, and African-Americans. That 2015 has been a year of milestone commemorations - 100 years since the Armenian Genocide; 70 years since the end of the Holocaust – and a year of racial unrest across the United States underscores the importance of Vollhardt's research.

Vollhardt examines what acknowledgement means in the context of collective victimization. Using open-ended qualitative surveys, she seeks to understand what victims want and to assess the psychological effects of denial and acknowledgement. Using a coding process to analyze survey content, Vollhardt is developing a theory about the psychology of acknowledgment and denial of collective victimization. Her results suggest that victim groups define acknowledgement and denial through their lived experiences. Although acknowledgement is not identical for all victim groups, similar attitudes toward recognition appear to hold across groups despite significant experiential differences.

In their survey responses, Jewish- and Armenian-Americans emphasize commemoration of the historic crimes committed against their communities. In contrast, African-Americans tend to focus on persistent and ongoing injustices. The issue of reparations also reveals differences. Among Jews, whose status as victims of genocide is widely recognized and who have collectively received reparations, there is virtually no discussion. Armenian ideas about reparations revolve primarily around apologies and the restoration of Armenian cultural heritage in Turkey, but may also include the right to return, the restoration of Armenian churches, and monetary reparations for stolen property. African-Americans seek reparations to address current socio-economic inequalities. Both Armenian- and African-Americans draw parallels between their communal histories and the Holocaust. They yearn for widespread acknowledgment of their group's historical suffering on par with recognition of the Holocaust.



Psychology Professor Johanna Ray Vollhardt.

Vollhardt's research is timely and her teaching is innovative and engaging. She developed a new course, "Psychology of Resistance during Genocide," with Clark's focus on liberal education in mind and with a non-traditional format. Tasked to establish a psychological theory of resistance, students interviewed community members. They also listened to testimonies from the USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive, for which the Strassler Center is one of three full-access sites in New England. And they considered how people resisted during genocide. They created a conceptual map, which they refined and revised as they engaged with additional primary and secondary literature and information about other genocides and mass atrocities.

Vollhardt's commitment to research and teaching move the Strassler Center forward, while her engagement with the broader community increases visibility and ties. Appearing on the "Charlie Rose Show," Vollhardt discussed aggression with five other scholars and co-hosts Charlie Rose and noble prize laureate and neurologist Eric Kandel. Building on discussions about physiology, brain function, and human and animal aggression, Vollhardt contributed insights from the perspective of those targeted by aggression. She explained that victims typically respond by becoming aggressive themselves, by helping victims, or by preventing other traumatic events. In each case, victim response is a way to cope with trauma by regaining agency.

In addition to her engaged research and committed teaching, Vollhardt continued her co-editorship of the *Journal of Social and Political Psychology*. In 2014-15, this included a special section on psychological research in the aftermath of the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda on the occasion of the 20th anniversary.

Vollhardt continues to advance connections between the Social Psychology program and the Strassler Center. This academic year, the Psychology Department will offer two courses in social psychology that bring new perspectives to doctoral students and advanced undergraduates alike – a graduate seminar on stereotyping and prejudice, and a capstone seminar on the social and cultural psychology of genocide.

Sarah Cushman

## Program Faculty

The following faculty from eight academic departments participate in the Center's life and programs. We are grateful to all for their contributions of scholarship, expertise, and teaching.

**Taner Akçam, PhD**, History Department  
Kaloosdian Mugar Professor of Armenian Genocide Studies  
and Modern Armenian History

**Katerine Bielaczyc, PhD**, Department of Education  
Director, Hiatt Center for Urban Education  
Associate Professor of Education

**Debórah Dwork, PhD**, History Department  
Director, Strassler Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies  
Rose Professor of Holocaust History

**Jody Emel, PhD**, Graduate School of Geography  
Professor of Geography

**Anita Fábos, PhD**, Department of International  
Development, Community, and Environment  
Associate Professor of International Development  
and Social Change

**Everett Fox, PhD**, Department of Language, Literature  
and Culture  
Director, Jewish Studies Concentration  
Allen M. Glick Professor of Judaic and Biblical Studies

**Thomas Kühne, PhD**, History Department  
Strassler Professor of Holocaust History

**Olga Litvak, PhD**, History Department  
Michael and Lisa Leffell Professor of Modern Jewish History

**Ken MacLean, PhD**, Department of International Development,  
Community, and Environment  
Director, Asian Studies  
Associate Professor of International Development  
and Social Change

**Dyan Mazurana, PhD**, Cathy Cohen Lasry Distinguished  
Visiting Professor  
Research Director, Feinstein International Center  
Associate Research Professor, Fletcher School, Tufts University

**Marianne Sarkis, PhD**, Department of International  
Development, Community, and Environment  
Assistant Professor of International Development  
and Social Change

**Srinivasan Sitaraman, PhD**, Political Science Department  
Associate Professor of Political Science

**Valerie Sperling, PhD**, Political Science Department  
Professor of Political Science

**Shelly Tenenbaum, PhD**, Sociology Department  
Coordinator, HGS Undergraduate Activities  
Professor of Sociology

**Robert Tobin, PhD**, Department of Language,  
Literature and Culture  
Henry J. Leir Professor of Foreign Languages and Cultures

**Johanna Ray Vollhardt, PhD**, Francis L. Hiatt  
School of Psychology  
Director, Social Psychology Program  
Associate Professor of Psychology

**Kristen Williams, PhD**, Political Science Department  
Professor of Political Science



# STUDENT & ALUMNI NEWS

Students in the Strassler Center program bring unique perspectives with different accents. As a result, discussions are complex, diverse, and fruitful.

Center graduates are now making their mark upon the field. Their scholarly excellence and engagement with public education highlight the success of the program.

...COPZETA WAWA MANEK MANNES WARCELI  
...MATEUSZ MAURZYCY WIEIP  
...MIECZYSKA WIECZYSKA WIECZYSKA WIECZYSKA  
...MOSZE WOTKE  
...MORDECHAJ WOPYC  
...NATALIA NATAN NATANIEL  
...NOBERT MUCHYIA MUSYN  
...PACHELA PACHIMIEL  
...PAPAL PAFAL PEBEKA  
...SABIA SABBATH  
...SABIA SABINA SANCIA  
...SOSIA STANISLAW STEFAN STEFANIA  
...SZACHNO SZALOM SZANJA SZEBACH SZEETEL SZEJNA SZEJNDLA  
...SZANISZEL  
...ZEHUWA ZENG  
...ZACHUMIT



## Graduate Student News

Trips to archives, survivor interviews, conference presentations, grant applications, teacher training, and academic book lists characterize the scholarly lives of Strassler Center doctoral students. The five-year doctoral program is rigorous and the students, who enroll after emerging successfully from the highly competitive selection process, recognize that they are expected to work productively. Students begin developing their dissertation topics upon arrival and are soon ready for serious research. They carry out their work in a range of languages and in locations around the globe. Their original findings are shaping our understanding of genocidal events, the psychology of victims and perpetrators, the processes of reconciliation and justice, the activities of perpetrators and bystanders, intergroup violence, acts of resistance, aid networks for refugees and survivors, and more. Their activities and accomplishments during the 2014-15 academic year are a credit to the Strassler Center.

First-year doctoral student **Anna Aleksanyan** holds the Harry and Ovsanna Chitjian Fellowship. She comes to the Strassler Center from Yerevan, Armenia where she earned an MA in History from Yerevan State University. Having studied the history of the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey, Aleksanyan worked as a guide at the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute in Yerevan. She began to research the activity of western Armenian women prior to the genocide and focused on the gender aspect of the genocide at the Department of Source Studies on the Armenian Genocide where she eventually became head of the department.

The Turkish Union and Progress party began by targeting men for physical elimination. Women and children exiled to the remote Arabian deserts were vulnerable to humiliation, rape, and often mass killings. Turkish gendarmes, Kurds, and Arabs kidnapped many girls and women during the deportations and from concentration camps. These women survived at tremendous cost. Forced to marry their abductors or become their slaves, they were compelled to change their religion and adopt new names and identities. At war's end, Armenian and international organizations tried to emancipate these women and return them to their Armenian identity. Liberators sometimes rescued them by paying ransom or abducting them anew. Some women refused to return out of shame or out of obligation to new families and children. Aleksanyan's dissertation research focuses on the genocidal and postwar experiences of Armenian women as well as the recovery by some of their identity.

With the centennial of the Armenian Genocide, Aleksanyan participated in a host of academic and commemorative events. Invited to take part in a March workshop organized by the University of Padua, she presented "Raphael Lemkin's Concept of Cultural Genocide." At a conference held at the University of Nebraska, she discussed "'Neutral Home' and the Issue of Identity of the Surviving Armenian Women and Children." At the Strassler Center's Graduate Student Conference, she presented "The Dilemma of Re-Armenization of



Anna Aleksanyan and Alicja Podbielska

Women after the Genocide." And she participated in the workshop *Violence against Women, Gender Equality; Gender Violence from Cedaw to Istanbul and Beyond*, organized by the Venice School of Human Rights.

The summer brought her to archives in Yerevan where she conducted research in the Armenian National Archive and to the Nubarian Library in Paris.

**Maayan Armelin** is a Claims Conference Fellow and first-year PhD student concentrating on Holocaust perpetrators' motivations. A granddaughter of Holocaust survivors, she became interested in her grandparents' war experiences in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in particular. Many of their stories recounted the actions of non-Jewish neighbors, as well as German authorities and soldiers. Interested in the dynamics of violent behavior in the context of intergroup relations and conflicts, Armelin studied history and psychology

at the University of Haifa. For her MA thesis, she simulated an armed conflict and used the Prisoners' Dilemma paradigm to evaluate behavior. The results showed that participants were less inclined to act violently against opponents whom they perceived as human beings similar to themselves.

For her dissertation, Armelin will study the factors that shaped the behavior of Nazi perpetrators. She will analyze the SS Einsatzgruppen, the killing squads that operated in the occupied Soviet territories during Operation Barbarossa, and were responsible for perpetrating the face-to-face genocide of Eastern European Jewry. The project will explore their motivations and justifications for mass murder of civilians. She hopes to define the unique social dynamics within these groups, the participants' sense of comradeship and competition and their perception of their assignments and victims. Her research will scrutinize different leadership styles practiced by SS officers commanding the Einsatzgruppen, and the ways these leadership styles shaped the men's willingness to participate in genocide. Using a social psychological perspective, Armelin will apply psychological theories and paradigms to explain the perpetrators' decision-making processes and behaviors.

Armelin has begun to review the German literature and historiography concerning the SS-Einsatzgruppen, their history and ideology, and the manner of their operations. During the summer, she visited the National Archive in Ludwigsburg, Germany, where she reviewed trial material concerning three SS officers who commanded the same Einsatzgruppe unit during the war. These materials shed light on the officers' leadership styles, the inner dynamics within the killing unit, the relations of the SS members among themselves, as well as with each officer. In fall, she will present her early findings at a conference at Winchester University (UK), *Encountering Perpetrators of Mass Killings, Political Violence and Genocide*.

**Sara Brown** is the Stern Fellow in Comparative Genocide Studies. She has been making excellent progress on writing her dissertation, while teaching part time at Mt. San Jacinto College. In addition, she speaks and writes widely about women's agency during the 1994

Genocide in Rwanda. She presented "Genocide Denial in Rwanda and the Role of Women TIGists" at the *Manufacturing Denial Conference* that the Strassler Center hosted and co-sponsored. And she lectured about her dissertation research at Mt. San Jacinto College and Yale University. Her chapter, "Survival and Rescue: Women during the Rwandan Genocide," will be published in the volume *Women and Genocide*, edited by JoAnn Di Georgio-Lutz and Donna Gosbee. Brown's co-authored chapter proposal, "Women Perpetrators: Theorizing Gender and Genocide" will be included in *Perpetrators: Dynamics, Motivations, and Concepts for Participating in Mass Violence*, edited by Timothy Williams and Susanne Buckley-Zistel. A version of this chapter was accepted for presentation at the American Society of Criminology annual meeting.

In her dissertation, *Gender and Agency: Women Rescuers and Perpetrators during the Rwandan Genocide*, Brown explores and analyzes the role of women who exercised agency as rescuers and as perpetrators. While much has been written about the victimization of women, the literature does not scrutinize women who perpetrated crimes against humanity or rescued targeted victims of the Rwandan genocide. Women are traditionally cast as victims during war, genocide, and acts of ethnic cleansing, and indeed many women do suffer horrific gender-specific abuses. This gender-based characterization, however, elides females who exercised agency and became rescuers

or perpetrators. Though fewer in number than the men who acted during the genocide and marginalized socially and economically within Rwandan society, the women who exercised agency during the Rwandan genocide were significant and their participation continues to affect Rwanda today.

Last summer, Brown was contracted by the International IDEA in Stockholm to write a report on women peace builders and spoilers in post-genocide Rwanda. The final report, "Women Spoilers and Peace Builders in Rwanda 1994-2014," was published as part of a series distributed by the European Union. Her other professional accomplishments include joining the board of a corporation currently developing a US Military Liberation of Holocaust Survivors memorial in San Diego. In the coming year, as Brown approaches the conclusion of



Asya Darbinyan, Sara Brown, and Abigail Miller

her dissertation, she will teach “International Human Rights” at San Diego State University and history at Mt. San Jacinto College.

**Asya Darbinyan** completed her second year of doctoral study as the T. McBane Fellow. Her dissertation explores the humanitarian and relief efforts Imperial Russian governmental and non-governmental organizations instituted in response to the Armenian Genocide. She focuses on the refugees who came to Eastern Armenia (part of Russian imperial territory), displaced by the systematic massacres and deportations of Turkish subject Armenians in the Ottoman Empire. The aid organizations operating on the Caucasus frontline included the All-Russian Union of Cities Committee, the Russian Red Cross, and the Tatiana Committee headed by Grand Duchess Tatiana Nikolaevna, the Tsar’s daughter. What, Darbinyan asks, motivated the enormous relief work undertaken by Russian aid groups? What differences existed between the ways the Russian civil and military authorities dealt with the emergency situation that unfolded and the destitute condition of the refugees?



Asya Darbinyan

Darbinyan investigated the National Archives of Armenia during the summer. She examined materials documenting humanitarian efforts of the Russian Committee of the Red Cross and describing the relief work of the Committee of Brotherly Relief, particularly its operations in Etchmiadzin. The religious center of all Armenians and located near Yerevan, Etchmiadzin was one of the main hubs for some 30,000 refugees from the Caucasus front in August 1915. Information about the relief work in Etchmiadzin will help Darbinyan in her analysis of photos in the new permanent exhibit at the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute. Many of those pictured were refugees who were sheltered and aided by funds provided from the Russian Empire.

In addition to research and coursework, Darbinyan participated in many of the events organized to commemorate the Armenian Genocide centennial. She presented her research at *Responsibility 2015: Armenian Genocide Centennial Conference* held in New York, at the Strassler Center’s International Graduate Student Conference, and at the International Association of Genocide Scholars conference in

Yerevan in July.

Claims Conference Fellow **Kathrin Haurand’s** dissertation project, *Jewish Refugees in Teheran during World War II*, investigates how Jewish refugees pursued a path forward after their experiences of loss and trauma during their flight to Iran. It sheds light on the role and function of nationality, class, education, religion, political affiliation, age, and gender in shaping the émigrés’ adjustment to their new environment. Her project also charts the aid networks that developed to enable the Jewish refugees a safe passage to Iran and later on to Palestine. In recent months, Haurand researched American archives that document rescue operations to Iran, and from Iran to Palestine, including those at the American Sephardi Federation, and the Hoover Institute at Stanford University.

The American Sephardi Federation hosts numerous collections containing material on Iranian-American relations during World War II. Haurand found valuable documents on the situation and activities of the refugees in Iran in the collection of Ozar Hatorah, an orthodox Jewish educational organization focusing on Middle Eastern communities. They launched educational projects with the help of a Polish refugee, Rabbi Isaac Levi. Haurand was able to cross reference their reports on Rabbi Isaac Levi’s activities with earlier research she conducted at the Alliance Israélite Universelle archive in Paris, thanks to a grant from the Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah.

Most of these reports and letters contain institutional, but rarely individual perspectives. To find these personal narratives, Haurand has been in touch with the National Association of Jewish Child Holocaust Survivors. She presented her research project at one of their events devoted to Jewish refugees deported by Soviet authorities from Russian-occupied eastern Poland to forced labor settlements in the Soviet interior. Through the Association, Haurand was able to contact survivors who fled to Iran as child refugees and who are now living in Israel and California.

Haurand visited the Polish government-in-exile collection located

at the Hoover Institute which includes a treasure trove of documents relating to the experience of refugees during their flight through Poland, Russia, the severe conditions in Soviet labor camps, and their journey to Iran. Child refugees wrote some of these reports and essays during their stay in Teheran. Many include detailed drawings and descriptions which provide insights into the harsh realities of the children's lives, and the traumatic events they endured until their arrival in Teheran. In the Polish Ministry of Information collection Haurand also found documents about the status and situation of Jewish adult refugees who joined Anders Army and were stationed in Iran during the war years.

Finally, Haurand was pleased to have the opportunity to advise the Kupferberg Holocaust Resource Center at Queensborough Community College (Bayside, NY) which is organizing an exhibition on Iranian Jewish History.

**Gabrielle Hauth** completed her first year of doctoral study as the Richard M. Cohen '71 MD fellow. Her research focuses on gender and sexuality during the Holocaust. In examining sexual relationships in the camps, she questions whether intimacy ameliorated or exacerbated the violence. Challenging the current categorization of camp sexual behavior, Hauth problematizes the way we understand sexual abuse and consensual relationships in that situation. She examines both prisoners and guards— their relationships within their groups and those formed across groups. By examining camp sexuality, she hopes to advance scholarship on Holocaust sexuality, as well as to engage with popular discourses concerning distinctions between victim, bystander, and perpetrator.

Hauth's focus on concentration camps allows her to observe how the same environment shaped intimacy for both victims and perpetrators. Prisoners and guards utilized sexuality in different ways and for different motivations. As the camp context differed radically from civilian life, analyzing how prisoners and guards adapted their sexuality to the circumstances, for what purposes, and to what ends contributes to understanding camp sexuality as a whole. Hauth has studied testimonies from the USC Shoah Visual History Archive that discuss intimacy between prisoners and sexual relations between prisoners and guards. And she found important testimony concerning homosexual intimacy between prisoners at the Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies at Yale University.

Hauth used her summer research months to the fullest. She presented "Voluntary Sexual Relations among Concentration Camp Pris-

oners" at the workshop *Sources for Historians of Love, Sex, and War* held at the Centre d'histoire de Sciences Po' in Paris. And she participated in the Auschwitz Jewish Center Fellows Program which gave her the opportunity to visit important sites in Poland and Slovakia to learn about Polish-Jewish history. Visiting the sites of the Holocaust deepened her understanding of its history and will influence her scholarship and dissertation project.

Agnes Manoogian Hausrath fellow **Ümit Kurt** is making excellent progress on his dissertation, *The Emergence of the New Wealthy Social Strata between 1915-1922: The Local Elites' Seizure of Armenian Property in Aintab*. Kurt is producing a microhistory of the Armenians in the city of Aintab, located on the Syrian border in southeast Turkey, before, during, and after the genocide. An Armenian Studies Scholarship from the Gulbenkian Foundation supports his research.

Kurt begins with the political changes in Aintab in the decades prior to the deportation and annihilation years (1915-1917). He describes the Hamidian massacres (1894-96) that targeted Armenians in Aintab and other Armenian populated provinces. Following the Young Turk Revolution (1908), new relationships emerged between Armenian political organizations, particularly the Aintab Dashnaksutyun organization, and the Aintab branch of the Union and Progress Party. He examines this tumultuous political atmosphere and explains the impact of the Adana massacres (1909) on the Aintab Armenians. Elucidating the economic dimensions of the genocide, Kurt describes how Turks used the Abandoned Properties Laws to confiscate Armenian property in Aintab.

While writing his dissertation, Kurt has also published actively. His article "Legal and Official Plundering of Armenian and Jewish Properties within a Comparative Perspective" appears in the *Journal of Holocaust and Genocide Studies*. He compares the quasi "legal" mechanisms used to expropriate wealth during the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust. Another article, under review by the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, examines the rescue efforts of Necmeddin Bey, who was appointed a sub-district governor in the Selimiye region of Syria to which most of the Aintab Armenians were deported. Kurt contributed a Turkish version of this piece to an edited volume published in Turkey (May 2015), which he co-edited. And Berghahn Books published his co-authored volume with Taner Akçam, *The Spirit of the Laws: The Plunder of Wealth in the Armenian Genocide* in spring.

In other professional developments, the centennial of the Armenian

Genocide afforded several opportunities for Kurt to present his research findings. He participated in the Strassler Center's International Graduate Student Conference, lectured at UCLA, and presented at a conference in New York on the Armenian Genocide within the context of the Ottoman Empire and World War I. In fall, Kurt assumes a research fellowship in the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State University.

Cummings fellow **Samantha Lakin** began her doctoral studies in Comparative Genocide Studies having completed an MA at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University. She researched how survivors of mass atrocities and genocide construct their experiences through the formation of historical narratives, and how these narratives affect their social and political relations with different communities in the state and beyond. Her research examined connections between historical grievances and injustices, psychosocial healing, and state policies that enable survivors to better recover from mass atrocities.

For her MA thesis, Lakin surveyed visitors and interviewed memorial guides and leaders of survivor organizations at the Kigali Genocide Memorial and several other memorial sites in Rwanda. She considered how memorials create a dialogue space for survivors to explore their histories with violence; the educational value of memorial sites for children of survivors; and international visitor attitudes toward narratives of extreme violence. She was also one of the first researchers to work with the Rwanda testimonies in the USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive. Her findings demonstrate that some survivors share their stories during commemoration periods, while others subordinate their individual narratives to the official discourse still developing in Rwanda.

Lakin is interested in how the international community seeks to restore justice and to help states rebuild institutions after mass atrocities and genocide. Transitional justice mechanisms are divided between juridical justice that addresses perpetrators and symbolic justice that focuses on victims. This is the framework for Lakin's doctoral research on victim and survivor attitudes toward justice in

post-genocide Rwanda. The external validation that comes from memorials helps survivors cope with their experiences and regain their sense of value in the post-conflict society. Survivors seek to incorporate their histories into the emerging narrative of the transitioning society to help them cope with their experiences and build post-war lives.

Lakin's dissertation will explore how states and local communities can provide meaningful justice for survivors of the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda. The western community has often defined justice, yet local conceptions of justice for genocide survivors may differ from these prescribed notions. Lakin speaks with those who experienced the trauma of the genocide firsthand, to understand their experiences

with justice mechanisms in Rwanda. Her goal is to gain a local and nuanced understanding of how to provide meaningful justice for survivors. She seeks to understand survivors' unique and varied experiences and attitudes toward justice, in order to help them cope with what they endured.

Lakin spent three months in Kigali this summer, conducting field research for her dissertation prospectus. She carried out direct observation at memorial sites, conducted document reviews with primary source materials in a number of archives, and engaged in preliminary interviews with Rwandans about their attitudes toward justice and memorialization. She was invited to lecture at the University of Rwanda Law Faculty in Butare and the National Legal Task Force for Reparations. Finally, she continued to consult for survivors' organizations regarding memorialization.



Samantha Lakin

**Abigail Miller** proudly held the Tapper Fellowship during her second year of doctoral study. Miller's dissertation examines Argentina as a place of refuge for Jewish émigrés during the Nazi era and after the Holocaust, with a focus on refugee narratives of loss and recovery. She draws on memory studies, anthropological approaches to human rights, and social psychological responses to collective victimization. Following the Argentinean Jewish refugee community into the postwar decades, she traces their socio-political situation in the period leading up to and during the Dirty War. She plans to analyze narratives of loss and repair by Jewish refugees in Argentina. Explor-



Abigail Miller

ing how the memory of the Holocaust affected the Jewish community during the Dirty War, she will drill down on the situation of Jewish Argentinians at that time. Did they engage in activism as a result of the legacy of the Holocaust? she asks.

Miller researches how the experience and memory of genocide affects refugee communities' integration into a new national community. By examining the Jewish refugee community in Argentina, she seeks to understand how such groups respond to cycles of state-sponsored threats and violence. She is interested in the potential use of such historical research to influence current policymaking for refugee victims of genocide and mass atrocity. To that end, she attended a fall workshop on *Refugee Testimonies* led by Clark University professor Anita Fábos (Department of International Development, Community, and Environment) and Leora Kahn, Executive Director of PROOF Media for Social Justice.

Miller has begun her doctoral research in a number of archives. She visited the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee archives in New York to mine their records on relief work in Argentina during the war. A summer research trip to Buenos Aires introduced her to the community and national sites of memory and afforded her the opportunity to establish contact with archivists and local historians. She also returned to the USHMM archives to continue her research in their collections. She was pleased to present her research

on narratives of loss by Jewish Holocaust refugees in Argentina at the International Association of Genocide Scholars conference in Yerevan, Armenia.

Shirley and Ralph Rose Fellow **Michael Nolte** analyzes the experiences of Jewish women at the Hadamar mental institution during the years 1933 to 1939. His doctoral research was supported by the Hilda and Al Kirsch award this year. Nolte has established that, in the pre-war period, Hadamar specialized in treating people diagnosed as psychopaths. In general, young urban women who did not conform to contemporary social norms received such diagnoses. These patients usually came to the attention of medical authorities as a result of sexually transmitted diseases or for performing poorly at school. Their families were often indigent and fragmented. Like non-Jewish inmates, most Jewish patients at Hadamar were diagnosed with psychopathy.

If the proportion of psychopaths among Jewish and gentile patients was balanced, Jewish female patients were anomalous in two respects. Most of the Jewish patients were, on average, ten years older than the gentile patients. And roughly half of the applications for sterilization were rejected in the case of Jewish psychopaths while most applications for gentiles were approved. The officials in charge of discovering psychopaths screened the lower strata of society. And Jewish female patients hailed mainly from middle-class households. They encountered these officials after Nazi persecution brought them



Ümit Kurt and Mikal Brotnov Eckstrom '10



Mihai Poliec

and their families under financial pressure. Social factors determined who was diagnosed as psychopathic. The Jewish patients were older because they experienced social decline later in their lives, and thus encountered the mental health officials only after 1934.

Antisemitism in patient records influenced the treatment of Jewish patients. The files are filled with remarks catering to anti-Jewish stereotypes. Jews were seen as cunning, deceiving, and greedy. Medical records stressed that Jewish patients could not be trusted. The court records demonstrate that they did not view Jews as sick, but as ill-intentioned and deceiving. Nolte presented these findings in lectures at the University of Virginia.

Nolte attended the annual conference of the Association for the Studies of Nationalism at Columbia University. Together with his co-author, Hanna Schmidt-Holländer, he presented “‘Du must Caligari werden!’ – A Critique of Nationalism in *Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari*.”

Sidney and Rosalie Rose Fellow **Alicja Podbielska** explores popular memory of aid offered to Jews by ethnic Poles during the Holocaust in her dissertation, *The Memory of Rescue in Poland*. She analyzes the shifting Polish narrative of rescue from the immediate postwar years, through the communist period and democratization, until the present, tracing the development of the popular myth of Polish rescuers as altruistic and representative of the whole of Polish society’s war-time attitudes. Contrasting that construct with the picture that has emerged from recent historiography suggesting that rescuers may also have acted from self-interest, she explores gener-

alizations, omissions, and concealments within memory discourse. To reveal them, she juxtaposes Jewish and Polish narratives. And she compares the highly ritualized public discourse of heroism with the “raw” unscripted private memory that emerges in oral testimonies narrated by elderly rescuers, their families, and other inhabitants in rural areas of Poland.

Podbielska observes many paradoxes in the history of Polish memory of rescue. At first, Polish national memory backgrounded the Jewish experience, limiting opportunities to mention rescuers. Ironically, the anti-Jewish events of 1968 prompted Poles to emphasize rescue to counteract allegations of Polish antisemitism. As democratic changes initiated more open dialogue about the past, debates about Polish involvement in and attitudes toward the mass murder of Jews ignited interest in rescuers. Yet, reviewing the Polish press (1945-1989), Podbielska observed ample space devoted to rescue, debunking the myth about silence that allegedly reigned until the early 1990s. In the very first debate about Polish attitudes toward the Holocaust (1945-1948), references to rescue abound and the debate resembles that occurring in Poland today.

During a summer research trip to Poland, Podbielska conducted research in the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw. She explored files of the Commission to Aid Poles, established in 1945 by the Central Committee of Jews to assist rescuers and ended in the early 1950s by the communist authorities who later accused Jews of ingratitude to their rescuers. She also examined letters exchanged between rescuers and rescued and documentation concerning Yad Vashem’s recognition of Righteous Gentiles. Finally, Podbielska interviewed the curators of the Polin Museum of the History of Polish Jews about the representation of rescue in the permanent exhibition and the creators of the exhibition in the Warsaw Zoo where some Jews, aided by Polish staff, survived the war in hiding.

Claims Conference fellow **Mihai Poliec** continued archival research this year with the support of the Samuel and Anna Jacobs award. In his dissertation, *Civilian Collaboration during the Holocaust in Romania*, Poliec examines why civilians went from bystanders to perpetrators and how they became complicit in the Holocaust. His research sheds light on anti-Jewish violence in Bessarabia and Bukovina after July 1941.

Working in the USHMM archives, Poliec examined papers from the

Czernowitz Oblast Archives and from the Romanian Ministry of Defense. They record civilians informing on Jews and complaining about Jewish specialists exempted from deportation, Jewish escapees from Transnistria, Jews in hiding, and Jews used for compulsory labor. Gentile civilians feared the release of Jews from ghettos would create economic competition. Associations of Romanian professionals (physicians, pharmacists, war veterans) demanded the expulsion of their Jewish colleagues. Complicity took many forms, but the consequences of denunciation were to make victims vulnerable to deportation and death.

Romanian Ministry of Defense files document civilian victimization of Jews detailed in reports, telegrams, and other official letters. For example, in December 1943, a Romanian clerk denounced a Jew working in a gentile's store. A Romanian merchant informed the clerk, who was Head Secretary of the Romanian Chamber of Commerce in Chisinau. The clerk caught the Jew and escorted him to the police precinct. The authorities counted on the zeal of such people who understood that it was their civic duty to take action against those no longer protected by law or society.

In the capital of Bessarabia, the staff of the psychiatric hospital regularly compromised the well-being of Jewish patients. For example, in December 1941, a medical team assessed as viable the deportation of four Jewish orphans to Transnistria. In March 1942, the hospital declared a number of Jewish patients "fit" to return to the local ghetto. The hospital requested permission from the governor to rid itself of its remaining Jewish patients who were "a burden" on the institution. And in May 1942, the hospital discharged a Jewish female patient to the ghetto finding her healed of mental illness.

Poliec obtained a collection of letters sent by Jewish deportees in Transnistria to their relatives or friends exempted from deportation. He looks forward to organizing this material as well as discoveries from his final trips to archives in Romania and Yad Vashem, in Jerusalem.

**Jason Tingler** is a Claims Conference fellow, now fully engaged with dissertation research, having completed his oral exams and dissertation prospectus defense. He examines ethnic relations and violence in the Chelm region of occupied Poland, in the eastern part of the Lublin District. The region housed the Sobibor death camp and the prisoner of war camp Stalag 319. While the former is well-known

for its approximately 170,000 Jewish victims, the latter is typically overlooked despite its death toll of more than 100,000 (mostly Soviet) prisoners of war. Several Jewish ghettos and labor camps were also located in Chelm, and the region witnessed deportations and death marches of Jewish civilians. Yet, the Germans were not the only perpetrators in the district. After coexisting more or less peacefully for centuries, Polish and Ukrainian residents committed deadly acts of violence against each other, as well as surviving Jews in the region. Polish and Ukrainian partisans instituted their own policies of ethnic cleansing, manipulating the German occupational authorities to further their own ethno-nationalist aims in the region. Tingler's dissertation will explore the impact of the German occupation on these ethnic relations to understand how this region's historical multiethnic diversity came to an end.

Tingler conducted research at the USHMM in April. He obtained a wealth of crucial sources, including memoirs and postwar testimonies of Jewish survivors from the Chelm region collected by the Jewish Historical Committee after the war, records of postwar Polish trials of Polish and Ukrainian collaborators, case files from German trials, investigations into Nazi atrocities in the Chelm region, and wartime reports from the Polish underground regarding ethnic relations and atrocities in eastern Poland. At the US National Archives in College Park, he investigated captured German military records. He found the monthly and daily reports from the military command overseeing the occupation and exploitation of the Lublin district. The military command regularly summarized the German occupational policies that pertained to this region, including the deportation of Polish and Jewish populations, as well as the seizure of agricultural foodstuffs. Reading these files, Tingler found that the German occupiers were concerned with the impact of Nazi policies on the occupied population, and regularly discussed local inhabitants' attitudes. These sources have been crucial for Tingler's understanding of relations among ethnic groups in this complex region of Poland. For instance, as these reports discuss the growing persecution and mass murder of the Jewish population, they also note that local Poles were ambivalent to Jewish suffering, and in some cases even "cheered for the ongoing Final Solution" of the Jews.

**Mary Jane Rein**

## Life after the Center

Roots and branches recur throughout this report and are an apt motif to represent the doctoral training offered at the Strassler Center. Having established roots as students, our graduates carry the Center forward as they branch out professionally. Several recent PhDs have achieved a significant milestone with the publication of their revised dissertations as scholarly books.

Adara Goldberg PhD '12 serves as Director of Education at the Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre. She has helped grow educational programming and developed teaching and learning tools for visiting exhibitions. Her educational work is informed by her Strassler Center training, including her recently published dissertation, *Holocaust Survivors in Canada: Exclusion, Inclusion, Transformation, 1947-1955* (University of Manitoba Press 2015). Goldberg examines the experiences of Holocaust survivors who immigrated to Canada, their reception after arrival, and how they adapted to their new homeland. And she explores relationships between survivors and local Jewish social service organizations and communities, and analyzes how these relationships helped and hindered survivors' adaptation.

Her findings challenge the conventional wisdom that Holocaust survivors who came to North America had a common experience of acceptance, success, and recovery. Goldberg's dissertation committee comprised Professors Debórah Dwork (her advisor), Frank Bialystock (University of Toronto), and Richard Menkis (University of British Columbia).

Alexis Herr PhD '14 is a lecturer at Keene State College, home to the Cohen Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies. Her revised dissertation is in press and will be published as *The Holocaust and Compensated Compliance in Italy: Fossoli di Carpi, 1942-1952* (Palgrave Macmillan Italian Studies, 2016.) Herr critically examines the widespread myth of the "good Italians" through analysis of the role of bystanders and their "compensated compliance" at the Fossoli di Carpi transit camp. Assessing the manuscript, an anonymous reviewer offered strong praise: "It covers a controversial and important subject which has been little studied.... It is a book which should re-position Italian debates and go straight onto reading lists. Moreover, the book is clearly written and argued, impressively backed by theoretical and methodological reflections and well aware of the key historiographical context both in Italian and English." Herr will hold the USHMM's Pearl



Back row: Michael Nolte, Mikal Brotnov Eckstrom, Jody Manning, Raz Segal, Natalya Lazar; Front row: Joanna Sliwa, Adara Goldber, Betsy Anthony

Resnick Postdoctoral Fellowship for an eight-month residency in 2016. Moving from bystanders, Herr plans to write the first history of Italian perpetrators, Italian Fascist *questore* (regional governors) and *prefetti* (police) who facilitated and organized the deportations of Jews and others from Italy. Herr's dissertation committee comprised Professors Debórah Dwork (her advisor), John Roth (Claremont McKenna College), and Marla Stone (Occidental College).

Stefan Ionescu PhD '13 served as a post-doctoral fellow at the Rodgers Center for Holocaust Education at Chapman University in California and now relocates to North Carolina where he will teach at Elon University. His outstanding dissertation became *Jewish Resistance to Romanianization, 1940-1944* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), which belongs to the Palgrave Studies in the History of Genocide. His book demonstrates that while Romanian efforts to cleanse the economic sphere of "foreign" influences devastated the Jewish and Roma communities, sabotage and other forms of resistance by Jews and Roma hindered the full implementation of those policies. His scholarship adds a new dimension to our understanding of Jewish and Roma resistance during the Holocaust. Ionescu's dissertation committee was comprised of Professors Debórah Dwork (his advisor) and Maria Bucur (Indiana University), and Dr. Radu Ioanid (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum).

Raz Segal PhD '13 continues his successful trajectory. His revised dissertation, *Genocide in the Carpathians: War, Social Breakdown, and Mass Violence, 1914-1945*, has been accepted for publication as part of the Stanford Studies on Central and Eastern Europe (Stanford University Press, 2016). This past year, Segal served as Thomas Arthur Arnold Postdoctoral Fellow at The Zvi Yavetz School of Historical Studies at Tel Aviv University. He is also a co-organizer with Professor Ken MacLean of the second Israel Academic Exchange (September 2015). Segal and MacLean proposed the concept of "post-mass atrocity societies" as a way to frame discussions about how people respond to large-scale violence in the past, its legacies, and the threat of recurrence, and the ongoing processes of formation and dissolution of nation-states and their devastating impact on civilian populations and social structures. Segal's dissertation committee was comprised of Professors Debórah Dwork (his advisor), Yehuda Bauer (Hebrew University, emeritus), and Antony Polonsky (Brandeis University).

Seeds planted, roots established, Strassler Center graduates branch out in myriad directions. They are a force in the field of Holocaust and Genocide Studies, and they encourage current students to follow their lead.

**Sarah Cushman**

**Kim Allar (ABD)**, Saul Kagan Claims Conference Academic Fellow for Advanced Shoah Studies

**Elizabeth Anthony (ABD)**, Curt C. and Else Silberman ITS staff scholar at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

**Cristina Andriani PhD '13**, Licensed Mental Health Counselor at Staffier Associates and Family Continuity

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**Alexis Herr PhD '15**, Lecturer, Keene State College, Cohen Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies

**Stefan Ionescu PhD '13**, Research Associate and Holocaust History Fellow, Wilkinson College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Chapman University

**Jeffrey Koerber PhD '15**, Research Associate and Instructor, Wilkinson College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Chapman University

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**Ilana F. Offenberger PhD '10**, Lecturer, University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth

**Christine Schmidt PhD '03**, ITS Archive Researcher at the Wiener Library for the Holocaust and Genocide, London

**Raz Segal PhD '13**, Thomas Arthur Arnold Postdoctoral Fellow, The Zvi Yavetz Graduate School of Historical Studies, Tel Aviv University

**Joanna Sliwa (ABD)**, Saul Kagan Claims Conference Academic Fellow for Advanced Shoah Studies and Faculty Advisor, Master Teacher Institute in Holocaust Education, Joan and Allen Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life, Rutgers University

**Lotta Stone PhD '10**, Historian and Research Associate, Middleton Place Foundation, Charleston, SC

## Undergraduate News

Since the introduction of the undergraduate concentration in Holocaust and Genocide Studies (HGS) in 1998, Sociology professor Shelly Tenenbaum has guided its activities with acumen and dedication. Tenenbaum has been instrumental in advancing the undergraduate program from an idea to the concentration with the second greatest number of undergraduates at Clark and with the greatest number of course offerings. Growing the concentration from its roots in history to a rich multidisciplinary program, comprising psychology, political science, geography, and comparative literature, Tenenbaum aims to have students study the circumstances that cause genocide, the violent processes that unfold, and the efforts toward reconciliation in the aftermath. Tenenbaum recently reorganized the concentration into three clusters: “Holocaust,” “Forced Deportation, Mass Murder, and Genocide in the Eastern Mediterranean,” and “Human Rights, Mass Murder, and Genocide” to better address students’ wide interests.

To complement these course offerings, Tenenbaum organizes lectures and events that address undergraduate concerns. This year, she co-sponsored a two-day visit by Yale Sociology professor Jeffrey Alexander who visited Clark in his capacity as Phi Beta Kappa Society Visiting Scholar. He lectured on “Cultural Trauma, Social Solidarity, and Moral Responsibility: Reactions to the Holocaust and Other Mass Murders.” An exhibition in the Siff Gallery, “Picturing Moral Courage: The Rescuers,” curated by Leora Kahn, Executive Director of PROOF: Media for Social Justice and a former visiting professor at the Strassler Center, was displayed in connection with a workshop for professionals engaged in refugee settlement. Kahn discussed her work on the project and gave students and faculty a guided tour of the exhibit.

Tenenbaum actively maintains an impressive list of undergraduate internships related to Holocaust and Genocide studies. In the past, students have held internships at organizations located around the globe, including in Bosnia, Cambodia, the Czech Republic, Guatemala, Poland, Rwanda, and Sweden. Many have received stipend



Sociology Professor Shelly Tenenbaum

support, thanks to generous endowments established by Debra '77 and Jeffrey '76 Geller, Ina and Haskell Gordon, and the Belfer family, as well as a recent anonymous contribution in honor of Doris Tager. Tenenbaum oversees the competitive awards process. This year's recipients include Marisa Natale '17 and Emma Durocher '16. Natale catalogued the Robert Messing '59 Holocaust Money Collection. Durocher is the first Clark undergraduate to intern at the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center in Connecticut, which

seeks to expand understanding of indigenous cultures. Among her other tasks, Durocher compiled materials related to the 1637 Pequot War and the 1676 Turners Falls Massacre, a vicious attack by English colonists against an unguarded Indian village during King Philip's War.

HGS concentrators pursued a variety of rewarding opportunities throughout the year. Alicja Gancarz '17 obtained a Steinbrecher fellowship to record the oral histories of her two Polish grandmothers. In Poland, she interviewed her maternal grandmother and other family members about the historic upheavals they experienced during World War II, communism, and in the post-communist period. In Massachusetts, Gancarz interviewed her paternal grandmother, who immigrated in 1995. She then analyzed and compared her grandmothers' lives in order to understand how individual choices shaped their experiences and views. The project culminated with reflections about how her family history has shaped her opportunities and world view.

Six undergraduates participated in the Prague Jewish Studies Program at Charles University during the spring semester through Clark's study abroad program. Four of the six are HGS concentrators who relished the opportunity to study Jewish life in Central Europe. In addition to taking courses such as "Punk and Alternative Culture from Nazism to Communism in the Czech Lands," in which students examined post-1968 Czech culture through different artistic media, the students, in true Clark spirit, opted to pursue service-learning courses. Among other activities, they taught English in local schools and participated in the Czech equivalent of Big Brothers, Big Sisters. As their final project, Lily Scheindlin '16 and Daniella Levine '16 created a temporary graffiti memorial for Czech victims of the Holocaust ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=VfZKWY\\_7V7A](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VfZKWY_7V7A)) on which they quoted the famed Czech author Milan Kundera, "People derived too much pleasure from seeing their fellow man morally humiliated to spoil that pleasure by hearing out an explanation."

Another concentrator, Leah Simonson '17, visited Sofia Bulgaria during winter break with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. The trip gathered young American and Bulgarian Jews to discuss antisemitism in Eastern Europe and provided historical context through conversations with Holocaust survivors. Simonson returned to Europe over spring break with the organization Germany Close-up which brought German and American Jews to Weimar, Germany and the nearby concentration camp, Buchenwald. Continuing her commitment to bridging difference, Simonson worked at the International YMCA in Israel this summer, in a program that connects



Above: Rebecca Liebman '15 at the Clinton Global Initiative;  
below: Daniella Levine '16 and Lily Scheindlin '16 in Prague





PhD candidates Mihai Poliec, Elizabeth Anthony, and Natalya Lazar with Photo Archive Intern Jonathan Edelman '16 at the USHMM

Israeli and Palestinian children in a relaxed and friendly environment.

Tenenbaum advises the Clark chapter of STAND: A Student Anti-Genocide Coalition. This year, they were committed to raising awareness about North Korean refugees hiding in China who need basic aid and assistance with resettlement. STAND sponsored a screening of the documentary *The People's Crisis* (2012), produced by the activist group Liberty in North Korea (LINK), which presents the humanitarian crisis in North Korea through interviews with refugees and experts. Keen to ground their activism in knowledge and facts, STAND hosted T. Kumar, the international advocacy director of Amnesty International, for a lecture about human rights abuses in North Korea. A weeklong series of events culminated in a STAND dance-a-thon to benefit LINK, whose mission the students support: to change the dialogue surrounding North Korea in order to focus on the suffering of the people. STAND will concentrate their advocacy efforts in 2015-16 on the rise of Islamic radicalism and ISIS.

Committed as they are to the study of genocide and mass violence, HGS students major and excel in other disciplines. A case in point is Andrew Bellesis '16 who received Clark's Phi Beta Kappa

Sophomore Prize. The nation's oldest academic honor society, Phi Beta Kappa honors an outstanding sophomore who has demonstrated early academic achievement in a rigorous program of study across a wide breadth of disciplines. Nominated by HGS Professors Tenenbaum and Taner Akçam, as well as chemistry Professor Mark Turnbull, Bellesis clearly embodies these standards as he pursues a double major in biochemistry and molecular biology, in addition to his HGS concentration. More impressive still, Bellesis is first author on a published scientific paper on which he collaborated with chemistry Professors Mark Turnbull and Chris Landee.

The robust activities of the undergraduate concentration are a testament to Professor Tenenbaum's dedicated work as a teacher, advisor, and scholar. She has nurtured a culture of excellence evident throughout the academic year that shines bright on Academic Spree day, held in spring. Half of the current HGS concentrators presented their work in talks, panels, or posters this year. The accomplishments of her students and advisees are a credit to Tenenbaum and her unflinching devotion to undergraduate education.

Jake Dinerman '16

## LEEP Internship: Holocaust-Era Money and an Economic Component of Genocide

When Mary Jane Rein, Executive Director of the Strassler Center, contacted me about a potential summer research internship, I was thrilled. I was eager to embark on an academic project to which I could devote a lot of time, learn research skills that historians practice, and broaden my intellectual horizons. At my interview, she pulled out a large mailing envelope stuffed with numismatics journals, newspaper clippings, and a collection of Holocaust-era coins and notes, carefully preserved in protective laminate sheets. The feeling of holding these artifacts is indescribable; they are significant not only because of their age and historical context, but because money is an element of common experience that connects the lives of everyday people throughout history, including those who were victimized by the Holocaust.

Robert Messing '59, an amateur numismatist who has written widely about Jewish monetary items and is a founding member of the American Israel Numismatic Association, generously donated this collection to the Strassler Center for use by scholars and students. My internship, funded by a stipend from the Arthur and Rochelle Belfer Endowment competitively awarded to an undergraduate Holocaust and Genocide Studies concentrator, entailed researching the material and producing a catalogue of the collection. Additional support from the LEEP (Liberal Education and Effective Practice) Center ensured that the project benefited from the intellectual and practical elements of that program. In addition to writing a paper on Holocaust money, I developed ideas for how these materials could serve as a teaching resource in History, Economics, Art History, and other classrooms at Clark.

The Messing collection contains a variety of coins and notes issued for exclusive use in specific Holocaust labor camps and ghettos, including Buchenwald, Lodz, Mittelbau, Terezin, and Westerbork. It is well known that the Third Reich despoiled the Jewish community during the Holocaust, and this money was a tool of that process. The use of camp- and ghetto-specific money is related to the larger economic context of the Holocaust in which expropriated valuables helped fund the Reich war effort. It also served as yet another ruse in a system designed to persuade inmates that work could save them.

When people first entered these camps or ghettos, Nazi officials confiscated their cash and possessions in exchange for ghetto or camp money. The currency had no real value, and was exchanged at a rate that greatly disadvantaged the bearer. The process enriched



Marisa Natale '17

the Germans but also served to prevent escape. Outside, the holder would have no legitimate currency and this money readily identified the bearer as an escapee. Then too, providing camp money placated the inmates who were duped into believing that some sort of normality prevailed. Worst of all, money was often distributed to the “highest performing” workers in forced labor camps. By keeping prisoners on inadequate rations and giving them the opportunity to buy food with cash bonuses, the Nazis ensured that the prisoners would work themselves to death in an effort to earn enough food to stay alive.

The role of camp- and ghetto-specific currency in the process of genocide deserves scholarly attention. It is intimately tied to the violence so many suffered under Nazism, and the consequences of this research have the potential to be far-reaching; both in expanding our understanding of the Holocaust and our understanding of economic violence in other genocides. I look forward to sharing my research findings and I am genuinely grateful for the generosity of Robert Messing, as well as the mentorship and guidance of Dr Mary Jane Rein and Professor Thomas Kühne.

Marisa Natale '17



# GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

The Center's tree, located beside the Rose Library, and its graduate student offices are dedicated to the memory of Holocaust survivor Henry Tobak. A plaque relates a Talmudic tale that explains the significance of these gifts. A young girl asks an old man planting a carob tree how long it will take to bear fruit. Seventy years, he explains. Will he live to enjoy its fruit? she asks. No, he responds, but just as he has enjoyed trees planted by those before him, he hopes to do the same for those to come. And so it is with our tree. Education, research, and greater human understanding, the fruits of our program, will accrue to the benefit of future generations.



## Growth & Development

Newly elected Clark University trustee Dr Rebecca Colin '89 is full of joy and enthusiasm for her philanthropic work! A magnificent pledge in support of a building addition sets the stage for construction of the Colin Flug Graduate Study Wing. Rebecca, along with her parents Fred and Barbara Colin, and the trustees of the Simon and Eve Colin Foundation, are long-standing supporters of the Strassler Center. And Rebecca's pledge came with an extraordinary commitment: to share her passion for the work of the Strassler Center with family and friends. She invited many to attend a 14 May event held at Temple Sholom in Greenwich, CT where they heard from President David Angel about the Center's compelling vision and the need for space to accommodate its growing program and to expand its overcrowded library, and from Professor Debórah Dwork about landmark scholarship undertaken at the Center.

The Colin pledge, a major capital commitment from David Strassler, and gifts from a growing number of friends and supporters, launched a concerted design effort. Betty '50 and Ira Dyer made a generous gift to be used at the discretion of Director Debórah Dwork and her top priority, she assured them, is the Graduate Study Wing. A bequest from long-time library patron Diana Bartley will help ensure space for the thousands of volumes she gifted. The family and friends of Herbert Rein agreed to designate gifts in his memory to the library, in recognition of his genuine love of books and deep interest in the tragic fate of European Jewry. These gifts will ensure that the Center's library and research facilities will keep pace with the needs of faculty and students.

If we desperately need more space to accommodate our burgeoning international cadre of doctoral students, fellowship and research bursary support remains in the forefront of the Center's funding needs. Generous friends continue to provide fellowship stipends and research awards. Penny '68 and Bruce '66 Wein perpetuate the values and interests of Penny's parents, Hilda and Al Kirsch, with an award in their names to which they make annual contributions. Ernest Rubenstein and his fellow trustees of the Samuel and Anna Jacobs Foundation have established an endowed research award that honors the memory of the Foundation's donors, his in-laws. Current fellowships funded by Robin Moss and the trustees of the Buster Foundation in honor of Richard Cohen '71 MD, Sara Chitjian and the Hary and Ovsanna Chitjian Foundation for a student working on the Armenian Genocide, an anonymous donor in honor of beloved teacher T. McBane also for a student working on the Armenian Genocide, and the Cummings Foundation in support of

comparative genocide enable the Center to recruit first-rate students. The Conference on Material Claims against Germany funds four doctoral fellowships, as they have for more than a decade. And endowments established by Howard Fromson, Bill Hausrath '53, Glenn '71 and Leslie Parish, Marlene and David Persky, Sidney and Rosalie Rose, Al Tapper, and all five of Ralph and Shirley Rose's children, provide support for students now and in perpetuity.

We are grateful to these friends and the many donors listed here whose contributions underwrote the activities of the Strassler Center during the academic year 2014-15. Their gifts light the way to a better future.

**Mary Jane Rein**



Robert Messing '59 and Professor Debórah Dwork

## Donor Profile: The Melvin S. Cutler Charitable Foundation

Camaraderie and mutual respect emerge in a conversation with several trustees of the Melvin S. Cutler Charitable Foundation about their philanthropic activities. The Foundation is a product of the vision, funding, and expansive personality of its eponymous donor, but Mel is quick to share credit for the work and recognition with his fellow trustees. Six in all, they include Mel and his adult children, Liz, an artist; and Doug Cutler, President of Cutler Management; his granddaughter Kelly Cutler; long-time colleague Frederic Mulligan, Chair of Cutler Associates; and attorney and friend, Robert Adler. Mel, Fred, and Rob spoke about the Foundation as well as the organizations and people it supports. They clearly cherish the task of distributing funds and are animated by the altruistic principles Mel has instilled.

Established in 1980, the Foundation is governed by a mix of Jewish and humanitarian ideals that reflect Mel's experiences growing up in the Bronx during the war years. Mel recalled living with his single mother and grandparents who imparted the importance of being a good person. Despite their modest circumstances, the family regularly contributed to a pushke (a donation box kept in Jewish homes). Not observantly Jewish, their lives were nonetheless imbued with Jewish values and a concern for their co-religionists. Mel describes first-hand memories of the Holocaust that shaped his worldview and inspired his concern for human suffering. Seeing Nazi victims pictured in *Life* magazine, learning about the murder of innocent Jews, and meeting distant relatives with tattooed arms endure as vivid recollections.

The Cutler Foundation divides its giving between traditional Jewish causes and non-Jewish organizations located principally in Worcester. Yet, these seemingly separate interests also overlap in meaningful ways. The eight levels of charity described by the medieval Jewish philosopher Maimonides are essential to the Cutler philosophy. The highest level enables recipients to establish themselves financially so that they do not become dependent on others. Accordingly, the Cutler Foundation is committed to helping beneficiaries gain economic knowledge and independence. Programs at mental health organizations, drug rehab facilities, veterans' shelters, youth groups, and artist cooperatives combat poverty by allowing people to create financial opportunities for themselves.

In addition to investing in individuals, the Foundation aims to benefit Worcester by supporting community institutions like hospitals and universities. But they also fund less conspicuous initiatives that



Cutler trustees Frederic Mulligan, Kelly Cutler, Barbara Crosbie, Mel Cutler, Elizabeth Cutler, Douglas Cutler, Robert Adler

allow for lasting returns at home. A case in point is their support for the Holocaust curriculum *Echoes and Reflections*, a national program of the ADL (Anti-Defamation League) which they insist should deliver local benefits. The Strassler Center twice hosted an *Echoes and Reflections* teacher workshop which afforded Massachusetts educators their only opportunity to participate in trainings. Rob attended the opening of the fall 2014 workshop and was pleased to observe how engaged the participants were. The Cutler Foundation has generously supported educational initiatives at the Strassler Center by endowing a fund that will support continued engagement with these local educators.

Fred describes learning philanthropy from Mel at the start of their professional relationship. Back in 1972, before the newly formed company even turned a profit, Fred recalls "we couldn't afford pencils but Mel was already directing donations." He approached charity with a smile and without waiting to be asked, in keeping with Maimonides's teachings. Rob asked about his motivation for leaving an imprint on the community in which he has found great success. Mel described the Foundation's positive impact on the Worcester community, its needy population, and many institutions as a legacy for his children and grandchildren.

Modest and averse to ostentation, Mel summarizes his many contributions prosaically, insisting "it was just the way I was brought up!" Thanks to a generous endowment, the Strassler Center will help carry his legacy into the future. And teachers and students will be enriched by it.

Mary Jane Rein

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Ian Rosenbluth '01  
Ruth and Allen Rubin  
Karen E. Soorian '85  
Dolores Stevens  
*In memory of Ara Heroian '55*  
Shak Sulikyan '01  
Robert Tashjian '51  
Khachig Tölölyan

## In Memoriam: William Hausrath '53



Taner Akçam, Khatchig Mouradian, William Hausrath '53, Raymond Kevorkian (Director, Nubar Library, Paris)

Former Agnes Manoogian Hausrath Fellow Khatchig Mouradian published this remembrance of Bill Hausrath '53 in the *Armenian Weekly* on March 11, 2015.

*At long last, what is there left from life? What's left to me?*

*Strange as it seems, only that,*

*which I gave to others...*

—Vahan Tekeyan

*Translated by Tatul Sonentz*

These lines from Vahan Tekeyan's poem "Final Accounting" echoed through my mind as I read the e-mail notifying me of the passing of Bill Hausrath on Feb. 13, 2015. Bill had created the Agnes Manoogian Hausrath Memorial Fund and the Agnes Manoogian Hausrath Endowed Research Fund in Armenian Genocide Studies in memory of his wife, Agnes, who died in 2003.

Agnes's mother was a survivor of the Armenian Genocide.

Bill was one of the warmest and most modest individuals I had ever met. And I carried Bill's name in my title. I was the Agnes Manoogian Hausrath Fellow at the Strassler Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Clark University as a doctoral student.

Later, my colleague Ümit Kurt, working on the confiscation of Armenian wealth in Aintab during the Armenian Genocide, became a Hausrath Fellow.

Bill's gift set a standard of generosity in supporting fellowships ded-

icated to research on the genocide. Other friends of the Strassler Center have donated funds for my more junior doctoral colleagues. But, unlike the Hausrath Fellowships, these are current-use gifts that will not last in perpetuity. My ardent hope is that others will follow Bill's example by leaving a lasting legacy that ensures the long-term future of Armenian Genocide research.

Bill and Agnes Hausrath didn't have children. Every now and then, our colleagues would call Ümit and me "the Hausrath boys." Thanks to Bill's generous gifts, there will be many more Hausrath boys and girls studying the Armenian Genocide.

Born on Jan. 22, 1931 in Lowell, Mass., Bill received his bachelor of business administration degree from Clark University in 1953, and his master's from Columbia University in 1954. Following a successful career, he retired as a manager at General Electric's Aerospace/Engine Division.

The day I defended my dissertation proposal, Bill was there beaming with pride. He told me how my research into the destruction of the Armenians in the desert of Der Zor reminded him of the ordeal his mother-in-law had endured.

As I write these lines, a printout of my dissertation draft is scattered on my desk with notes and comments. Somewhere in this pile is the dedication page. Two men are memorialized there: my beloved father, whose last name I carry; and Bill Hausrath, whose name I carried in one of the most cherished titles I ever held.

**Khatchig Mouradian**

## Call to Action

As the Strassler Center's vision has grown, so too has the demand for space in which to accommodate students, faculty, and an ever evolving program. Thanks to a leading gift pledged by Clark University trustee Dr. Rebecca Colin '89 and her fellow trustees of the Simon and Eve Colin Foundation, we will construct the Colin-Flug Graduate Study Wing during the summer of 2016. At the same time, construction of a separate library annex will allow the Center to double its holdings. Filled beyond capacity, the Rose Library now holds more than 8,000 volumes and book collecting continues apace as acquisitions expand to encompass genocide and mass violence in Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Americas, as well as continued book collecting on the Holocaust and Armenian Genocide.

Julian Bonder, architect of the Rose Library, returns to us with inspired solutions for increasing our capacity to offer study space to doctoral students working on a range of genocides and to acquire books that support their research. His design for the Graduate Study Wing entails a connected but free standing building that will echo the Rose library addition, with ground floor carrels and upstairs seminar room. The library annex will be adjacent to the existing library in space created by means of an ingenious redesign of the Center's front porch. These additions will make possible the renovation of the current doctoral student offices into much needed faculty offices that will help to advance the program into new areas of genocide scholarship.

Bonder designed the Rose Library and Cohen-Lasry House renovations early in his career. Since 1999, the award-winning building has served the Center handsomely as a hub for teaching, research, lectures, and classes. A professor of architecture at Roger Williams University, Bonder has gained international renown for his innovative memorials and designs for architectural competitions that address the memory of genocide, mass violence, and crimes against humanity. His recently designed Memorial to the Abolition of Slavery located in the French city of Nantes, epicenter of the French slave trade, is a

marvel of engineering, design, thoughtful urban planning, and commemoration. His plans for the expansion of Cohen-Lasry House will build upon this serious and ongoing engagement with issues that address memory and space.

A centerpiece of the Graduate Study Wing will be a seminar room that will be an opportunity to honor founding Director Debórah Dwork. Friends of the Strassler Center and appreciative former students are invited to contribute to this initiative. The seminar room will serve as a lasting testament to Professor Dwork's extraordinary commitment to teaching. While Dwork's scholarship on the children of the Holocaust, victim experiences, Auschwitz, and refugees have been seminal and



Design concept for Colin-Flug Graduate Study Wing

the Rose Professorship she holds is the first-ever endowed chair dedicated to Holocaust History (outside of Israel), she has also long been committed to training students who work on many different genocides. In founding the Strassler Center, she has always nurtured the vision that the Holocaust should not be taught as a unique event but rather as one case among many.

The Colin-Flug Graduate Study Wing will facilitate the broader mandate Dwork launched and developed. Please join the effort to build a permanent tribute to honor Debórah Dwork's achievements so that her work will carry forward long into the future. Your gift toward the building of the seminar room will support our continued commitment to outstanding teaching.

Mary Jane Rein

## Center in the Mail

The summer institute instructors were all very welcoming, supportive, and knowledgeable. I do not think I have had a better professional development experience to date.

**Anonymous teacher comment to Dr. Sarah Cushman, Head of Educational Programming**

I was in Times Square (for the Armenian Genocide Centennial). I must tell you your address was amazing. I have heard you speak many times, usually in a more academic setting. Your content, energy, passion and presence were the highlight of an amazing day. Your message of “the other Turkey” is exactly what the audience needed to hear. Our Armenian people have great energy and commitment. At this point, we need political maturity. There is no room for hatred and racism. These are negative human reactions and a meaningless distraction to our cause. The best way to fight that mentality, in our political domain, is for Armenians to understand and embrace the changes in Turkey. We need to encourage and support these brave people who publish articles, write books, sponsor lectures, conduct research and speak the truth.

**Stepan Piligian, Trustee, National Association for Armenian Studies and Research to Professor Taner Akçam**

It was a most memorable visit. One never knows where the ripples will end up, but it was exciting to see some people's thoughts beginning to take new form. I am honored to have been a part of the genesis of a creative new program (in Geography and Genocide).

**Geography Professor Anne Knowles (Middlebury College) to Professor Debórah Dwork**



Summer Institute Participants

Thank you for all your hard work and diligent efforts on behalf of researching such important life histories. Your scholarship not only contributes to knowledge, but it makes a significant positive difference to our world. I am even prouder to be a Clarkie now. Sociology Professor and Senior Vice President for Academics Paul Leslie '76

**Sociology Professor and Senior Vice President for Academics Paul Leslie '76 (Greensboro College) to Professor Debórah Dwork**

Now that the fall semester has ended, I didn't want to miss the chance to thank you for your recommendation of Faith Jean '17 for our Lipper Internship Program. We've so enjoyed getting to know Faith and watching her grow into a wonderful teacher and museum professional over the past few months! We are privileged and happy to have been part of Faith's educational experience and hope to stay in close touch with her as she continues to grow and build upon her experiences.

**Loren Silber, Educator, Museum of Jewish Heritage: A Living Memorial to the Holocaust to Professor Thomas Kühne**

Thank you so much for being with us, working with us, and being a part of that extraordinary program. What a meeting of the minds it was. And it all comes back to our connections with you and the fabulous Strassler Center.

**Dale Daniels, Executive Director, Center for Holocaust, Human Rights & Genocide Education, Brookdale Community College to Professor Debórah Dwork and Khatchig Mouradian (ABD)**

Speaking of publications, I have 3 articles appearing in the next couple of months. *The Future of Holocaust Memorialization* just came out and includes an article I wrote about how digitization has transformed the ITS archive for scholarly research.

In other really great news, Christine's (Christine Schmidt PhD '03) grant writing skills have paid off for everyone - we were awarded a huge four-year grant for partner programs (USHMM, Wiener, and ITS) and so there will be continued close partner work for us. I'm thrilled!

And the USHMM gave an award to my inter-departmental team (which Suzanne Brown-Fleming and I co-head) for the dramatically successful advancement of ITS academic programming.

**Elizabeth Anthony, ABD, I  
TS Program Manager,  
USHMM to Professor Debórah Dwork**

In 2009, I had the privilege of attending the First International Graduate Students' Conference in Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Clark University. At the time, I was at a point in my PhD where I was having great difficulty in writing and felt that I had lost my passion. That turned around at the conference, where I was able to connect with so many compelling and dedicated fellow junior scholars. The papers, panels and camaraderie facilitated by the Clark faculty and students (especially my "host", Adara Goldberg), reignited my spark and reminded me of how vibrant academic discourse related to Holocaust and Genocide Studies could be.

**Jeremy Maron, PhD, Researcher-Curator, Canadian Museum for Human Rights and Canadian Delegate to the International Holocaust and Remembrance Alliance**

We just got the Strassler Center's Year End Report. It is magnificent. I am truly impressed with the work all of you do! And extremely proud of being a tiny, tiny part of it all.

**Lina Sjöquist, Culture and Communication, at Proventus AB in Stockholm, Sweden to Professor Debórah Dwork**

The panel discussion went very well thanks in large part to Asya. Her presentation was academic, thorough, and had a nice flow. She spoke eloquently and at just the right pace. About 60+ people attended this after school event, which included mostly students, some administrators and faculty as well as some community members.

**LISA MENASIAN COLLOCA, A.P. HISTORY TEACHER, LOWELL  
High School to Sarah Cushman, PhD '10, Academic Program Liaison  
Officer**

Sara Brown is a true asset to the San Jacinto Campus History Department and we are very lucky to have her on our staff...She is to be commended for her excellence in research as well as her dynamic classroom presence that helps make history come alive for students. I value her as a colleague and as an amazing instructor for our campus.

**Mt. San Jacinto College history chair evaluation**

Thank you very much for your thoughtful comment on my paper. It is always nerve-racking to make such bold assertions in a scholarly field as an undergraduate; however I felt that the conclusions my research led me to were inescapable. I very much appreciate your comment that you felt my argument was convincing and well put together...Your support throughout this project has been very helpful to me and I greatly appreciate the opportunity to work on this collection that you kindly donated to the Center. I have worked hard to ensure that many future generations of Clark students and faculty will be able to utilize these artifacts in their own studies and so, as you said, long after survivors are able to tell their stories we will have tangible reminders of this terrible history.

**Marisa Natale '17 to Robert Messing '59**

## Save the Dates 2015-2016

### 23 October 2015

4 pm, Rose Library, Cohen-Lasry House

#### *Empire, Nation-State, and Genocide*

Professors Peter Holquist (University of Pennsylvania) and Ronald Suny (University of Michigan) compare genocide in the Ottoman and Russian Empires. Their recent scholarship challenges the common understanding of the Armenian Genocide in the context of the Young Turks' plan to eliminate Christians and homogenize Anatolia as part of the founding of the modern Turkish Republic. They propose that genocides of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries were the result of a reorganization of empire based on new demographic policies.

### 15 November 2015

7 pm, Temple Beth Elohim, Wellesley MA

#### *"Where are You?" Looking for Loved Ones after the War*

Professor Debórah Dwork will discuss how surviving Jews searched for loved ones at war's end. Where were they? What had happened to them? Individuals created lists; organizations created lists. Lists of those found alive; lists of those known to be dead. Decades before photocopy machines, let alone fax, computer, database, and Internet technology, people looking for loved ones faced many obstacles. Eager to find their family and friends, and eager to be found, survivors in Europe developed their own means of communication.

### 18 November 2015

7:30 pm, Higgins Lounge, Dana Commons

#### *Recognizing Painful Legacies through Memorial Construction*

How do communities address painful legacies through memorial construction? That question serves as the starting point for a discussion between Professor Julian Bonder (Roger Williams University), architect of the Rose Library, and Clark Professors Deborah Martin (Geography) and Kristina Wilson (Visual and Performing Arts). Bonder's acclaimed Memorial to the Abolition of Slavery in Nantes, France, a port from which hundreds of Atlantic slave-trading expeditions set forth, will serve as the cornerstone. The trio will also look at Bonder's Holocaust-related work and other memorials to mass atrocity.

### 3 March 2016

4 pm, Rose Library, Cohen-Lasry House

#### *The Ghosts of Indonesia: The 1965 Genocide in Historical Perspective*

7:30pm, Location TBD

#### Film: *The Act of Killing*

Professor Bradley Simpson (University of Connecticut) will give a historical overview of the 1965 genocide in Indonesia and provide context for viewing and discussing the film to follow. Unlike more familiar genocides, the génocidaires in Indonesia won. *The Act of Killing* is about them and the society and history they have constructed on a foundation of glorified mass murder.

### 16 April 2016

9am – 6pm, Higgins Lounge, Dana Commons

#### *Genocide against Native Americans? A Symposium on Indigenous Identity and Mass Violence in North America*

Professor Thomas Kühne is the convener of a symposium that will examine the impact of mass violence on the identities of contemporary indigenous peoples. Professors Alex Alvarez (Northern Arizona University), Margo Amez (University of British Columbia), Angelique Townsend EagleWoman (University of Idaho), Joseph Gone (University of Michigan), Karl Jacoby (Columbia University), and Audra Simpson (Columbia University) will discuss the history of mass violence against indigenous populations in North America drawing upon a variety of disciplinary perspectives.

"When it comes to life, the critical thing is whether you take things for granted or take them with gratitude," the British writer G.K. Chesterton observed. I am delighted to take with gratitude, and express my gratitude for, the many gifts of my co-workers and colleagues at Clark and afar. I start with Center staff, whose outstanding work has taken the Center to a new level of productivity. I thank: Librarian Robyn Conroy for keeping our overflowing collection organized and clarifying our library expansion needs. Executive Director Dr. Mary Jane Rein for her vision and concrete steps to actualize those goals. Accountant Angela Santamaria whose clear financial statements and budget management are crucial to all we do. Head of Educational Programming Dr. Sarah Cushman has forged a new way forward as she advanced the Center's public service mandate with her work with middle and high school students, teachers, and schools. Administrative Assistant Jean Hearn adds warmth to efficiency. And the student workers at the Center – smart, willing, competent, and cheerful – shine bright: Doğa Bilgin; Jacob Dinerman, Judy Kühne, Olivia Rogine, and Zoe Vallas. My deep appreciation to all.

As these pages report, we maintained a robust calendar of events this year. They ran without hitch thanks to the ready willingness of many people across the Clark campus. Many thanks to Jim Cormier in Media Services; Brenda Nieszewski in Physical Plant; Cheryl Turner Elwell and Jim Hilow in Information Technology Services; Lorinda Fearebay, Jim Keogh, Deirdre Ni Chonail, and Jane Salerno in Marketing and Communications; Michelle Bates and Kathy Cannon in Business and Financial Services; and Kim McElroy in Dining Services.

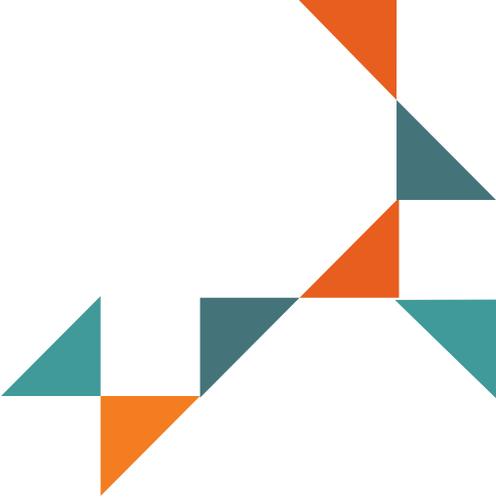
I am delighted to express my appreciation for my academic colleagues at Clark whose schol-

arship and teaching define the Strassler Center: Taner Akçam; Anthony Bebbington; Katerine Bielacycz; Anita Fabós; Thomas Kühne; Ken MacLean; Deb Martin; Dyan Mazurana; Marianne Sarkis; Shelly Tenenbaum; and Johanna Vollhardt. I thank, too, my fellow Center and Institute directors, from whom I have learned by example and through conversation this year: Kate (again!), Tom Del Prete, Ron Eastman, Jim Gomes, Rob Johnston, and Amy Richter. Many colleagues at other institutions and organizations have given the gift of their time as well as their scholarship to our doctoral candidates this year, for which I am deeply grateful: Kate Brown; Eric Gordy; Barbara Harff; Sam Kassow; Raymond Kevorkian; Meir Litvak; Wendy Lower; Jeff Megargee; Aron Rodrigue; David Silberklang; Keith Watenpau; Caroline Yezer. The Strassler Center now boasts 24 students at all levels of study, and these experts, as generous as they are outstanding, invest in them as the future scholars in this field.

It has been a pleasure to meet regularly with Wim Klooster, Chair of the History Department, whom I thank for his partnership on many matters. I am grateful, too, to LaDona Fazio, Director of Advancement Services, for her work on behalf of the Strassler Center and to Jonathan Kappel, Director of Campaign Advancement, for opening the door to working together on the Center's behalf. I have reported for years to Dean of Research Nancy Budwig, from whom I continuously learn. For years, too, the Center has enjoyed the warm support of Clark's President David Angel, and I am most grateful.

This *Year End Report* was designed by Kaajal Asher. Production is to the credit of Mary Jane Rein, who serves as Editor-in-Chief, Production Editor, and Copy Editor.

With my thanks,  
**Debórah Dwork**



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