DEAR FRIENDS,

This has been both an exciting and a challenging year for the Program in Jewish Culture & Society. Exciting because we have several new minors and one new major! We are delighted to welcome these students into our program! It has been a thrilling year, too, because we have had capacity audiences at almost all of our events and we are buoyed by the buzz created by these enthusiastic audiences. But it has also been a challenging year: the budget crisis at the state level has affected our ability to plan for the future and has changed the way we plan our programming.

Associate Director Dana Rabin, and Professors Eugene Avrutin, Sara Feldman, and Bruce Rosenstock and I all worked together to increase our outreach to undergraduates and thus to encourage new minors and majors to join the Program. We will continue these efforts and I hope to meet my goal of at least ten new minors/majors each year.

Our rich and varied courses coming up this fall include: “History of Judaism,” “Yiddish,” “Intensive Biblical Hebrew,” “Memory, Time, and Modernism,” “The Holocaust in Context,” “Literary Responses to the Holocaust,” and “Jewish Storytelling.” We trust that students will find these courses fascinating!

Through fruitful collaborations with Hillel, the Champaign-Urbana Jewish Federation, the Urbana Public library, and Sinai Temple we have greatly enlarged our community presence. Among the banner events were a screening of the film based on Sayed Kashua’s work, Borrowed Identity to an almost entirely full crowd (250 people); two days later Sayed read from his newest work Native to an energetic and appreciative group. Many community members also enjoyed the Yiddish and Hebrew film series that Sara Feldman arranged and which included a discussion after each film.

Another highlight was a fieldtrip to Springfield, IL to see the “Lincoln and the Jews” exhibit. Erez Cohen (Hillel Director), Jessica Kopelow (Executive Director of the CUJF), and I gathered about 20 students, community members, kids, and faculty to take a trip to the Lincoln museum. The exhibit featured myriad documents detailing Lincoln’s relationship with various Jewish leaders and thinkers and the outing afforded a delightful opportunity to break bread with and get to know members of the local Jewish communities.

In Chicago we worked with the wonderful Rabbi Wendi Geffen of North Shore Congregation Israel to organize an intimate meeting with Dean of Social Work Wynne Korr about Jewish Social Justice. We also hosted at Temple Sholom a stellar talk by Daniel Greene about Chicago’s Jewish Ghetto. At the invitation of Rabbi Alan Cook of Sinai Temple in Champaign
I offered a discussion to congregants about Holocaust representation and Chris Benson discussed *Inheritance*. We hope to continue to work with synagogues here and in Chicago to offer thought-provoking programs to various audiences.

We have two exciting Israeli Studies events coming up, both organized by Rachel Harris, the JUF supported Israeli Studies scholar in Comparative Literature. The first is a visit in November from Eran and Dina Riklis, the filmmakers who created *Syrian Bride*, *Lemon Tree*, and *Borrowed Identity*. In the spring semester Rachel is organizing a conference on Women in Israeli Cinema that promises to be an exciting, groundbreaking gathering of filmmakers and scholars.

Michael Rothberg, a dear friend and esteemed colleague has decided to accept the 1939 Society Samuel Goetz Chair in Holocaust Studies and Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Los Angeles. Michael spearheaded the creation of the Holocaust, Genocide, and Memory Studies initiative and, as you can see from the special section devoted to HGMS in these pages, it has been a vibrant, excellent, and diverse program that has attracted graduate students to the U of I and brought scholars and students together across disciplines to discuss the Holocaust in the context of other devastating events. I wish Michael and his wife Yasemin Yildez all the best in their new positions at UCLA; they will be sorely missed!

I would like to thank Tracey White (who has been temping in the office full time) for all of her invaluable work in keeping things running, creating posters and announcements (like this year’s events poster) and being key to the great success of the Mnemonics conference that we hosted here in early June.

The newsletter was again designed by Sam Copeland; thank you so much, Sam!

We have arranged a wonderful lineup of speakers and events for the 2016-2017 academic year including visits from Masha Gessen, Ken Frieden, Steven Weitzman, and many others; I hope you will be able to join us for some or even all of them! Our events are free and open to the public so please mark your calendars!

As ever, if you have any questions or would like to be added to our events list, please do not hesitate to contact me (bakaplan@illinois.edu).

Also, please like our new Facebook page, Illinois Jewish Studies, and find me on LinkedIn.

Brett Ashley Kaplan

Director, Professor and Conrad Humanities Scholar, Comparative Literature

Brett’s books, *Unwanted Beauty: Aesthetic Pleasure in Holocaust Representation* (2007) and *Landscapes of Holocaust Postmemory* (2011), examine the Shoah’s intersections with art and space; she has recently published *Jewish Anxiety in the Novels of Philip Roth* (2015) and is working on a project about the intersections of Jewish and black arts and literatures in the U.S. and France.
LECTURES & OTHER PUBLIC EVENTS 2016-2017

Monday, September 12 • 7:30PM
TRAVELS IN TRANSLATION: FROM EASTERN EUROPE TO THE LOWER EAST SIDE IN YIDDISH & KLEZMER MUSIC
A lecture/concert by Ken Frieden, B.G. Rudolph Chair of Judaic Studies, Syracuse University.
This is a Vivian Marcus Memorial Fund Event
Location: Smith Memorial Hall

Monday, September 19 • 12PM
JEWISH DEATH THINKING: AMY LEVY AND ANZIA YEZIERSKA
Susan Bernstein, English, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Jewish Studies Workshop
Location: English Bldg, Room 109

Tuesday October 25 • 4:00PM
RETROFITTING TOTALITARIANISM IN PUTIN’S RUSSIA
Masha Gessen, Author, activist and journalist for the New Yorker, The New York Times, Granta, Slate and Vanity Fair, etc
Krouse Family visiting Scholars in Judaism and Western Culture/CAS MillerComm
Location: Spurlock Museum

Monday, November 7 • 12PM
INHERITED GUILT IN MEDIEVAL JEWISH THOUGHT
Dov Weiss
Jewish Studies Workshop
Location: English Bldg, Room 109

Monday, November 14 –Tuesday November 15
SCREENINGS WITH Q&A, TBA
Eran and Dina Riklis, Israeli filmmakers who created Syrian Bride, Lemon Tree and Borrowed Identity and other films.
Location: Monday Evening Screening at the Art Theatre in Downtown Champaign

Monday, February 6 • 12PM
BRUNO SCHULZ, E.M. LILIEM AND THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF POLISH JEWISH MODERNISM
Karen Underhill, Slavic, UIC
Jewish Studies Workshop
Location: English Bldg, Room 109
All events are free (except the film screenings at the Art Theatre) and open to the public

Monday, February 20

5PM • THE DOUBLE HELIX OF JEWISH HISTORY: GENETICS & THE SEARCH FOR THE ORIGIN OF THE JEWS
Lecture • Location: Spurlock Museum

12PM • A THRICE-TOLED TEL: THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF ETHNOGENESIS
Jewish Studies Workshop • Location: English Bldg, Room 109
Steven Weitzman, Religious Studies, Stanford University,
Samuel and Sheila Goldberg Lectureship Fund

Sunday – Tuesday, March 5-7

WOMEN IN ISRAELI CINEMA CONFERENCE
Location: Alice Campbell Hall

Monday – Tuesday, March 27-28

5PM • IS ‘FRATERNITY’ POSSIBLE: MUSLIM-JEWISH RELATIONS IN CONTEMPORARY FRANCE: HISTORY & REFLECTIONS
Lecture • Location: Lucy Ellis Lounge

12PM • STREET RIOTS & JEWISH POLITICS: ANTI-JEWISH VIOLENCE IN TUNISIA BEFORE DECOLONIZATION
Jewish Studies Workshop • Location: English Bldg, Room 109
3/28 IPRH Inside Scoop • Location: English Bldg, Room 109
Maud Mandel, Professor of History and Judaic Studies, Brown University
Oscar and Rose Einhorn Fund

Monday, April 17 • 12PM

BETWEEN ORIENT & OCCIDENT: MOROCCAN JEWS & THE SPANISH COLONIAL PROJECT
Eric Calderwood
Location: English Bldg, Room 109

Monday, April 24 • 7:30PM

SCREENING OF VITA ACTIVA – THE SPIRIT OF HANNAH ARENDT
Q&A w/Professor Bruce Rosenstock
Location: Lucy Ellis Lounge
We invited all of our new minors and majors to send us a photo and here are the ones we received!

Welcome to new minors Joshua Altshuler, Rachel Feldman, Zipporah Goldenfeld, Meirav Malter, Abriel Lovelace, Allison Schwartz, Elana Zelden, and new major Ben Schmitt!
**JOSHUA ALTSCHULER, WINNER OF THE FILLER AWARD**

I am a sophomore studying history and Jewish studies. I grew up in Barrington, Illinois and I have four older siblings. At the University of Illinois, I have been involved as a student leader at Illini Hillel and I am currently serving as the organization’s 2016 Vice President of Engagement. In addition, at the University of Illinois, I have participated in two theater productions with Illini Student Musicals. For the past eleven years, I have spent my summers at Olin-Sang-Ruby-Union-Institute (OSRUI), a Union for Reform Judaism camp in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, and I will be returning to OSRUI this summer as a third-year senior counselor. My experiences at camp fostered my Jewish identity and contributed to my interests in education, spirituality, and the environment. As a history major, I have loved interacting with inspiring professors in discussion-based settings, and learning about a diverse array of perspectives and cultures.

At the University of Illinois, I have thoroughly enjoyed the classes I have taken in Jewish history such as the course “Jewish History Since 1700,” as well as Professor Avrutin’s “Soviet Jewish History” class this semester. The history of Judaism is powerful to study based on my own Ashkenazic ancestry. Having a connection to the individuals I read about makes their life narratives much more expansive and meaningful. In addition, through the primary sources dissected in class, the Jewish people consistently offer an important commentary about living on the periphery of empire, acculturation, and cultural expression. Within the Illini Hillel atmosphere, I enjoy being a leader in our discussions regarding Israel, Jewish principles, current events, and the Torah. For example, this semester I led a discussion regarding the various Jewish perspectives on affirmative action, and worked with Erez Cohen, Illini Hillel’s Executive Director, on a program considering the song “Hallelujah” in popular culture. These educational opportunities have sparked vibrant conversations and have provided many students with an environment in which they can deepen their connection to a Jewish identity. This past summer, I was Rosh Limmud (head of learning) in one of OSRUI’s specialty programs. As Rosh Limmud, I was given the opportunity to work with many camp faculty members such as Jewish educators, cantors, and rabbis. Together we would plan and implement Jewish educational programs for our campers each day. Specifically, I got to work with the campers on studying the book of Genesis, Jewish perspectives on the environment (teva) and developing Jewish morals (middot). By serving in this education-based role, I appreciated the importance of Jewish studies and helping others deepen their own personal connection to their faith and heritage. In my upcoming semesters at the University of Illinois, I am excited to take more classes on Jewish life and culture and to continue to concentrate on the Jewish people in my history courses and educational conversations.
My research focuses on ways out of traumatic silence across generations in contemporary French and Francophone Algerian fiction. While the stakes of representing trauma as a way of legitimizing one’s identity have now become a public matter in France, the stakes of representing cross-community empathy remain crucially underdeveloped. It is therefore with this larger aim that my dissertation project “Documents et Cheminements: Tracing the Postmemory of the Second World War and the Algerian War of Independence” highlights mechanisms of empathy that break down the victim-perpetrator divide and bridge communities in ways that acknowledge their ethnic or religious specificity, while offering a way out of competitive memory across generations. I engage with representations of multifaceted, interconnected, constantly evolving identities, and their relation with memory as a way out of repetitive sociopolitical discussions. My project aims at opening up discussions about identity and cultural memory, beyond the sole assessment of sociological crises. Focusing on networks of empathy between victims, perpetrators, and their descendants, my analyses complement existing discussions of silence, oral transmission, and media as a way to privately transmit memory across generations. I foreground my concept of transcategorical postmemory to show how descendants of victims and perpetrators compete or come together both privately and publicly in their claim for historical recognition in works by Leïla Sebbar, Catherine Lépront, Patrick Modiano, Boualem Sansal, Kamel Daoud, Pascal and Alexandre Jardin, Yamina Benguigui, and Jérôme Ruiller. This future-oriented perspective on historical trauma can yield dialogue with other historical and geographical contexts beyond the Second World War and the Algerian War of Independence.

PRISCILLA CHARRAT AWARDED THE GENDELL FAMILY AND SHINER FAMILY FELLOWSHIP

A wonderful collaboration took place on September 21, 2015, at the Krannert Art Museum in Champaign-Urbana. With the continued support of benefactor Lorelei Rosenthal, the UIUC Program in Jewish Culture & Society teamed up with the Krannert Art Museum to screen the dramatic, at times funny but always poignant, Jewish-themed 2015 BBC film, Woman In Gold. Those people who had not yet had a chance to see the film as well as some of us who gladly saw it for the second time watched the screening with great attentiveness. Over 50 people attended the lecture and film that evening.

The Program in Jewish Culture & Society invited Professor Lisa Silverman, a historian at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, to frame the movie before the screening. She also offered some remarks afterwards with new KAM Curator of European and American Art, Maureen Warren. Author of Becoming Austrians: Jews and Culture between the World Wars (published by Oxford University Press in 2012) and Co-Editor of Interwar Vienna (2009) and Holocaust Representations in History (2015), Professor Silverman helped us all think about the presence of Jews in the years preceding the Anschluss in 1938 and the need to understand Jewish experiences in Central Europe between the World Wars while simultaneously examining the devastating events that followed during the Holocaust and its long aftermath.

Professor Silverman’s insightful 30-minute lecture focused on the broader range of issues raised by Woman In Gold and helped viewers reflect on what they were about to see. An expert on Austria and Austria’s Jewish community both before and during WWII, Professor Silverman asked us to think about the nature of art as property, the processes by which specific objects are accorded special affection and meaning, and even the question of what happens
when a particular art object gets reframed as a national treasure (even though it requires silencing of important aspects of its production and the people who appear in it).

*Woman In Gold* recounts the fascinating emotional, political, and legal battles that ensued when Maria Altmann, an elderly Jewish woman then living in Southern California, attempted to reclaim family possessions seized by the Nazis, in particular a famous portrait of Maria’s beloved Aunt Adele that had been painted by Gustav Klimt and named by him “Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer.” That this painting had already become a national treasure in postwar Austria and largely renamed *Woman In Gold* is quite relevant to the story. It was, however, a stolen painting, and the legal battle to reclaim it makes for a dramatic, engaging, and important story. The film was released in the U.S. on April 1, 2015, directed by Simon Curtis, and produced by BBC Films. Alexi Kaye Campbell wrote the screenplay, and Helen Mirren delivers an inspired, compassionate, and deeply appealing rendition of the lead character, Maria Altmann, who frequently pushed and pulled the young lawyer, portrayed by Ryan Reynolds, himself the grandson of Arnold Schoenberg, the Austrian (or Austrian-American) Jewish composer, a point that becomes more and more relevant as the film goes on.

Of course, Klimt’s “Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer” (a.k.a. *Woman In Gold*) has far deeper and greater implications for Austria, for the Jewish community worldwide, and for art. That painting is but one of many thousands of objects confiscated by the Nazis and still held in vaults and other locations in Austria. Sometimes the problem is that there are no clear descendants who can challenge the Austrian government. And sometimes the problem is more closely related to what we see in this film and that Professor Lisa Silverman wanted the KAM audience to contemplate as well. When objects come to have special meaning for people—in this case postwar Austrians—the actual provenance of those objects can easily be forgotten so that the violence connected to them is no longer in the public eye. Some people believe that it is too difficult to put the spotlight on those issues and that history. *Woman In Gold* wants us to remember.

Earlier that day, donor Lorelei Rosenthal recounted part of her own Austrian Jewish family’s history. Her endowment of this fund was clearly to honor the memory of her (and her family’s) loving and devoted parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents, along with the legacy of their Austro-Hungarian heritage: “My grandparents lived in the Austro-Hungarian Empire prior to the First World War and took an active part in the cultural, social and economic life of the times. But at the same time, they had the foresight to see what was on the horizon and fortunate enough to have opportunities waiting for them in the United States.”

We are fortunate to have Lorelei Rosenthal to support The Program in Jewish Culture & Society in advancing such memories.

For more information about Virginia Dominguez see page 30.
During this academic year, spray-painted swastikas were found in several campus buildings, on the roads in the countryside and pin-pricked on to the office door of a Jewish professor. In order to generate more dialogue about these violent symbols in our midst, I organized a roundtable on racism and antisemitism with participants from diverse departments and groups representing different experiences and perspectives. This was a safe space to discuss some of the recent acts of racism and antisemitism and to foster open dialogue. Above all, I did not want these incidents to be swept under the rug.

The swastika is a symbol that is no longer only antisemitic but can also be used to express multiple forms of hatred. Indeed, “The swastika has morphed into a universal symbol of hate,” said Abraham Foxman, the national director of the Anti-Defamation League. “Today it’s used as an epithet against African-Americans, Hispanics and gays, as well as Jews, because it is a symbol which frightens.” The swastika is now a white-supremacist sign—not just an antisemitic one—that may stand for any number of hatreds.

My colleague Erik McDuffie, an Associate Professor in African American Studies and History, organized a Freedom Forum to discuss the antisemitism, racism, and other forms of hatred that we have seen escalate on campus. I thank Erik and the African American Studies program for putting this important event together in response to the proliferation of racist and/or antisemitic symbols in our midst. I was part of that panel, and I print my remarks here. I began by reading two poems about blindness:

First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out--
Because I was not a Socialist.
Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out--
Because I was not a Trade Unionist.
Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out--
Because I was not a Jew.
Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me.

— Martin Niemöller

"First They Came For The Socialists..." (1950s) ¹

As a Holocaust scholar, I am repeatedly struck by the persistence of wilful blindness as an excuse for inaction. In many memoirs and testimonies, people living in Europe during World War II repeat phrases such as “we had no idea” or “we were utterly shocked at the end of the war when we found out about the horrors of the concentration camps.” In fact, unless you actively tried not to see, there was no way to escape the escalating role that white supremacy played in Germany and then in all of its occupied territories. The rhetoric of white supremacy was not hidden in plain sight. It was not hidden. It is manifest in Hitler’s earliest speeches and was enacted in a swelling series of laws prohibiting freedom of speech, the right to own radios, the right to intermarry, the right to determine your own name (Jewish men had to insert “Israel” and Jewish women “Sara” (August 17, 1938)), the right to choose where to live, and eventually the right to live. Period. If you did not see communists being incarcerated, people with disabilities being sterilized, Jews being humiliated, blacks being demonized, books being burned, synagogues being burned and smashed, freedoms crumpling, then you CHOSE not to see.

Antisemitic and racist graffiti, cartoons, propaganda, and mythologies circulated widely and fed the choice to accept white supremacy as doctrine and ultimately helped to enable the Nazi genocide.

Symbols of hatred, the swastika most prominently among them, proliferated. Despite its origins as a symbol of “good fortune” the Swastika was adopted by the Nazi regime early on and, according to the USHMM, “As a symbol, it became associated with the idea of a racially ‘pure’ state.”

When swastikas and nooses appear in our community we cannot pretend we don’t see.

¹ I am grateful to Okla Elliott for pointing me towards these poems about blindness.

For more information about Brett Ashley Kaplan see page 2.
SAYED KASHUA ON THE ORLANDO KILLINGS

Let him not be a Muslim, only not a Muslim, please, please. You don’t have even a second to mourn the victims, you can’t share in the grief, you don’t have a chance to identify, Please, please. You listen to the news, bite your nails, follow the headlines that run like a loop at the bottom of the TV screen. You switch from one news channel to another, check websites. And then comes the breaking-news headline: FBI examining suspicion of terror act. And you think, no, they always say that at the start, they’ll find out that it wasn’t, because you already know that terror means Muslim, and Muslim is you.

After all, they have to examine whether there’s a connection to terror, just like they examine every possible connection. It’s too early to say. He probably has a Muslim name, it’s probably only because of the name that they’re saying it might be terrorism. And if he really does have a Muslim name, then please, God, make it not be from the Middle East, let it be someone who converted to Islam because he thought it was trendy. You have a Muslim name, and that’s a problem. And the children? No, they don’t have Muslim names – will that help them? Maybe it will help them. The kids will be all right, you tell yourself, happy for a fraction of a second that you gave them universal names that aren’t ethnically or religiously identifiable.

Suspicion of terror. Commentators flood the news channels, recapping the whole history of Islamic terrorism. Some are blunter, but you clutch at the more moderate ones, the ones who say that we have to wait in order to find out whether he had connections, motives, and not leap straight to conclusions. Omar, that’s the name, Omar. The security organizations are checking out his connections with Islamic terrorist groups. Maybe it was a hate crime, maybe he’s a psychopath. Please, let someone from the police go on TV and say that it’s someone who is mentally ill with a psychiatric history, and rule out the Islamic terrorism option. And you can’t take even a minute to identify with the victims, and their number keeps rising, and so does your feeling of guilt and the feeling of the persecution that awaits you. I very much want to mourn for the victims, but I’ll be accused of hypocrisy: You’re a Muslim, you have a Muslim name. But the kids don’t, and maybe that can help them.

Maybe we’ll go back – in Israel at least I had somewhere to escape to. They’re probably celebrating now in Israel. Because of some murderer, some pathetic guy who’s giving them everything they need to support a theory that they harbor in their hearts. And you curse that Omar, without knowing anything about him, you just know that you hate him to death, because he’s inflicting calamity and fear on you and on millions like you, and you know that there’s nothing in the world that connects you to this Omar.

And after you can no longer hope that it was a mistake, that he’s not a Muslim, after the authorities concluded what they were waiting to conclude – that it’s Islamic terrorism – you try to think logically: What in the blazes do I have in common with this Omar? What do I have in common with Afghanistan? I don’t know their language, I’ve never met a single one of them. It’s the Afghans’ problem. But you know that’s a lie. You know very well that all the connection that’s needed exists between you and him and that you are guilty like all the Afghans, like all the Muslims, of this despicable murder. You are a murderer, well not you, but go prove it. And the predators leap on you and tell you that you’re made of the same genetic code, you have to purify yourself.

And then you start to think about the victims for the first time, and to hope, heart palpitating wildly, that there are Muslims among the victims. Victims are good, Muslim victims means that the murderer didn’t distinguish between religions, between ethnic origins. And you feel so pathetic for waiting for Muslim names among the victims, instead of feeling the hurt of their loved ones for a moment, but you’re not given the chance, you don’t belong to this, you’re not part of the mourning, of its cause: you are the cause.

And you have no connection, you even know very well that you are not a Muslim according to the Sharia laws, you don’t even believe, but you know that you are, no one asks your opinion, no one is
interested in your worldview. Maybe we’ll switch religions? Is that an option in the United States? Or is it too late? And which one, exactly? Forget religion, enough with religions. Is atheism a category here? Does religion even appear on a document of any kind? I don’t care, I really don’t care, what is important is for the children to be all right, for the children not to feel the dread and the fear that I experience every time a Muslim kills someone.

But it doesn’t help, and you know it doesn’t help, because I’ve read history, and you know that the assimilators will be the first to feel the blow. And then the nightmares begin, accompanied by declarations of warmongering politicians who made their fortune from nationalism and hatred and marking the enemies of the people, the nation, the homeland. Do the neighbors know we’re Muslims? After all, we have nothing to do with them, and it’s not by chance that we have nothing to do with them. There’s no indication, they will never know, we could be anything, and we have Israeli passports if they start pounding on doors or anything like that. Will they give us the option to leave the country? We don’t have a problem, we are not citizens, we wanted to be but we aren’t, yet. We’ll leave, if only we’re given that option.

And how exactly will the suppression the politicians are promising take place? Neighbors will finger neighbors? Teachers will turn in their pupils? For sure my children’s teachers don’t know they’re Muslims, or do they? They must know. It’s unnecessary paranoia, you try to persuade yourself, nothing will happen, humanity is strong and no one will persecute us, no one will drag people from their homes because of religion, that’s unimaginable.

And if there’s another murder, and they’ll say again that it’s terrorism, and again will want to connect all the Muslims to it?

Maybe we’ll leave? But where to? There’s already no place to escape to, and by heaven people here are so nice, and the children have it so good, a lot better than ever before. Their names are universal, they’ll be all right, you tell yourself, everything will be all right.

Sayed Kashua is a Visiting Clinical Professor in the Program in Jewish Culture & Society. He is the author of Dancing Arabs, Let it be Morning, Second Person Singular, Native and essays published in Haaretz, The New Yorker, and other venues. He also created the uproarious sitcom Arab Labor and a new television show The Writer.

In his lecture, Magid provocatively argued that Kahane should be understood not as a religious idealist but rather as a secular materialist. Unlike the militant Religious Zionism of Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook (1891-1982), Kahane was not fueled by messianic impulses, claims Magid, but the Darwinian notion of survivalism at all costs. Kahane regarded the survival of the Jewish people as the highest “ethical” Jewish value, Magid states. Moreover, the militant rabbi regarded the Jewish people as perennially and spiritually “colonized” by relentless and unconquerable forces of anti-Semitism. And, unlike many Zionists who saw Jewish sovereignty in their ancient homeland as a solution to anti-Semitism, Kahane believed that anti-Semitism would never cease and, thus, could only be “managed.” Magid explained that, for Kahane (“the Manichean”), anti-Semitism is an ontological fact, not a social reality.

According to Magid, Kahane believed that Jews – whether in North America or Israel – need to act violently in order to withstand the “cancer” of anti-Semitism. By doing so, the Jewish people would not only protect themselves but also, through violence, become subjects in the world events, rather than mere passive objects. For Kahane, by becoming violent, contemporary Jewry could reclaim the militant culture of the biblical period (when Jews had their own army and empire). And because Kahane often rails against the weak and “emasculated” Jew of the two-thousand-year exile, Magid labelled the Brooklyn militant an “anti-rabbinic Jew.” Magid also noted that, in Kahane’s opinion, Jews must turn to the fist and gun when responding to anti-Semitism, and not respond via martyrdom (as medieval Jews did) or assimilation (as the American Jewish establishment does). While Magid stridently rejects Kahane’s racism and militancy, he stressed that Kahane’s worldview needs to be understood in light of the fact that Kahane’s ideology has, unfortunately, found a home within segments of American and Israeli Jewry.

On November 17, Prof. Magid presented a paper, entitled “Satmar Hasidism’s Jewish Theology of the Anti-Christ,” at the workshop of the Program in Jewish Culture & Society. Here, Magid elucidated the theology of Rabbi Yoel Teitelbaum (1887-1979), a well-known anti-Zionist Hassid who headed the Satmar community in New York. Unlike Kahane’s embrace of militancy, Teitelbaum celebrated Jewish passivity and subservience. Any attempt on the part of the Jewish people to attain political power, whether in their ancient homeland or not, according to Teitelbaum, is tantamount to rebellion against God. Just as God ordained the Jewish exile, so too only God could usher in the Messianic period and restore the Davidic Kingdom. Thus, any Jewish attempt, regardless of intentions, to hasten the Messiah should be viewed as idolatrous. At the same time, Magid explained, Teitelbaum regarded the establishment of the state of Israel as a supernatural act – not from God but from Satan! Jewish statehood, for Teitelbaum, represented a religious test from God, a test to ascertain whether Jews would remain faithful to their exilic, and divinely ordained, subservient state. In the subsequent “question and answer” period, Magid offered some interesting comparisons and contrasts between the ideologies of Kahane and Teitelbaum.

Prof. Magid is the author of numerous widely acclaimed books that focus on Lurianic Kabbala, Hasidism, and contemporary American Judaism. His first book, Hasidism on the Margin: Reconciliation, Antinomianism, and Messianism in Izbica and Radzin Hasidism (University of Wisconsin Press, 2003) examines Messianic and antinomian trends among nineteenth-century Hasidic thinkers, and in particular the sect known as Izbica-Radzin (founded by Rabbi Mordechai Yosef Leiner and later led by his grandson R. Gershon Hanokh Leiner).

Prof. Magid’s second major work, From Metaphysics to Midrash: Myth, History, and the Interpretation of Scripture in Lurianic Kabbala (Indiana University Press, 2008) focuses on sixteenth-century

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Shaul Magid
Kabbalah. More specifically, it examines the hermeneutics and theology of Rabbi Isaac Luria and his school with regard to such central topics as original sin, homosexuality, relations between Jew and Gentile, and divine incarnation. This book was awarded the 2008 American Academy of Religion Award for best book in religion in the textual studies category.


Currently, Prof. Magid is working on three book projects: American Jewish Survivalism-- Meir Kahane and the Politics of Pride; Certainty and Doubt in the Jewish Pietistic Tradition; and The Jesus of Volozhin: Elias Soloveitchik’s Commentary to the New Testament (Academic Studies Press).

Professor Magid is the Jay and Jeanie Schottenstein Chair in Jewish Studies at Indiana University. He is also the Director of Graduate Studies at the Borns Jewish Studies Program at Indiana University. Before his appointment at Indiana, Prof. Magid taught at Rice University (1994-1996) and The Jewish Theological Seminary of America (1996-2003). Professor Magid received his BA from Goddard College (1980), his MA from Hebrew University and Brandeis University (85-89), and his PhD from Brandeis University in Judaic Studies (1994).

For more information about Dov Weiss see page 30.

CAROL INKSEEP ON SAYED KASHUA’S LAUNCH OF NATIVE AT THE URBANA FREE LIBRARY

A major highlight of this year’s events was the Book Release Party for Native: Dispatches from an Israeli-Palestinian Life, the critically acclaimed essay collection by Sayed Kashua, Visiting Clinical Professor with the Program in Jewish Culture & Society

At the book launch, which was hosted by the Urbana Free Library, Kashua read from the essays in his book, all of which originally appeared as pieces in his popular weekly column in the Israeli daily newspaper, Ha’aretz. The diverse, near-capacity audience from both the campus and the community was treated to an exceptional event that was by turns funny and profoundly moving, deeply personal and politically insightful.

Kashua’s reading was, from the start, an exercise in boundary bending and cultural crossover. As an Israeli Arab who writes in Hebrew, he found himself reading the English translation of his book to a mostly American audience. In an interview that appeared in the local paper just before the event, Kashua wryly commented that “my relationship with Hebrew is much more complicated than my relationship with my wife.”
Kashua’s quick and self-deprecating humor had the audience laughing throughout the evening, most especially as he playfully apologized for his accent and bantered with the audience about the translation of his work. He opened the reading with the satirical “Warning Signs,” a letter to the editor of Ha’aretz written in the voice of Kashua’s wife. She complains that “The picture my husband paints of his family life is a crude lie and has no basis in reality.” Kashua has a unique ability to skewer humorously but insightfully modern society – Israeli, Arab, and/or American.

In his reading of “Yes, I Don’t Want To” Kashua also had the audience laughing, even as he pointed to the deep cultural divide and complex power relationships in Israel. How does an Israeli Arab say “no” to a request from a Jewish employer? Kashua reveals that the tactful “Insh’Allah” may work with other Arabs, but certainly not with Israeli Jews. The deceptively amusing, insecure monologue points to deep insights about Arab identity in Israel and about the way that power relationships play out in unexpected ways.

The essays Kashua read and the topics he addressed ranged widely throughout the reading and Q & A session. He spoke of his profound respect for his Ha’aretz colleagues and shared honest anecdotes about the climate in Israel for journalists. He was also animated in his response to questions about the very popular Israeli television series Arab Labor – a project to which he completely devoted himself and which gave him a full sense of artistic freedom and ownership. He also offered a critique of Borrowed Identity (2014), the film based on his novel Dancing Arabs (2004) which had played to a full house at the local Art theater just days before.

Perhaps the most moving part of the evening was Kashua’s reading of “The Stories That I Don’t Dare Tell,” a poignant essay about his grandmother: “On Nakba Day I can’t stop thinking about my grandmother. If only she were still alive; if only she were the way I like to remember her: strong, sharp witted, always waiting for me.... I would shrug off my heavy book bag and run to her, bury my head in her bosom and silently weep.” This essay is about hope and the loss of hope, about the ways that we lie to ourselves and our children, about the struggle to survive and sustain a belief in the future.

Carol Inskeep is an Adult Services Librarian at the Urbana Free Library. She has been involved in many collaborative programs/events with UIUC that bring music, arts and authors to the community.

Sayed Kashua launches Native
HIGHLIGHTS OF 2015/16

Erez Cohen and Vered Weiss at the Hillel Faculty Shabbat

Chis Benson and Dana Rabin at the Jewish Studies Welcome Party

Dara Goldman, Jesse Ribot, Vered Weiss, and Associate Director Dana Rabin at the Jewish Studies Open House
Jewish Studies Major Ben Schmitt and Hebrew and Yiddish Professor Sara Feldman at the Hillel Faculty Shabbat

Yaakov Garb, Brett Kaplan, and Nili Belkind at the Jewish Studies Welcome Party

The Lincoln and the Jews field trip, co-organized with Erez Cohen, Hillel Director, and Jessica Kopelow, Executive Director, Champaign-Urbana Jewish Federation

Yaakov Garb (right) and Jesse Ribot
DARA GOLDMAN ISH MATZAH: FINDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEANING — AND LEARNING — IN CONFLICT*

My husband, Itai Seggev, and I attended the faculty forum at the home of Roey Gilad, the Consul General of Israel to the Midwest on October 15th, 2015. The faculty forum is an annual event sponsored by the Consulate to support relevant activities by faculty throughout the region.

This year’s faculty forum featured a presentation addressing the topic, “How to manage conflicts between students on a diverse campus such as DePaul University,” by University President Reverend Dennis Holtschneider. I was particularly interested in the presentation by Reverend Holtschneider, since there are strong parallels between recent events at the University of Illinois and controversies that DePaul has dealt with in the past. President Holtschneider’s perspective—along with the ensuing discussion—offered insight into how to respond and learn from difficult incidents.

As the title of the topic suggests, Rev. Holtschneider focused specifically on incidents involving student conflicts. In particular, he shared his experiences with students on campus advocating for and against the removal of Sabra products from campus based on the company’s supposed involvement in the West Bank. He spoke about how the University dealt with that specific problem, which mostly involved careful investigation and discussion of the company’s specific dealings and their political implications: precise information revealed that many of the concerns fueling the conflict were unfounded. The incident was therefore resolved without too much difficulty, yet it also revealed larger issues that DePaul University has attempted to address more systematically.

In particular, Holtschneider explained, much of the fervor of the “Sabra incident” could be attributed to students’ general inability to deal with conflict. He has increasingly noticed that students are ill-equipped to handle anything that rises above the level of minor disagreement and that they often experience even minor discord as hostile or even threatening. That is, today’s students need a better skill set that would enable them to deal productively with everyday problems or disagreements informally amongst themselves. DePaul has therefore instituted a program in which they conduct workshops and other activities designed to help students deal with such difficulties more effectively. It turns out that, since implementing that program, they have noted a significant decrease in formal complaints regarding problems between roommates, classroom conflicts, and clashes between student organizations.

Holtschneider often stays quiet when a crisis erupts instead of immediate reaction and intervention. He has observed, however, that missives from above (especially from a university president) can effectively shut down discussion and incite conflict if students believe they have been ignored or silenced. Consequently, he has found that he can be much more effective if he quietly observes and, assuming things do not escalate to a problematic level, allows the disagreement to play itself out. In this sense, in addition to providing the students with conflict-resolution skills, he allows them to practice these skills by giving them a chance to deal with one another before an official administrative position is taken. He has also found that he can often speak and intervene from a more informed and effective position if he delays his response.

The DePaul administration has changed its policy in supervising student organizations. Rather than trying to create distance between contentious groups in an attempt to avoid conflicts, the student center opted deliberately to place certain contentious groups in close proximity. The offices of the Muslim and Jewish student organizations—who had been on opposite sides of the Sabra argument—are now located next to one another. Increasing students’ day-to-day contact and interaction in these organizations has not only reduced conflict but promoted greater collaboration. As the students get to know one another in a less charged environment (i.e. in situations not related to any particular event or issue), they appear to have developed a greater appreciation and understanding of one another. The university put its faith in the students’ ability to embrace diversity, and—thus far—that strategy has proven to be an effective one.

In the end, the faculty forum offered useful insight into the value of treating crises—not as a problem to be avoided or neutralized as expeditiously as possible—but as potential learning opportunities. In other words, under the right circumstances, student conflict can empower students and better prepare them to deal productively with the disagreements, difficulties, and controversies they will inevitably encounter throughout their lives.

For more information about Dara Goldman see page 30.

*The title of this piece, Ish Matzah/A Fighting Man, is a reference to the Hebrew play on words (Ish matzah matza matzah/A fighting man found a matress and in the matress he found a matzah)
How can the intimate personal story be used to increase our understanding of much larger issues, such as genocide?

The Emmy Award-winning documentary Inheritance takes us a long way toward answering that question. The November 9, 2015 screening and discussion of the documentary, sponsored by the Program in Jewish Culture & Society and hosted by Hillel, the Margie K. and Louis N. Cohen Center for Jewish Life, opened up a provocative discussion among members of the capacity audience on issues surrounding the Holocaust, and its lasting effects, as viewed through the lens of people with connections to the horrors.

The documentary, produced and directed by James Moll, the Academy Award-winning film director, and founding executive director of the Shoah Foundation, focuses on a conversation between two women bound by a horrific past, the burdens that have been passed down to them, and the legacy they feel compelled to leave behind. One of these women, Helena Jonas, once was enslaved as the house servant of Amon Goeth, the sadistic commandant of the Plaszow concentration camp outside Krakow, Poland, featured in the film Schindler’s List. The other woman, Monika Hertwig, is Goeth’s daughter.

Through their interaction, which I am adapting as a dramatic presentation, we see the enduring impact of trauma—for both the survivors of genocide, and the children of the perpetrators of the Holocaust. But we also see conflict. The experiential reality of the survivor, and the mediated reality of the child of a perpetrator—a person growing up in the cultural denial of post-World War II Germany who now wants to confront and accept the responsibility of that society.

What unfolds in the time these women spend in conversation—across correspondence, at the memorial site on the grounds of the former Plaszow camp, and in the house where Goeth lived and tormented Helena—is a compelling dialogue. It is a conversation that reveals how we violently enforce these differences in a continuing struggle for social rank, privilege and power. Although nothing can compare with the scope and mechanized efficiency of Nazi extermination, there is contemporary resonance in the “Inheritance” story as we see continued acts of genocide and the rise of new generations of hate-mongering political demagogues today.

This has been a key consideration of my work in exploring the deep, detailed aspects of personal histories—including traumatic memory and individual guilt—in order to elevate public appreciation of the full contextual meaning and consequences of social processes, ultimately leading to ethnoviolence. In so doing, I believe, we are better able to establish our own human connections to the larger issues that too often are represented only by emotionally numbing statistics.

As an activist scholar (a journalist and lawyer), my goal is to help us all make these connections through compelling narratives so that we might see our own social responsibility.

The play I am writing presents an opportunity to build on the more illuminating aspects of the interaction between the two women—incorporating additional research material, including dialogue from the hours of “outtakes” of the video recorded interviews. Once completed, “Inheritance” (the play) will be developed and workshopped at the Kranert Center for the Performing Arts, which also developed and launched Moises Kaufman’s “33 Variations”.

Christopher Benson is an associate professor in the Department of Journalism, the Department of African American Studies and the Institute of Communications Research, and he is a faculty affiliate in the Department of Psychology at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. A lawyer and journalist, he is co-author of the award-winning Death of Innocence: The Story of the Hate Crime That Changed America, about the 1955 lynching of 14-year-old Emmett Till, the case that galvanized the Civil Rights Movement. Benson’s research and writing focuses on issues at the intersection of race, justice and media. He has taught courses on Hate Crimes, Media Ethics and Diversity and Media Law.
The Krouse Family Visiting Scholars in Judaism and Western Culture Fund made another exciting visit possible this year: Dagmar Herzog, a Distinguished Professor at the CUNY Graduate Center. Herzog’s meticulous research on sexuality and fascism has been highly influential. Her most recent books include Sexuality in Europe: A Twentieth-Century History (2011); Sex in Crisis: The New Sexual Revolution and the Future of American Politics (2008); Intimacy and Exclusion: Religious Politics in Pre-Revolutionary Baden (2007); Sex After Fascism: Memory and Morality in Twentieth-Century Germany (2005). As Brett noted in introducing Dagmar, “Sex after Fascism traces the active forgetting of how Nazism fostered a contradictory set of sexual desires while simultaneously projecting an image of sanctity. While it was this purified vision of sexual relations that persisted, Herzog’s detailed analysis of documents and state propaganda indicates that this was far from the case.” One of Herzog’s central questions explains how the “connections between Nazi sexual enticements and Nazi racism came to be so energetically forgotten, only to be replaced by the new... ‘memory’ of Nazism as sexually constrictive and uptight” (5-6). Herzog studies this forgetting and analyzes how German fascism truly functioned. By studying this contradiction in its various forms, she has inaugurated a topic that focuses on “sex as a major preoccupation” in the Nazi regime. Herzog’s work crystallizes the significance of the targets of Nazi violence (Jewish people and the disabled); the places of the most extreme violence; and the ideology of Nazi desire to bring a new form of “pleasure” to Aryan peoples.

Herzog’s workshop, “Sexual Violence and the Nazi Holocaust,” was a privilege to attend for the 20 professors and graduate students from departments of Comparative Literature, French, History, English, Spanish, and Religion. Herzog detailed the state of the field of Nazi fascism and the sexualization of the Nazi regime. Her examples included the film The Pawnbroker, on the trauma of one male survivor; a pulp book, Eichmann: Man of Slaughter (1960), and then moved on to discuss important scholarship devoted to sexuality and Nazi violence. Focusing on the overall plan to exterminate the Jews, Herzog debated the idea of rape as a unique essence of grotesque sexual violence.

Herzog’s public lecture on “survivors’ syndrome” detailed the history of reparation cases after World War II, with Herzog documenting the arguments of the “supporters” and “deniers” of cases of psychological and psychic damage of thousands of survivors. This was a packed audience, riveted by her historical analysis of how doctors and psychiatrists dealt with Nazi victims and the aftermath of the war. Only after the US’s loss in Vietnam and the recognition of PTSD were the survivors’ suffering acknowledged and some reparations made for their material and psychological loss.

On Tuesday evening the 9th, Herzog joined Brett’s Comparative Literature Professionalization seminar, where students engage issues about teaching, publication, and professional work. She advised them to seek a dissertation committee member outside of our university, discussed the state of the job market, and examined some of the shifts in the humanities. Students were enthralled with this discussion, especially the opportunity to ask such a renowned scholar questions about future studies of the Holocaust. For the Holocaust, Genocide, and Memory Studies Program, Herzog participated in a lively discussion, among scholars from French, German, Comparative Literature, and English, of two essays on “forgetting” in colonial history. Once again, the Krouse Family has made possible this opportunity to advance our collective studies in Holocaust history and sexual politics.

For more information about Dale Bauer see page 30.
HELEN MAKHDOUNIAN ON PETER BALAKIAN’S VISIT

The Program in Jewish Culture & Society and the Initiative in Holocaust, Genocide, and Memory Studies organized a special visit from Peter Balakian, a 2016 Pulitzer Prize-winning Armenian American poet, memoirist, and foremost scholar on the Armenian Genocide. This visit included Balakian delivering the Center for Advanced Study (CAS)/MillerComm lecture “The Armenian Genocide, Poetry of Witness, and Postmemory” on April 18th, 2016, close to the 101st anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. Balakian’s visit generated insightful conversations on history, literature, memory, and artistic representation of genocide and trauma.

Balakian’s work offers scholarship, creative output, and communal activism coming together to secure social justice for victims of mass violence. As the Donald M. and Constance H. Rebar Professor of the Humanities at Colgate University, Balakian delineates the importance of witnessing, remembering, and learning about genocides, both inside and outside of the classroom. He also teaches several courses at Colgate on genocide and writing, specifically examining works on the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust. Balakian was awarded the 2016 Pulitzer Prize in Poetry for his Ozone Journal, a poetry collection that deals, in part, with the speaker’s memories of excavating the remains of Armenian Genocide victims in the Syrian Desert. During his time at the University of Illinois, Balakian underscored the need for excavating and studying difficult pasts and the need to elucidate histories of collective violence into the general consciousness.

In the culmination of his visit, Balakian’s lecture was equal parts academic, creative, and historical. First, Balakian turned to Yeghishe Charents’s poem “Dantesque Legend.” Charents wrote “Dantesque Legend” based on his experiences as an eighteen-year-old volunteer battalion fighter against the Ottoman military that was massacring Armenians. Balakian argued that in witnessing the atrocities and confronting the trauma through poetry, Charents “ingested violence” in his “stiff-eyed seeing of unimaginable cruelty and violence.” By categorizing Charents’s poem as an example of “poetry that ingests violence,” Balakian emphasized poetry’s weaving together of the complex layers of traumatic events. Then, Balakian turned to three of his own poems—“The History of Armenia,” “Road to Aleppo, 1915,” and “For My Grandmother, Coming Back”—to discuss his own explorations of Armenian memory, generational transmission of trauma and memory, and poetics. Balakian’s grandmother, a death march survivor, filed a human rights lawsuit against the Turkish government. Balakian learned about the document, which he weaves into his poem “The Claim,” years after his grandmother passed away, and this discovery prompted a lyrical impulse to try and retrieve something of what was lost. In these poems, Balakian explores his grandmother’s recall of the Genocide, confronts the harsh reality of deportations and death marches, and imagines a return to a lost homeland.

Balakian also fostered various conversations across campus. He met with Creative Writing MFA students to discuss the challenges in writing about trauma, violence, and politics as well as pedagogical strategies related to teaching undergraduates about genocide; he also visited with graduate students from The Future of Trauma and Memory Studies Reading Group. At this meeting we discussed a selection of Balakian’s poems, a chapter from his memoir Black Dog of Fate, and a piece from his new essay collection, Vise and Shadow. Balakian facilitated cross-disciplinary dialogues that left members energized and excited. During
a meeting with the Armenian Association of the University of Illinois we learned about Balakian’s research uncovering his family’s experiences during and after the Genocide as well as how he personally negotiates the inheritance of traumatic memories and speaks about this past. Through his engagement with international communities, Balakian has fascinating insight on memory work that crosses borders, developing dialogues between Armenians and other minority groups in Turkey.

Throughout his visit, Balakian tasked individuals interested in the study of genocides to consider such far-reaching effects of humanitarian efforts. In 2015, during the centennial commemoration of the Genocide, Balakian recalled watching activists’ global efforts, media coverage of the commemoration and the historic event, and political entities’ formal recognition of the Genocide. He asserted that examples like the New York Times’s five full page spread with color plates “represented some acute sense of an ethically meaningful moment” and contrasted recent coverage with historical representations and humanitarian outreach. Balakian argued that the “Armenian case provides us with many interesting vectors of study and exploration” in terms of how “the news stays news” and how “the history’s not dead.”

The generous support from The Program in Jewish Culture & Society and The Initiative in Holocaust, Genocide, and Memory Studies made possible Balakian’s lecture and his activities on campus.

Helen Makhdoumian is a Ph.D. student in English at the University of Illinois.

NAOMI TAUB AND JESSICA YOUNG ON THE LOOK OF SILENCE SCREENING

For the 2016 Mnemonics: Network in Memory Studies graduate summer school held here at the University of Illinois (see page 24-25), the Future of Trauma and Memory Studies Reading Group organized this year’s events around the summer school’s theme, “The Other Side of Memory: Forgetting, Denial, Repression.” As part of this initiative, Naomi Taub (English) organized a special screening of Joshua Oppenheimer’s new film, The Look of Silence, which builds upon his earlier Oscar-nominated film, The Act of Killing (2012), examining the 1965 Indonesian genocide, this time through the story of Adi and his family who confronts the perpetrators who killed his brother.

This film exposes the literal and figurative silence that surrounds the genocide and pervades Indonesian society, forcing people to see the past for what it was. The Look of Silence provides a rich case study of the cultural repression of an Indonesian genocide—where its perpetrators have been lionized so that the hideous violence of the mass killing of between 500,000 and one million intellectuals, landless farmers, and ethnic Chinese becomes a point of national pride. The film meditates on the types of silences and forgetting that occur amidst this post-genocidal landscape using the metaphor of sight. Adi is an optometrist who, while fitting the perpetrators for glasses, asks them to recount what happened to his brother and admit to their culpability in the genocide. Confronting elisions in his memory, the recollections of his family, and the narratives of the perpetrators, Adi views history through the lens of his present and hopes for new ways of envisioning the future of Indonesia as it comes to terms with genocide and struggles for reconciliation.

After the success of last year’s Screening Memories film series, focusing on genocide and its filmic representation, we set about, with the sponsorship of the Initiative in Holocaust, Genocide, and
Memory Studies, to bring Oppenheimer’s newest film to both the campus and the Champaign-Urbana community at large. Oppenheimer, who in 2014 won a MacArthur “Genius” Fellowship, was gracious enough to participate personally in our screening and discussion of *The Act of Killing* in April 2015. The screening drew a large and diverse crowd of students, faculty, and community members, and was followed by a lively and engaging discussion and question and answer session with our panelists.

The panel was comprised of scholars from different Illinois departments, including Liya Kaganovsky (Comparative & World Literature), Michael Rothberg (English), Matthew Winters (Political Science) and Jessica Young (English). Last year, for the Screening Memory film series, Jessica Young interviewed Joshua Oppenheimer via Skype about the connections between his new film and *The Act of Killing* for this screening. The larger political aims of the filmmakers drew global attention to the genocide and its lasting effects, while also exposing America’s implication in the genocide fifty years ago. Matthew Winters, who works on issues related to foreign aid and development in Indonesia, provided the background on this genocide, as well as its ongoing socio-cultural implications in the country today. Liya Kaganovsky and Michael Rothberg, who co-taught a course on documentary film the year before, elucidated the connection between Oppenheimer’s work and other prominent documentarians, including Claude Lanzmann and Jean Rouch.

Oppenheimer himself speaks to the importance of his film within the dynamics of memory and trauma when he writes, “*The Look of Silence*, is, I hope, a poem about a silence born of terror—a poem about the necessity of breaking that silence, but also about the trauma that comes when silence is broken. [...] We must stop, acknowledge the lives destroyed, strain to listen to the silence that follows.”

We look forward to organizing future events with the Program in Jewish Culture & Society and the Initiative in Holocaust, Genocide, and Memory Studies that continue to shed light on forgotten and suppressed histories of violence.

_Naomi Taub_ is a PhD student in the English Department. Her research focuses on global Jewish literature from World War Two up to the present, dealing with themes of politics, memory, and identity. She is co-organizer with Helen Makhdoomian of the Future of Trauma and Memory Studies Reading Group.

_Jessica Young_ is a doctoral candidate in English. Her dissertation focuses on the representation of trauma and memory in contemporary South Asian literature. Jessica is the co-founder of the Future of Trauma and Memory Studies Reading Group and co-editor with Michael Rothberg of “Days and Memory,” the blog of the Initiative in Holocaust, Genocide, and Memory Studies.
From June 2-4, 2016, the Initiative in Holocaust, Genocide, and Memory Studies hosted the fifth annual Mnemonics: Network for Memory Studies summer school. Mnemonics is an international consortium dedicated to fostering the research of graduate students working on issues related to cultural memory. The network consists of university partners in London, Ghent, Leuven, Aarhus, Stockholm, and Frankfurt as well as at Columbia University and the University of Illinois. In previous years, HGMS had sent eight students from seven different departments to Mnemonics events in Denmark, Belgium, Sweden, and the UK; this year we welcomed twenty-four students from eight different countries. The theme of this year’s summer school was “The Other Side of Memory: Forgetting, Denial, Repression,” a topic that allowed presenters to address such issues as the transgenerational transmission of Holocaust memory, the impact of Turkish denial of the Armenian genocide on Armenian diaspora communities, the legacies of colonialism and indigenous dispossession on contemporary societies, the aftermath of state-sponsored violence in Latin America, and literary, cinematic, and online approaches to oblivion. We also welcomed three distinguished keynote speakers, Berber Bevernage (Ghent), Jodi A. Byrd (UIUC), and Françoise Vergès (Paris), and two Mnemonics partners from London, Lucy Bond and Jessica Rapson. The local organizers were Brett Kaplan and Michael Rothberg and the graduate student organizing committee of Mnemonics veterans included Jennifer Baldwin from Anthropology and the MD/PhD program, Priscilla Charrat from French, Estibalitz Ezkerra from Comparative Literature, Lauren Hansen from German, Sophia Levine from Dance, and Jessica Young from English.
Co-organizer Brett Kaplan with keynote speaker Jodi Byrd

Keynote speaker Berber Bevernage with Naomi Taub

Keynote speaker Françoise Vergès responds to a panel on Memory and Forgetting in Diaspora
ETHAN MADARIETA ON
INTER-MEMORIALIZATION AFTER URUGUAY’S RECENT DICTATORSHIP

With the generous support of the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies (CLACS) and the Tinker Summer Research Fellowship, I spent seven weeks of 2015 in Uruguay, mostly in and around Montevideo and Treinta y Tres. My research was to be focused on the analysis of post-dictatorship monuments, museums, memorials, and memorial and activist cultures. So how does the Memorial del Holocausto del Pueblo Judío become a memorial to those who suffered and died due to the State sanctioned violence of the recent dictatorship? Why was a Holocaust memorial constructed in the years following the dictatorship—49 years after the Shoah—instead of a dictatorship memorial?

Montevideo’s rambla hugs the eastern bank of the Rio de la Plata, and further onward, the Atlantic. On a calm day ocean waves spread over the break, lap the coastal walls, and murmur to the pescadores and mate-sipping pedestrians lounging along the rambla. About a thirty-minute walk from the old part of the city two railroad tracks cut through the grass between the boardwalk and the river (Figure 1). An official and spare looking sign announces: Memorial al Holocausto del Pueblo Judío (Memorial to the Holocaust of the Jewish People). A glance toward the northeast reveals red granite walls jutting into the sky from stone rubble, the walls’ parting an uneven and tilting stone passageway marked with the occasional tablet inscribed with Spanish in a Hebrew-looking font (Figure 2 and 3). The train tracks and tablets were later added to architect Fernando Fabiano’s original design at the urging of the Jewish community who “objected precisely to the austere bareness (…), the polyvalent stripped-down abstraction” (Aizenberg 225). Upon exiting the memorial walls on the side furthest from the railroad tracks, one sees the Holocaust memorial plaque, affixed to stone, emerging from the earth, leaning against a mound of dirt and scrub grass (Figure 4). The building tops of Nuevo Pocitos, an upscale shopping district, can be seen in the distance.

Edna Aizenberg argues that the “the Memorial del Holocausto del Pueblo Judío under the Lacalle presidency [1990 – 1995] was a space imbued with the sentiments ‘para que no olvidemos’ (lest we forget) and ‘nunca más’ (never again) that resonated with Uruguay’s brutal dictatorship, but failed to directly acknowledge it” (222). In her reading, the Memorial del Holocausto del Pueblo Judío was a
safe way of mourning and memorializing the detained and disappeared without the government and Uruguay’s population directly facing the atrocities of the recent brutal dictatorship. It would be another seven years before the inauguration (December 10, 2001) of Martha Kohen and Ruben Otero’s Memorial a los Detenidos Desaparecidos (Memorial to the Detained-Disappeared) in Vaz Ferreira Park on the Cerro de Montevideo (Figure 5). For their design, Kohen and Otero had in mind Maya Lin’s Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., while the two walls raised from rubble with a path between them is surely in conversation with the Holocaust memorial (Intendencia de Montevideo). These intertextual/inter-memorial gestures suggest an emerging from rather than a covering over of the recent Uruguayan dictatorship, but the questions remain: Did the thematic ambiguity of the Memorial del Holocausto, before tablets and rails were added for specificity, allow for an elision of Uruguay’s own brutal state sanctioned violence? Does the intertextual/inter-memorial gesture toward a global, transnational insistence on remembering, and/or does it elide geographic and cultural specificities that would disallow conflations of State violence?

Research into what I am calling “intermemorialization”—a kind of memorial intertextualization—in the Uruguayan context could be extended into other national and transnational contexts, offering a comparative approach that would elucidate the symbolic, material, and transnational cultural dynamics of memorial practices over time. I would like to thank the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies (CLACS) and the Tinker Summer Research Fellowship for their support in this ongoing research.

1 Red granite is a material used for many of Uruguay’s celebratory statues of their historical leaders.

2 “What President Lacalle did not mention was that such episodes had happened again, in none other than the tolerant land of Uruguay, and that the entire Uruguayan collectivity was not united behind the cause of a memorial remembering its own detained and disappeared” (222).

WORKS CITED


Ethan Madarieta is a PhD student in Comparative Literature and is minoring in Latina/ Latino Studies. He is an HGMS student and an affiliate to the Unit for Criticism and Interpretative Theory. His current research looks at processes/methods for creating everyday utopias through direct and immediate actions under oppressive regimes.
FAREWELL, VERED WEISS

We wish Vered Weiss, the JUF supported Israeli Studies postdoc for the 2015-2016 year, all the best as she begins new adventures. While here Vered taught “Israeli Cinema” and “Love & Sex in Hebrew Literature”; she also revised her dissertation into a manuscript that is now under review at an academic press! Vered notes that:

“The Program’s lectures and workshops offer extraordinary occasions for exchange of ideas and knowledge, and open up important opportunities to meet with renowned scholars.”

CHANGES TO THE ADVISORY COUNCIL

I am delighted to report that long-time supporter of the Program and active member of the Advisory Council Doug Hoffman has agreed to serve as the AC chair. This new structure will allow Doug to work with the AC to increase our fundraising efforts and our Chicago visibility. Doug was elected by a majority of AC members (all yes votes, no no votes) in May. I thank Doug for taking on this role and look forward to working with him in future!

Some members of our advisory council: Doug Hoffman, Michael Shapiro, Richard Herman, Larry Sherman, with Bruce Rosenstock and Tony Pomonis

REBECCA GREENLEE ON CWL 320

“Literary Responses to the Holocaust is a deeply interesting and enlightening class - Professor Kaplan chose a wide variety of reading and film material, showing many different facets of the Holocaust. We studied initial reactions to the Holocaust; current memory of it; the ways in which it still penetrates daily life; and the hope that can come out of atrocity. I strongly recommend this course to anyone interested in exploring discourse surrounding the Holocaust and memory in a deeper context, as Professor Kaplan teaches the many dimensions and forms that this can take.”
Eugene M. Avrutin is an Associate Professor of Modern European Jewish History and Tobor Family Scholar in the Program of Jewish Culture and Society. He received an NEH Fellowship to complete The Velizh Affair: The Story of Jews, Christians, and Murder in a Russian Border Town, which will be published by Oxford University Press in 2018. A collection of essays entitled Ritual Murder Accusations in Russia, Eastern Europe, and Beyond: New Histories will be published by Indiana University Press in 2017. He participated in a conference on criminal law and emotions at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development in Berlin, the Russian-Jewish Workshop at Brandeis University, and a conference on Jewish-Chinese encounters at the Shanghai International Studies University.

Dale M. Bauer is Professor of English at UIUC, and she has also taught at UW-Madison, U Kentucky, and Miami University. She has written three books: on Bakhtin and feminism, Edith Wharton’s politics, and, most recently, on Sex Expression and American Women Writers, 1860-1940 (UNC Press, 2009). Bauer is the editor of The Cambridge History of American Women’s Literature (2012). Her current project is on U.S. women’s serial fiction—from E.D.E.N. Southworth and Ann Stephens to Laura Jean Libbey and Mrs. Alex McVeigh Miller.


Sara Feldman, has published translations from Russian and Yiddish. As a postdoctoral fellow at the Frankel Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies, Feldman began work on People of the Russian Book, her monograph in progress about the ongoing Jewish attachment to (and ambivalence towards) the Russian national poet. Bridging Jewish and Slavic studies, this book will frame modern Hebrew and Yiddish literary history as a product of the Russian imperial context.

Dara E. Goldman, is Associate Professor of Spanish, specializing in Latin American and Caribbean Literatures and Cultures, gender and sexuality studies, and critical theory. Her current research includes work on representations of Jewish culture and identity in contemporary Cuba.

Rachel S. Harris, is Associate Professor of Israeli Literature and Culture. She had just completed a book that considers Israeli cinema in light of feminist film scholarship and the turn towards greater representation of women within the film industry both on screen and behind the camera. Her new research explores the representations of terrorism in the Arab-Israeli conflict in film and literature.

Harriet Murav, is finishing a literary study of the Yiddish author David Bergelson (1884-1952) and is also completing a translation (together with Sasha Senderovich) of Bergelson’s 1926 novel “Judgment” (Mides-hadin). She plans on translating Itsik Kipnis’s novella “Works and Days” (Khadoshim un teg) next.

Dana Rabin, in her first year as the Associate Director of the Program Dana Rabin worked on increasing our undergraduate presence on campus. In addition to a brochure for the minors, she developed JS 199, Introduction to Jewish Studies and JS 300, Jewish Chicago. During her sabbatical in the spring she completed her book manuscript Under Rule of Law: Britain and its Internal Outsiders, 1750-1800.

Bruce Rosenstock, is Associate Professor of Religion. He just completed a book on the German-Jewish philosopher Oskar Goldberg’s “biological Kabbalah” (Gershom Scholem’s description) and is currently working on a book to be titled “Hegel and the Holocaust” dealing with Leo Strauss, Eric Voegelin, Emil Fackenheim, and Gillian Rose.

THE FACULTY

Brett Kaplan*, Director
Dana Rabin, Associate Director
Bruce Rosenstock*, Undergraduate Advisor and Hebrew Program Director

Eugene Avrutin* (History): Associate Professor of Modern European Jewish History and Tobor Family Scholar in the Program of Jewish Culture and Society

Dale Bauer* (English): American Women’s Literature

Liza Berdychevsky (Recreation, Sport & Tourism): Gender & Tourism; Jewish Tourism

Edward Bruner (Anthropology): Anthropology of Tourism; Jewish Travel

Kenneth Cuno (History): History of the Middle East; Egypt

Virginia Dominguez* (Anthropology): Anthropology of Peoplehood; Israel

Sara Feldman* Hebrew and Yiddish Lecturer

Peter Fritzsche (History): Twentieth-Century German History; Third Reich

George Gasyna (Slavic): Polish Literature; Polish-Jewish Relations

Dara Goldman* (Spanish): Hispanic Caribbean; Jews of the Caribbean

Jessica Greenberg (Anthropology): Democracy; Postsocialism; Youth Movements

James Hansen (English): British/Irish Modernism; Frankfurt School

Rachel Harris* (Comparative Literature): Hebrew Literature; Israeli Cultural Studies

Javier Irigoyen-Garcia (Spanish): Golden Age Spain

Lilya Kaganovsky (Comparative Literature): Soviet Culture

Brett Kaplan* (Comparative Literature): Holocaust Representation in Art and Literature, Modern Jewish Literature

Sayed Kashua (Israel Studies Project Visiting Professor): Creative Writing; Hebrew

Wynne Korr (Social Work): Mental Health Policy; Social Work Education

Harry Liebersohn (History): European Intellectual History


Harriet Murav* (Comparative Literature): Russian- and Soviet-Jewish Writing; Yiddish

Cary Nelson (English): Modern American Poetry; Poetics of Anti-Semitism

Carl Niekerk (German): German Cultural History; Vienna 1900

Gary Porton (Religion): Rabbinics; Judaism in Late Antiquity (emeritus)

Dana Rabin* (History): Early Modern British History; Minorities in British History

Bruce Rosenstock* (Religion): Jewish Thought; Messianism in the Jewish Tradition

Richard Ross (Law): Legal pluralism; Natural Law

Emanuel Rota (Italian): European Intellectual History; Fascism

Mahir Saul (Anthropology): West Africa; Sepharad

Michael Shapiro (English): Shakespeare and the Jews (emeritus)

Marek Sroka (Library): Jewish Studies in Eastern Europe

Mara Wade (German): Early Modern German Literature

Terri Weisman (Art History): History of Photography

Dov Weiss* (Religion): Biblical Interpretation, Rabbinic Literature, Jewish Thought

* Members of the Program in Jewish Culture & Society Executive Committee.
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We are deeply grateful to all of you for your much-needed support! On the advice of the Advisory Council we have re-done the list to include only donations since June, 2015. We have made every effort to list everyone but please forgive us if you have given and your name does not appear here. If that is the case, my deep apologies! Please email me at bakaplan@illinois.edu and I will correct the electronic version ASAP. Thanks for your understanding.
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