

A Word from Our Former Students

Brooke Laing ('16; M.A. student in Human Rights Program, University College of London)



“Coming from Boone to London, I have really enjoyed being in the heart of popular activism. Major protests regarding a host of domestic and international human rights issues occur almost weekly. It has been inspiring to see thousands of people join together to stand up for the rights of their fellow humans so regularly and with such passion. The student body of UCL is very politically active and the department hosts frequent panels and lectures from notable speakers, including the heads of numerous UN Committees and NGOs on the frontline of Human Rights, such as Jeffrey Sachs and Phillip Alston. These are experiences that can only be found in a politically active and international city such as London.

My decision to pursue a career in Human Rights is a direct result of my involvement with the Judaic, Holocaust, and Peace Studies Center. The Center not only provided specialized expertise in Judaic, Holocaust, and Peace Studies, but also offered powerful lessons as to why these kinds of atrocities occur, placed particular emphasis on the importance of prevention, and celebrated the cultures and lives

of the persecuted, rather than teaching about them as statistics. These lessons deeply affected me. I started in the center 5 years ago as a Jewish history student interested in Holocaust studies. By the end of my four years at Appalachian State, the experiences and lessons my exceptional professors and the Center provided helped to reshape my worldview. Through Holocaust Studies, the Center taught me how to be an advocate for human rights and the prevention of atrocities today. Now, as I near the end of my Masters in Human Rights Program at University College of London, I believe that the practical expertise I've gained here at UCL in combination with the knowledge I amassed under the tutelage of the Judaic, Holocaust, and Peace Studies Center have given me the tools to help enact change, and to try and help protect those who are unable to protect themselves from their oppressors.”

Jaycob Kitain ('16; M.A. Student in Historic Preservation,



University of Florida)
“Studying at the University of Florida has been a great experience. I have so many resources both academically and socially at my disposal, and the UF Hillel is enormous! As I pursue my Master's degree in historic preservation, I look back at my time at Appalachian State. I bring up the school and the town of Boone a lot in discussions with

friends and professionals alike, and I wouldn't be where I am now without the experiences I had at ASU. Working with App Hillel and the Center for Judaic, Holocaust, and Peace Studies improved my public speaking tremendously, as well as enhanced my leadership and teamwork abilities. As a Hillel board member I gained new perspectives on networking and civic responsibility, which have become the foundation of my professional development. I wish all of the Hillel members and students in the JHP minor the best of luck in their collegiate careers, and I hope to visit soon!”

Trey Vickers ('15; Donor Relations and Special Events, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum)



“I know without a doubt that my academic and professional accomplishments have been shaped by my experiences with both the undergraduate history program at Appalachian and my involvement with the Center for Judaic, Holocaust, and Peace Studies. My experiences as a history major with minors in JHPS and Political Science, a member of the Heltzer Honors College, founding the Center Fellows student organization, and working with the annual Martin and Do-

ris Rosen Summer Symposium nurtured and challenged me to pursue my studies at a higher level, preparing me for the rigors of graduate school.

Following graduation in May 2015, I was awarded a scholarship for the one year Masters in History program at Brandeis University. My master's thesis examined Henry Ford's *The International Jew: The World's Foremost Problem* and its subsequent use among hate groups in the United States. Following graduation from Brandeis in May of 2016, I traveled to Poland on a graduate fellowship with the Auschwitz Jewish Center examining the legacy of the Holocaust within post-Communist Kraków, Łódź, Warsaw, and Oświęcim. When I returned from Poland I accepted a newly created position with the USHMM working in donor relations and special events. My work takes me across the country, meeting with donors and working to spread awareness for the museum.

Little did I know when I accepted my offer to attend Appalachian that I would be where I am today. I will be forever grateful to the university for the opportunities afforded to me from my association with the History Department and the Center. My collection of experiences provided me with a background to succeed in graduate school and professionally, fueling my passion to pursue Holocaust and genocide studies. It is not an exaggeration to say that my professional and personal accomplishments would not have been possible without my involvement with the Center for Judaic, Holocaust, and Peace Studies.”

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JUDAIC, HOLOCAUST,
AND PEACE STUDIES

54,000 interviews with Holocaust Survivors Now Accessible at ASU and the Center

ASU is the latest university and research institution to provide full access to the USC Shoah Foundation's Visual History Archive (VHA). The largest archive of its kind worldwide, the collection contains close to 54,000 video testimonies of Holocaust survivors as well as hundreds of accounts by witnesses and survivors of other systematic mass killings, including the Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda (1994) and the Armenian Genocide (1915-1923). The testimonies were taken in more than 60 countries and in more than 40 languages. ASU and its Center join more than 50 other universities and museums in more than 13 countries in providing access to the entire archive. ASU is the only site in Western North Carolina,

where the Shoah Foundation's VHA can be used in its entirety. Students, scholars, teachers and campus visitors will be able to access the Visual History Archive through Belk Library and Resource Center. The Library of the Center for Judaic, Holocaust and Peace Studies also has two computer terminals, where users can work with the complete archive of genocide survivor and witness testimonies. The Center wishes to thank Belk Library for collaborating with the Center and ASU's College of Arts and Sciences to bring this unique resource to Appalachian.

Forthcoming Center Events

August 5-10. Martin and Doris Rosen Summer Symposium: “Remembering the Holocaust” at the Courtyard Marriott, 1050 Highway 105. The focus of the 16th symposium is on

the Holocaust as Global History with an emphasis on past and present refugee crises. Dr. Racelle Weiman will co-lead the event (organized with Yad Vashem and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and co-funded by the Claims Conference. The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany).



Dr. Racelle Weiman

August 29. Lecture by Dr. Jared McBride (UCLA), a Holocaust scholar who specializes in the regions of Russia, Ukraine, and Eastern Europe. A recipient of the USC Shoah Foundation Center for Advanced Genocide Research's Douglas and Margee Greenberg Research Fellowship, McBride will also offer a workshop on how to use the Foundation's Visual History Archive in research and teaching (co-organized with USC Shoah Foundation Center for Advanced Genocide Research).

September 12 - October 3. Travel Exhibit on Jewish Life in Germany Today at Plemmons Student Union. Includes keynotes of Profs. Konrad H. Jarausch (UNC Chapel Hill) on September 21 and Till van Rahden (Université de Montréal) on September 25 (with German Consulate General, Atlanta).

For more information on events, please visit our website at: holocaust.appstate.edu/events

**A WORD FROM OUR DIRECTOR:
 TRAINING AND WORKING WITH ASU UNDERGRADUATES**



CJHPS Director T. Pegelow Kaplan and Prof. Stefanie Schüler-Springorum, the director of the Center for Research in Antisemitism in Berlin

Over the years, the Center for Judaic, Holocaust, and Peace Studies (JHPS) has trained hundreds of secondary-school teachers from the U.S. and Europe in its Martin and Doris Rosen Summer Symposia on “Remembering the Holocaust.” At the same time, the Center has had an even greater impact in its

work with the many thousands of ASU undergraduates who have taken classes in the academic minor in Jewish, Holocaust or Peace Studies. Most of the Center-affiliated faculty members teach in the minor, introducing students to an array of topics and debates that would otherwise not be part of their undergraduate experience at Appalachian. The Center is collaborating closely with the JHPS Program and many other departments to bring new faculty to the campus or help already-present professors to develop new courses. As a direct result, ASU students will, finally, be able to study Modern Hebrew in a for-credit course, beginning in Fall 2017. Students in these courses also directly benefit from the research colloquia, lectures, and conferences orga-

nized by the Center throughout the academic year. In 2016-17, ASU undergraduates had the rare opportunity to interact with some of the leading scholars in the study of the Holocaust and anti-Semitism, including Christopher R. Browning (UNC-CH), Guy Miron (Yad Vashem), and Marcus Funck (TU Berlin).

As the voices of former ASU students on the newsletter’s front page so powerfully illustrate, many of our alumnae and alumni have gone on to graduate school programs in JHPS or taken positions at museums and related institutions as a direct result of their work with the Center. In their careers, they will decisively contribute to keeping the memory and study of the Holocaust and modern genocides alive. At a time of rising anti-Semitism, nothing could be more important in the work of a Center than to expand this work with our students. In May 2017, a record number of a dozen JHP minors will graduate from ASU.

ASU’s Center in JHPS is eagerly expanding its initiatives to give undergrads more opportunities to study the Holocaust, anti-Semitism as well as Jewish life and traditions. The growing partnership with the Center for Research on Anti-Semitism at the Technical University of Berlin, which just welcomed ASU student researchers on an excursion to Holocaust sites in Europe, is one such example of new opportunities. In the future, we will develop similar partnerships with Israeli institutions. I invite all of you to talk to our students, especially those in the JHP minor, and learn from them directly. I also urge you to continue to support the Center so that we can step up this critically important work with the young women and men who will soon play their part in determining the future of this country.

Best wishes,

Thomas Pegelow Kaplan, Director of the Center for Judaic, Holocaust, and Peace Studies

**FIRST ASU STUDENT GROUP RESEARCH
 EXCURSION TO POLAND AND GERMANY**

Organized by the Program in Judaic, Holocaust, and Peace Studies, ASU students in a new upper-level research class on the Nazi genocide of European Jewry carried out research at archives, memorials and documentation centers in Germany and Poland over spring break. The students did not only work with numerous collections at the archives of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum and the Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp Memorial, they also presented their research at Polish and German universities, shedding light on a range of topics from the fate



At the Auschwitz Archives with Dr. Plosa

of “Jewish Mischlinge” in Nazi Germany to gender dynamics at auctions of Jewish property in wartime Frankfurt/Main. The visit included a Center-organized panel in Wolfsburg, the hometown of Volkswagen, on the city’s and company’s Nazi origins and the politics of memory. Panelist Mechthild Hartung, spokesperson for the Society of Persons Persecuted by the Nazi Regime (VVN), repeatedly challenged her co-panelist Peter Kassel, the Chair of the City Council Faction of the Christian Democratic Union of Germany. The two engaged the students in a debate over Wolfsburg’s ongoing veneration of Ferdinand Porsche, who had close ties to Hitler and Himmler and was involved in Nazi mass crimes. As Prof. Pegelow Kaplan, who led the research excursion (with Prof. Amy Hudnall) emphasized, “the travels in Europe offered ASU undergraduates the unique opportunity to conduct cutting-edge research at important



ASU Students beginning their research of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum

research sites in Europe, meet with influential scholars and archivists, and debate memory makers and politicians. They went to Europe as student scholars; not as ‘Holocaust tourists.’”

The group travel was supported by funding from the Miriam and Abe Brenner Foundation in cooperation with the Greensboro Jewish Federation, the Rosenblatt Family Foundation, and the

German Academic Exchange Service. This funding enabled many students to participate, who would otherwise not have been able to afford to go. The participants also presented their work in the United States, including on a public panel at ASU and as part of the Yom HaShoah commemoration at Beth David Synagogue in Greensboro. The next excursion is scheduled for 2019.

**AFFILIATED FACULTY AND STUDENT
 RESEARCH**

Anna Cantrell (Graphic Design/Center staff) was elected to receive a scholarship through the IIE Generation Study Abroad Scholarship Program on behalf of the Institute of International Education (IIE) and ASU’s Office of International Education and Development. As part of the program “Current Practices: Hybrid Print & Design in the Netherlands,” she will be working in the studios AGA Labs and Grafisch Werkcentrum Amsterdam in the Netherlands for part of the summer. Her work will later be part of an exhibition at ASU.

Davis Hankins (Religion/JHP) was awarded the Manfred Lautenschlaeger Award for Theolog-

ical Promise for his first book, a study of the book of Job. He will receive the award at the University of Heidelberg, Germany, where he will also give a paper on the consequences for Jewish intellectual history of economic changes in the period of Ptolemaic rule in Palestine. While overseas he will also travel to conduct research for his next project on the book of Ecclesiastes (coauthored with Dr. Brennan W. Breed). He recently submitted the notes for Ecclesiastes in the next (5th) edition of the New Oxford Annotated Bible, which is scheduled for publication in 2018. He also wrote a brief article for the Society of Biblical Literature’s Bible Odyssey website on legal language in the book of Job.

Prof. Rosemary Horowitz (English/JHP)’s essay “Elie Wiesel’s Political Vision in The Testament and Hostage” will be included in the collection The Novels of Elie Wiesel, to be published by SUNY Press. She was invited to present at the international conference on emerging questions in Holocaust testimonies research to be held at the University of Virginia later this year. She also submitted a proposal for the 2017 Association for Jewish Studies annual conference.

Prof. Thomas Pegelow Kaplan (JHP/History) was awarded a Postdoctoral Research Fellowship by the International Institute for Holocaust Research of Yad Vashem. He will be in Jerusalem for much of the fall

and winter. He also received a group study research grant from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) that supported the travels of his Holocaust research class in Europe in March. Pegelow Kaplan presented on his book project on transnational Jewish petitioning practices during the Shoah at the Alexander von Humboldt-Foundation Symposium in Washington, D.C. He also served as commentator at the “Burdens and Beginnings: Rebuilding East and West Germany after Nazism” Workshop at UNC-Chapel Hill and was invited to join the steering committee of the National Leadership Summit of Center Directors initiated by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.

**RENOWNED HOLOCAUST SCHOLAR
 JOHN K. ROTH AT ASU**

In March, the Center was host to John K. Roth, Edward Sexton Professor Emeritus of Philosophy and the Founding Director of the Center for the Study of the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights at Claremont McKenna College. Professor Roth, a renowned scholar of philosophy, religion, and Holocaust Studies, who authored, co-authored, or edited



more than fifty books, gave an evening lecture on the “Failures of Ethics: Comprehending Genocide and Atrocity” on the ASU campus. His most recent work on torture and genocide was the focus of the Center’s latest research colloquium that led to prolonged exchanges between the visitor and ASU faculty and students. The visit was part of a cooperation with Davidson College’s Vann Center for Ethics, UNCC’s Center for Holocaust, Genocide and Human Rights Studies and the Greenspon Center for Peace and Social Justice at Queens University.

**YOM HASHOAH
 2017/5777**

On Holocaust Memorial Day, community members, ASU staff, students and faculty participated in a ceremony at the local synagogue and eight hours of readings of the names of Jews murdered in the Shoah on the ASU campus. The Center co-organized the event with the Temple of the High Country and ASU’s Hillel chapter.



Elaine Rothenberg reading names of murdered Jews

STAY CONNECTED

To sign up for the Center’s e-newsletter with frequent up-dates on programs and activities, go to <https://holocaust.appstate.edu> and click on the “Subscribe” link.