

RWANDAN  
GENOCIDE  
SURVIVOR AT ASU  
IN NOVEMBER

ASU's Center for Judaic, Holocaust, and Peace Studies is pleased to invite the public to a talk by Mugabo Yves entitled "The 1994 Rwandan Genocide: The Voice and Struggles of a Child Survivor." It will take place on Tuesday, November 10, at 7:00 p.m. in Belk Library 114. The presentation is free of charge.

After the Holocaust, survivors and representatives of the international community powerfully intoned a “never again.” Yet, genocides became a recurring reality in the post-

Cold War worlds. The 1994 genocide in the East African country of Rwanda is but one of too many examples. In roughly three months, the Hutu Power genocidaires slaughtered some 800,000 Tutsis and Hutu moderates. "Repeating the phrase 'never again,'" acting UN Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson stressed in his 2014 remarks to commemorate the Rwandan genocide, "is, in itself, a sign of continued failure."

Mugabo Yves will speak about these mass murders in Rwanda from the perspective of a child survivor. In April 1994, he was seven years old. His Tutsi family lived in the capital Kigali that became one of the key sites of the killings. His mother and

many close relatives perished. Yves survived with the help of moderate Hutus.

## GAME DAY

The Community Advisory Board of the Center hosted a Game Day FUNraiser on Friday, August 28, at the Beech Mountain Club. Along with the enjoyment from playing cards, Mahjong, and other games, participants were treated to morning coffee and a buffet lunch. The event was well attended, and the day was filled with much pleasure. Thank you to Molle Grad, Linda Lentin, Meliné Markarian, and Janet Weinstein for coordinating this successful day.

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MOUNTAIN CHAI

Recognizing that we could all use more relaxation in our hectic days, the Center Advisory Board put a novel twist on its third annual Mountain Chai event. This year's Mountain Chai was an at-home event. Members were sent packets of tea to brew at their leisure in private or to share with friends and family. Thank you to our members and guests who enjoyed a nice cup of tea and supported the center at the same time.

Centers like the CJHPS do not emerge overnight, but are the result of years of hard work by many women and men on and off university campuses. As I begin this tenure, I would like to express my gratitude to everyone who has been involved in this undertaking at ASU, dating back to the beginnings, when Havurah members lent a hand to support the teaching of the Holocaust at ASU. I would like to express my thankfulness for the extensive work of the

I had been aware of the Center for Judaic, Holocaust, and Peace Studies (CJHPS)

for many years. I always regretted that I had not been able to help by teaching at its 2012 summer symposium due to a previous commitment as a visiting research fellow at the Simon Dubnow Institute for Jewish History and Culture in Leipzig, Germany. Thus, when the opportunity to direct the Center and to continue the important training of high school teachers in Holocaust Studies arose and evolved into an offer, I was more than thrilled.

previous directors and co-directors from Dr. Rennie Brantz and Dr. Zohara Boyd, herself a survivor, to Rosemary Horowitz and the immediate past director Simon Sibelman. Without the tremendous efforts of all of them and without the vision and backing of university leaders, there would not be a Center today or it would look very differently.

Sadly, we do not live in a post-racial and post-anti-Semitic world. The recent racially-motivated mass shootings in the U.S. and the anti-Semitic violence abroad are reminders that a lot of work still needs to be done. Some of this work can and indeed should unfold in centers such as the one at ASU.

In the months and years to come, the Center will build on its previous accomplishments. The Martin & Doris Rosen Summer Symposium will continue to be at the heart of its activities. The Center will also engage in more outreach and research activities, including talks and symposia with nationally- and internationally-acclaimed researchers. Faculty and staff affiliated with the Center will strengthen the minor in Judaic, Holocaust, and Peace Studies and offer new classes, including much-needed gateway courses. Genocide is of course not only a phenomenon of the past. It is very much part of our world today and going on as you read these lines. We will, thus, also collaborate with other ASU

departments and off-campus institutions in programming and classes that explain the enduring spread of systematic mass murder to ASU students and the broader community. The visit by Rwandan genocide survivor Mugabo Yves in November is one step in this direction. The Center and its work can only thrive with the support of the campus and broader community. I would, thus, like to ask everyone to continue their support, to participate in Center events, volunteer, and be part in any way they see fit. The Center has many programs and initiatives in the works, but I would also explicitly like to invite everyone to make suggestions, share ideas, and give input. In the end, this is a small, but vibrant Center that is in the truest sense of the word a community effort.

I am looking forward to  
working with all of you,  
**Thomas Pegelow Kaplan**  
**Leon Levine Distinguished**  
**Professor of Judaic, Holocaust,**  
**and Peace Studies**

## JHPS MINOR: IMPROVING THE CURRICULUM

The Center's new Faculty Advisory Board has started its work on strengthening the minor in Judaic, Holocaust, and Peace Studies that was first introduced at ASU in 2009. Beginning in Fall 2016, all minors will be required to take one of two gateway classes, "Introduction to Holocaust and Judaic Studies" or "Introduction to Peace Studies." Professors Pegelow Kaplan and Hudnall will be offering these classes respectively. The Center is also working to increase the number and range of its Judaic Studies courses and find a way to offer Modern Hebrew without which no Judaic Studies program can be viable. The Center is working with various allies on and off campus, including our colleagues at NC Hillel.

A photograph of three people smiling for a photo at a formal event. On the left, a woman with short blonde hair and glasses, wearing a blue jacket, holds a black garment. In the center, a man with grey hair, wearing a light-colored shirt and tie, stands with his arm around her. On the right, a woman with short brown hair, wearing a dark blue top and a long necklace, stands next to him. The background shows other guests seated at tables with blue tablecloths in a well-lit room.

## ASU Administration Continues Its Support: Chancellor Sheri N. Everts hosting the annual luncheon for friends of the center in August



## A Word from Our Director



**Faculty Advisory Board**  
Sarah Greenwald  
Rosemary Horowitz  
Amy Hudnall  
Eric Koomitz  
Alexandra Sterling  
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**Ex-officio:**  
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JUDAIC, HOLOCAUST,  
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For more information on events, please visit our website at: [holocaust.appstate.edu/events](http://holocaust.appstate.edu/events)



## SUMMER SYMPOSIUM 2015

During the week of July 11-17, 30 public school teachers came to the campus of Appalachian State University to attend the 14th Annual Martin and Doris Rosen Summer Symposium on “Remembering the Holocaust.” Many educators came from North Carolina, but we also welcomed teachers from Tennessee, Georgia, and Wyoming as well as Canada, Hungary, and Estonia. The Symposium emphasized learning and teaching about the Holocaust. Days were filled with informational sessions by presenters, such as the internationally-known scholar Dr. Michael Berenbaum, Canadian author of children’s literature Kathy Kacer, the director of the University of Virginia’s Jewish Studies Program Dr. Gabriel Finder, education specialist for Holocaust studies at Miami-Dade County public schools Dr. Miriam Klein Kassenoff, U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum program coordinator Dr. Ann Millin, ASU history professor Dr. Rennie Brantz, and Community Advisory Board member Suzanne Lasky Gerard and her friend Lee Rubin Jennings. Holocaust survivor Dr. Zev Harel provided powerfully moving testimony of his experiences during the Holocaust. Retiring Center director Dr. Simon Sibelman presented

various engaging sessions throughout the week. Additional sessions provided teachers with methodologies for including Holocaust films and literature in their classrooms. Dr. Rosemary Horowitz focused on how teachers can integrate survivor testimony into their teaching, and Lynda Moss and Lee Holder, the award-winning teacher in residence, guided teachers through a series of activities on how to engage students in Holocaust studies and various ways to integrate the Holocaust into the new social studies curriculum. Dr. John Cox from UNC-Charlotte reminded the participants of the survival strategies and Jewish resistance during the Holocaust.

The Symposium proved to be an exciting, informative, and powerful experience for all involved. Participating teachers continue to rate the Symposium very highly for its attention to content and teaching strategies. This year’s 30 teachers join the ranks of over 350 others who have participated in the Rosen Holocaust Symposium over the years. In addition, hundreds of students, faculty, and community members have attended Symposium sessions, which, through the generosity of donors, are always free and open to the public.



## Auschwitz-Birkenau Survivor Dr. Susan Cernyak-Spatz Addresses Crowds at ASU

On September 17, the Center for Judaic, Holocaust, and Peace Studies welcomed Auschwitz-Birkenau survivor Dr. Susan Cernyak-Spatz to the ASU campus for its first program of the fall term 2015. Cernyak-Spatz, who is a Professor Emerita of German Literature at UNC Charlotte, recounted her suffering at the hands of the Nazis and other Germans at Plemmons Student Union. Close to a 1,000 students, faculty, staff, and community members came to the event so that access to the venue had to be restricted due to overcrowding.



“I thought I understood quite well,” stated one audience member, “how terrible and evil the Holocaust was. Dr. Cernyak-Spatz opened my eyes” to a far more complex experience. “Most students could go their entire life without learning about what went on in the women’s camp” of

Auschwitz II, noted another ASU student. The speaker helped the audience grasp, Grayson Beane stressed, how women suffered and struggled at a death camp. Cernyak-Spatz was 24 years old, when the Germans deported her to Auschwitz. For two years, she was forced to work as a slave laborer in various positions in the camp, gaining significant insights in its functioning and the guards’ motivations that cannot be reduced to mere racial anti-Semitism. Cernyak-Spatz, now in her mid-90s, denied the presence of God at Auschwitz and negated the importance of faith in most inmates’ struggle for survival. “It is easy to talk about this subject when all the victims are nameless and faceless,” stressed ASU student Katie Sluder. “However, hearing an account from an actual holocaust survivor. . . makes it even more real. I feel lucky to have heard her experience. . . My future students will likely never get this opportunity. My goal now is to teach my students all that I have learned about this event so that they too will have a greater understanding of such a complicated piece of history.”

## STUDYING THE HOLOCAUST OFF CAMPUS

Last summer, thirteen Appalachian students participated in a University approved Summer Study Abroad program on the Holocaust in France, Germany, and Austria. Led by Dr. Rennie Brantz, this program ran from May 12 to June 7, and enabled participants to visit Nazi concentration camps in Dachau and Natzweiler, explore Holocaust museums

in Munich, Nuremberg, and Strasbourg, and spend time in the Nuremberg courtroom where top Nazi war criminals were tried after WWII. Students also experienced European culture and society today during visits to Paris, Salzburg, and Innsbruck. Each student earned six hours of academic credit. The impact on participating students has been profound. Several decided to minor in Judaic, Holocaust, and Peace Studies; one student changed her major as a result

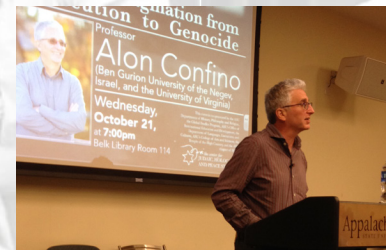
## “Why did the Nazis burn the Hebrew Bible”? Prominent Israeli-American Historian Provided Answers at ASU

On October 21, Professor Alon Confino lectured in Belk Library on “A World Without Jews: The Nazi Imagination from Persecution to Genocide.” Confino is one of the most innovative and vibrant scholars in the fields of modern German history, Holocaust and Memory Studies. He grew up in Jerusalem, but completed his graduate work at the University of California at Berkeley. Confino currently holds full professorships at Ben Gurion University of the Negev in Israel and the University of Virginia.

Professor Confino has been at the forefront of historical research for more than two decades. More recently, he has moved into the field of Holocaust Studies. In his talk, Confino portrayed the widespread burning of the Hebrew Bible during Kristallnacht in November 1938 as an intentional and public act that constituted anything but an aberration. He argued that

these practices of Nazis and other Germans should be seen as part of a large-scale project of “fixing the past” by ending the imagined Jewish “authority over a moral ancient past” and historical origins enshrined in the Bible. Confino’s multifaceted answer amounted to an insightful rereading of key issues in the study of the Holocaust.

Organized by the Center, Professor Confino also led a seminar for students and faculty on the conflicts between Jewish settlers and Palestinians, especially issues of forced migration in late 1940s Palestine/Israel. In light of the recent violence in the Middle East, these examinations were ever more timely and needed.



of this experience. Seven of the students received \$2,000 travel scholarships from the Miriam and Abe Brenner Holocaust Scholarship Fund administered by the Greensboro Jewish Federation. Students told us that this trip was a life changing experience.



2015 ASU Summer Abroad Trip

Beginning in Spring 2016, the Center will start to offer annual research excursions in connection with a new seminar

JHP/HIS 3540: “The Holocaust: Interpretation, Memory, and Representation.” The research travel will take place during spring break. Led by Prof. Pegelow Kaplan, the destination of the first excursion is Washington, D.C., and the district’s archives of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Participants will meet with archivists, librarians, scholars, and a Holocaust survivor. They will have access to some 70 million pages of documents and more than 8,500 interviews with survivors. Destinations of future research travel include the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum in Poland.



## AFFILIATED FACULTY RESEARCH

Prof. Rosemary Horowitz (JHPS/English) published an edited collection entitled *Women Writers of Yiddish Literature* with McFarland Publishers this summer. Taking stock of Yiddish literature in 1939, critic Shmuel Niger highlighted the increasing number and importance of women writers. However, awareness of women Yiddish writers diminished over the years. Today, a modest body of novels, short stories, poems and essays by Yiddish women may be found in English translation online and in print, and little in the way of literary history and criticism is available. This collection of critical essays is the first dedicated to the works of Yiddish women writers, introducing them to a new audience of English-speaking scholars and readers. In addition, at the invitation of Oxford University Press, Prof. Horowitz is currently writing a bibliographical essay on Holocaust memorial books. She is also making plans to attend the conference on the future of Holocaust testimony in Akko, Israel, in March 2016.

Prof. Amy Hudnall (History/Global Studies) is working on a book manuscript entitled *Learning from the "Immediate, Long-Term, and Multi-Generational Effects of Genocide on Perpetrators"* that traces the development of patriarchy from prehistory to present day with a focus on women's rights and the shaping

of power structures.

Prof. Thomas Pegelow Kaplan (JHPS/History) has co-organized and –led a three-day seminar on “Human Rights, Genocide, and Germans’ Moral Campaigns in the World” at the 39th Annual Conference of the German Studies Association in early October. At this conference, he also served as a commentator on a panel on early postwar lay Jewish efforts to shape the telling of the Holocaust. He recently submitted a manuscript entitled “History and Theory: Writing Modern European Histories after the Linguistic Turn” for an essay collection edited by Adam Seipp and Michael Meng. Prof. Pegelow Kaplan also just signed a contract with Cambridge University Press for his second monograph with the working title *The Language of Genocide in Postwar America and West Germany: Protesters, Imageries of Mass Murder, and the Remaking of Memory*. Earlier this fall, he conducted research at the archives of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum on a project on trans-European and global Jewish petitioning practices during the Shoah. Finally, he was invited to present a paper at the international conference in honor of Prof. Dan Michman at Yad Vashem and Bar-Ilan University in Israel in December.

