

Martin-Springer Institute

Global Engagement Through Holocaust Awareness

2021-2022: YEAR IN REVIEW

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

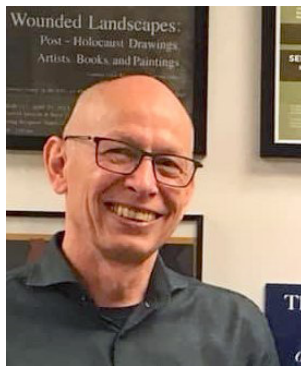
On August 3, 2022, Doris Martin (née Szpringer) passed away at her home in California. Born in 1926 in Będzin, Poland, she survived the Holocaust as a forced laborer in the Ludwigsburg camp, under the administration of the infamous Gross-Rosen concentration camp. After she arrived in the United States, she married Ralph Martin and together they moved to Flagstaff. She and Ralph laid the foundation for the institute at NAU. Last year, in September 2021, we celebrated the institute's 20th anniversary at NAU's Kitt Recital Hall. We miss you, Doris.

Our institute has grown over the years into an (inter)nationally recognized center that offers educational events for NAU students and the community while also developing programs for the state of Arizona and with national and global partners. In the past months, South Africa, Poland, Italy, Spain, and Germany have been a particular focus of our work.

Highlights of 2021-2022 include our Holocaust study tour to Poland and Germany with Arizona teachers as well as our ongoing student research projects on the International Brigades in the Spanish Civil War and on a painter from Trieste, Italy, who perished in Bergen-Belsen. We also enjoyed hosting Asya Darbinyan, our institute's third postdoctoral scholar, as well as many other speakers and programs throughout the year.

With our innovative and reliable programming, MSI has been successful in securing major funding from the Molly Blank Fund, the Rosenbluth Family Foundation, and the Claims Conference as well as from new and old friends of the institute. Such generous support opens new opportunities, including the possibility of hiring for the first time a Holocaust Education Program Coordinator.

We cannot thank Doris and Ralph enough for having started this institute many years ago. Doris, you will remain in our hearts.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Björn Krondorfer".

Björn Krondorfer, Regents' Professor
Director, Martin-Springer Institute
& Endowed Professor of Religious Studies

NAU NORTHERN ARIZONA
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MESSAGE FROM NAU PRESIDENT JOSÉ LUIS CRUZ RIVERA



Last year—my first as President of NAU—I had the privilege of celebrating the milestone 20th anniversary of the Martin-Springer Institute at NAU. What struck me then and stays with me now is how crucial MSI is to the fabric of this university, as we seek through our educational mission to create the conditions for a more just, equitable, civically engaged society for all people.

The work conducted by MSI that focuses on the legacy of the Holocaust and other genocides is crucial to bringing broader understanding to the public and our students about the past. And, in so doing, helps inform how we can address the most pressing issues of today. I am thankful for the scholarly, educational, and community-engaged efforts of MSI that contribute to knowledge and justice at NAU, in our communities, and beyond.

People

NEW MSI ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS

As we said good-bye to a number of Advisory Council members (some moved to different states, others retired), we are welcoming five new members.



Stephen Batalden is Professor Emeritus of History at Arizona State University and founding director of the ASU Melikian Center for Russian, Eurasian, and East European Studies where he remains a part-time research professor engaged in overseas projects in Armenia and Kosovo. His research addresses the religious and cultural history of modern Russia and the Balkans.

Camille D. Bibles is currently a U.S. Magistrate Judge in Flagstaff. In 2002, she worked on the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia as a war crimes prosecutor and later was a Senior Trial Attorney for the team prosecuting General Ratko Mladic. She also has worked for the Coconino County Attorney's Office and has been the lead attorney at the U.S. Attorney's Office in Flagstaff.



Jake Bacon, Arizona Daily Sun



Jill Friedmann is Assistant Dean at NAU's Cline Library. She has worked in the library, archives, and museum profession since 1995. Recently she led the library's efforts to create a Master Space Plan for future library programming and renovation planning. She is also trained as a photo historian and supports the work of Special Collections and Archives.

Patricia Mongini received a Ph.D. in Microbiology/Immunology from Stanford University. After retiring to Sedona, she became affiliated with NAU's Pathogen Microbiome Institute and serves on the board for Immaculate Conception Catholic School in Cottonwood.



Stu Siefer, together with his wife Nancy, spent time in Honduras in the Peace Corps. He got his architecture degree at ASU. He is past president of the Arizona Jewish Historical Society and is Fundraising Chair for the proposed Phoenix Holocaust Museum and Education Center.

For their past services on the Advisory Council, we like to express our deepest gratitude to **Sergio Mazza**, **Elliot Greenberg**, **Lela Montfort**, **Ismail Ozis**, and **John Liffiton**.

MEMORY ACTIVISM

Tomasz Grząślewicz is a Polish historian and translator working at the University of Silesia, Katowice. He is editor-in-chief of *A Guidebook to Jewish Heritage in Sosnowiec*. In June 2022, he guided our Arizona teachers through Sosnowiec.



Giving a tour of Sosnowiec to the educators from Arizona was among the most rewarding experiences I have had since I got involved with the history of Jews in Sosnowiec. The group had impressive knowledge about Edward Gastfriend's memoir. The teachers were curious to find out as much as possible, asking many challenging questions. I can see how they will share what they learned with their students. The work of your institute is extremely important: it builds bridges between countries and cultures, teaching the difficult past to shape a better future.

Tomasz Grząślewicz
Katowice, Poland



Our Year in Review

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF SURVIVORS

STUDY TOUR OF HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL SITES IN POLAND AND GERMANY

More than two years in planning—and having raised one hundred thousand dollars to make possible this experience for twenty Arizona teachers—we embarked in June 2022 on a 17-day study tour to Europe. We followed the “footsteps” of Doris Martin’s memoir, *Kiss Every Step*, and Edward Gastfriend’s memoir, *My Father’s Testament*.

Beyond textual evidence, our teachers explored the actual locations of Doris and Edward’s journeys of hardship during the Holocaust. Architecture, space, sounds, smells, and distances all added to the complexity of our understanding of their survival in ghettos, Nazi camps, death marches, and liberation. We explored each location by foot, whether in big cities like Krakow and Berlin or forgotten former Nazi labor camps in overgrown forests. Political geography was as important as visiting today’s memorial sites under the guidance of Polish and German museum directors, memory activists, historians, curators, educators, archivists, and local experts.



We would like to mention one of many highlights: We had reached out in advance to the current Polish residents of the apartment in Będzin (Poland), where Doris and her family had lived during the Nazi occupation of their hometown. The Polish couple, Monika and Michael, welcomed our teachers at their home with refreshments. They allowed us to enter the apartment, explaining how it changed since Doris had lived there. We all went up the stairs to the second floor, the very steps featured in Doris’ memoir, *Kiss Every Step*. After a particularly gruesome Nazi selection in Będzin, Doris and her family had returned to their apartment, still united, and they kissed every step as a gesture of relief. All the teachers ascended these same stairs 80 years later. When we presented our host Monika with the recent Polish translation of Doris’ memoir, she started crying out of gratitude. She would, she said, finally be able to read Doris’ story in her own language.

This program was supported by the Claims Conference, The Molly Blank Fund, G and Marc Dubow, and friends of the institute.



REFLECTIONS FROM PARTICIPATING TEACHERS

Connecting personally with the tragedy of the Holocaust, I learned the painful truth that genocides result from human choices and complicity: an incalculable lesson for my students.

Amanda Johnson
Corona del Sol High School
Tempe

Reflecting on my “Footsteps Pilgrimage,” I feel as if Doris Martin and Edward Gastfriend have become family.

Maria Balaguer
Tucson High
Magnet School
Tucson

There was so much that I learned. It contextualized the experiences of Holocaust survivors and helped me understand that every story is unique. As educators, we must be vigilant in teaching young people how not to become perpetrators.

Jaime Festa-Daigle
Lake Havasu Unified
School District
Lake Havasu City

Being in the different camps with other educators from Arizona gave me a new perspective on the Holocaust and all the different groups living through this period. It will help me create meaningful lessons for my students.

Dan Tyler
Prescott High School
Prescott

Our Year in Review



On September 26, 2021 the community turned out to help the Martin-Springer Institute celebrate its 20th anniversary at NAU's Kitt Recital Hall and Ardrey Auditorium.

MEDICAL APARTHEID AND RACE

Due to COVID, our January 27 International Holocaust Remembrance Day event was postponed to April 19, 2022.

The Martin-Springer Institute presents

Medical Apartheid and Race:

A Conversation with Harriet A. Washington

Tuesday April 19, 2022
7:00 pm • Prochnow Auditorium

Free and open to the public • This event is supported by NAU's Student Activities Council

Event Parking:
Contact: Melissa.cohen@nau.edu
(or 928.928.2454) about parking validation for the garage at the Drury Inn.



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Harriet A. Washington is the author of Medical Apartheid: The Dark History of Race-Based Healthcare in America from Slavery to the Present (Harvard University Press, 2016) and the 2017 National Black Leadership Initiative Award recipient.

What an amazing event! Harriet Washington was brilliant and gracious.

Gioia Woods, Chair
Department of Comparative Cultural Studies

Harriet Washington's speech about what African Americans have experienced in the medical field was incredibly powerful. As a future healthcare worker, it is horrific to realize what people endured. It is a strong reason for wanting to enter this profession.

NAU student (anonymous)



CAN WE UNDERSTAND GENOCIDE WITHOUT GENDER?

Just about every seat was taken at NAU's Liberal Arts building venue when Lerna Elmekçioğlu spoke on the Armenian genocide on April 21, 2022.

It was a great pleasure meeting at Elmekçioğlu's talk last week. I am so glad to see the Institute thriving. My nephew will be starting at NAU this summer, and I will definitely encourage him to take part in Martin-Springer Institute events.

Paul Miller-Melamed
Associate Professor of History
McDaniel College

Works in Progress

FUNDING HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2021-2022

MSI received a three-year commitment from **The Molly Blank Fund** to support a Holocaust Education Program Coordinator. In the fall of 2022, we will become a team of three at the institute, significantly increasing our ability to reach out to teachers across Arizona and improve Holocaust education in our state.

The Molly Blank Fund also generously supported our *In the Footsteps of Survivors* study tour in Poland and Germany and will contribute to our Postdoctoral Scholar program.

We received from the **Rosenbluth Family Charitable Foundation** two separate and significant grants for 2022-2023. The first supports student-faculty research projects, the second an extended main speaker series for NAU and the Metro-Phoenix area.

One of the unexpected gifts came, unannounced, in an envelope that contained a significant personal check from the **Simon and Cecile Spiegelman Family**: we thank you from the depth of our hearts.

Jeanette Garretty Reinhard and Eli Reinhard committed to support our Postdoctoral Scholar program for another three years.

G Shanahan and Mark Dubowy stepped forward at a critical moment with an incredible gift for the *In the Footsteps of Survivors* study tour.

Thank you. And thank you to everyone who has supported us over time.

A FAN FROM THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR



Since March 2021, MSI has facilitated a research project and mentored students as part of a student-faculty collaboration on American International Volunteers who fought in the Spanish Civil War against Franco's insurrectionist forces. Tracing the lives of International Volunteers who signed a Spanish fan in 1938, the students reconstructed their lives through the Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives in New York, the Russian archives, and other primary and secondary sources. As a public humanities project, it will become a digital exhibit that we hope to present to the public in the fall of 2022.

This interdisciplinary student group presented their ongoing work on the Spanish Civil War in a poster session at the **American Historical Association** in New Orleans (January 2022) as well as at NAU's **Undergraduate Symposium** in April.

GINO PARIN IN TRIESTE: PORTRAIT OF AN ARTIST DURING THE HOLOCAUST

In our second student-faculty research project, we reconstructed the life of Gino Parin before and during the Holocaust. Born Jewish, Parin had converted to Catholicism. As a Swiss citizen who had studied in Germany, he chose the Italian city of Trieste as his residence. Though he seemed briefly enthralled by Italian fascism, eventually Italian and German anti-Jewish laws classified him as Jewish. In 1944, he was transported to the Nazi camp of Bergen-Belsen where he died.

The interdisciplinary student group will retell his complex story through a series of podcasts; an exhibit with original paintings will be staged at NAU's Clara M. Lovett Art Museum in Spring 2023.



YOU CAN HELP MAKE OUR PROGRAMS HAPPEN

For a tax deductible donation, make checks payable to:

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Elizabeth.Rock@nau.edu
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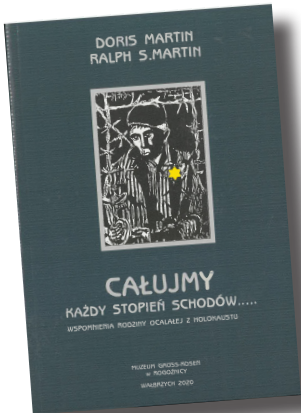
Upcoming 2022-2023

TRIBUTE TO OUR FOUNDER, DORIS (SZPRINGER) MARTIN (Z"l) DECEMBER 24, 1926 - AUGUST 3, 2022

On August 3, Doris passed away at her California home. Twelve years old when the Nazis invaded her hometown Będzin, Poland, she was deported to Auschwitz and survived the women's forced labor camp of Ludwigsdorf, which was under the administration of the infamous Gross-Rosen camp. Miraculously, all members of Doris' family survived and reunited after the war. Arriving in the United States in 1950, Doris later married Ralph Martin. They made Flagstaff their home for many years and founded the Martin-Springer Institute at Northern Arizona University.

In 2009, she and Ralph published her memoir *Kiss Every Step*. In 2021, as if coming full circle, her memoir was translated into Polish by the staff of Gross-Rosen memorial site in Poland.

This fall, we will honor Doris at a public event at NAU, paying tribute to her untiring efforts to educate young people about the Holocaust.



FALL 2022

August to November: *Through the Eyes of Youth: Life and Death in the Będzin Ghetto* exhibit, Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre, South Africa

September:

- *Resilience: Women in Flagstaff's Past and Present* exhibit on the NAU campus
- Esther Basch, Holocaust survivor testimony, with Chabad of Flagstaff
- *I Go on Singing: Paul Robeson's Life in His Words & Songs*, in cooperation with NAU's School of Music

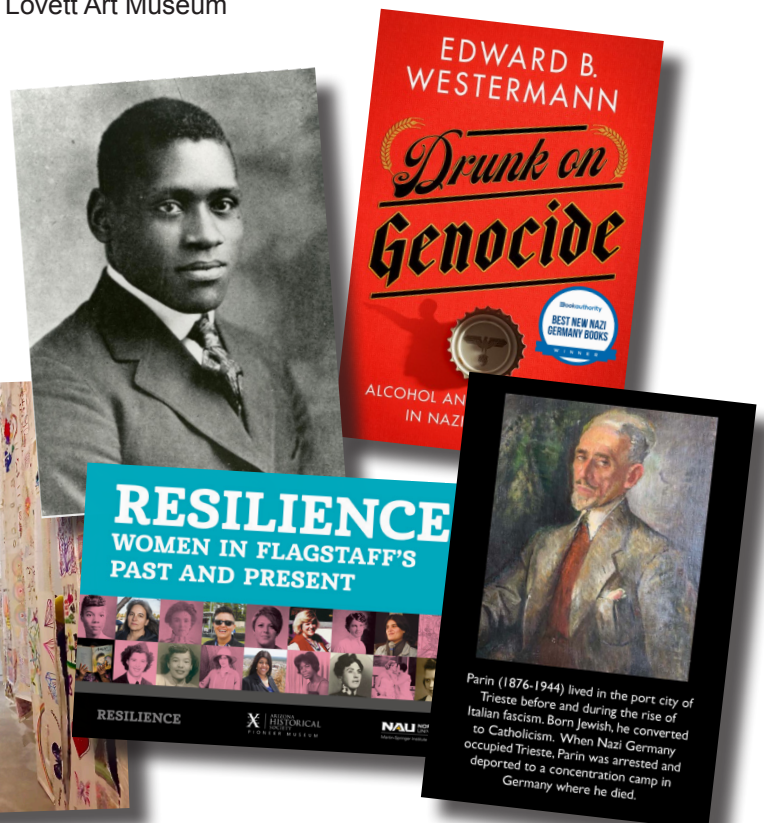
October: Military historian Edward Westermann speaks on his book, *Drunk on Genocide*

November: *25 Million Stitches: One Stitch, One Refugee*, in cooperation with Creative Flagstaff

SPRING 2023

January: International Holocaust Remembrance Day events at NAU and in Phoenix

February to April: Gino Parin art exhibit, at NAU's Clara M. Lovett Art Museum



For programming details go to:
[facebook.com/MSIatNAU](https://www.facebook.com/MSIatNAU).
Updates are also available at:
[nau_msi](https://www.instagram.com/nau_msi) on Instagram

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928-523-5029,
bjorn.krondorfer@nau.edu

Program Coordinator: Melissa Cohen
928-523-2464,
melissa.cohen@nau.edu

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