

# Martin-Springer Institute

## Global Engagement Through Holocaust Awareness

MSI Review

Fall 2018

### LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

As much as the global community after 1945 promised that “never again” will end discrimination, exclusion, atrocities, and genocides, we are looking at a world today where such promises increasingly sound hollow.

I believe we have an ethical and moral duty to shape public discourse that promotes different values; in the case of the Martin-Springer Institute, these are empathy, moral courage, justice, tolerance, and working toward reconciliation—through continuous educational and dialogical engagement.

Our multi-faceted programs aim at better understanding the dangers posed by hateful ideologies and rising antisemitism, as well as other forms of prejudice and the disregard of core democratic principles. In 2017-2018, we offered over 50 different programs and events, attended by nearly 5,000 people. Given our modest budget, we worked hard to make this possible.

Our programs address issues of social injustice and complicity while also celebrating the strength of resilience and the ethics of caring relations. Continuously, we build bridges across religious, ethnic, and national differences. Please consider supporting us in these endeavors. We depend on your generous contributions.

Enjoy the newsletter; and we hope to see you at many of our events in the coming year.



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



### SELECT HIGHLIGHTS 2017-2018

- Father Patrick Desbois: *Unearthing Holocaust Memories, Documenting the Yazidi Genocide*
- Exhibit at the Coconino Center for the Arts: *Echoes of Loss: Artistic Responses to Trauma*
- Symposium on Refugees: *Strangers or Neighbors? Jewish, Muslim, and Christian Perspectives on Refugees*
- Holocaust Survivor Testimony: Jacob Eisenbach, in cooperation with Chabad of Flagstaff
- A Public Dialogue: *A Palestinian Peace Activist and an Orthodox Jewish Settler Talk Peace*
- Exhibit in Riverdale, NY: *Through the Eyes of Youth: Life and Death in the Bedzin Ghetto*
- Elisa von Joeden-Forgey: *Yazidi Genocide and Sexual Violence*

### MSI AND CHABAD CO-HOSTED HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR

*"I feel genuinely honored to have seen Dr. Jacob Eisenbach speak at NAU last fall. It is individual accounts of survivors that stick with us, and to hear them first-hand is transformative. His warmth and message of hope through education felt cathartic in this current climate of political division and uncertainty, when it is easy to feel hopeless. Thank you MSI for bringing Dr. Eisenbach to our community."*

Amber Meyer,  
Flagstaff, AZ



# People

## ADVISORY COUNCIL NEWS



Ron Borkan,  
Martin-Springer Institute Advisory Council Member  
Flagstaff, AZ

*"I wanted to join the Advisory Council of the Martin-Springer Institute because I believe that education and dialogue are particularly important at this time given what is happening in the world. In my retirement, I am seeking to affiliate with programs and their boards that reach into the community to develop empathy and understanding locally, nationally and internationally. The Martin-Springer Institute is doing outstanding work in this regard and I want to do everything I can to facilitate its mission."*

### GERDA WEISSMANN KLEIN

Martin-Springer Institute  
Honorary Council Member



Survivor of hatred and horror during the Shoah, Gerda has inspired thousands in her

public talks for over fifty years and by her writings. Her memoir *All But My Life* is read around the world, and the 1995 film based on her book received both the Oscar and Emmy for documentary short subject. Recipient of numerous honorary degrees, Gerda served on the governing board of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and founded "Citizenship Counts" (a nonprofit that seeks to advance responsibilities of citizenship). In 2011, Gerda received the highest honor bestowed by our country on a civilian, the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

David Kader,  
Chair, MSI Advisory Council

### Additional Honorary Council members include:

**Susan Neiman**, Director of the Einstein Forum, Germany. Born in Atlanta, Georgia, she studied at Harvard and the Freie Universität Berlin and taught at Yale and Tel Aviv universities.

**John K. Roth**, Edward J. Sexton Professor Emeritus of Philosophy, Claremont McKenna College, was founding director of the Center for the Study of the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights.

**Shifra Sagy**, Professor Emerita of Psychology at Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Israel, is currently the director of the Martin-Springer Center for Conflict Studies.



Advisory Council member Sergio Mazza joined Mohamed Mohamed and Zeki Saritoprak at MSI's academic symposium on refugees, October 2017 (see page 3).

## NEW ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBER, ON MSI'S ANNUAL HOLOCAUST EDUCATION CONFERENCE

*"The array of topics, perspectives and insights provided by presenters and professionals engaged in teaching about the Holocaust helps me to move from simply having a toolbelt of content knowledge and strategies for the classroom to having a toolbox and hopefully a toolshed to create rich, meaningful and authentic experiences for a range of student and adult learners."*



*We are learning from and with individuals who are visibly impassioned about such vital work at the local, national, and global levels, especially when it is evident that history is truly repeating itself in many pockets throughout the world."*

*I am encouraged to know that there are other educators dedicated to this particular work and to know that I am not alone in combatting such injustice. I know that I am, and I will be, supported with respect to my own endeavors where Holocaust education is concerned."*



Duane Yazzie,  
Teacher-Librarian  
Tséhootsooí Diné Bi'Ólta'  
Fort Defiance, AZ



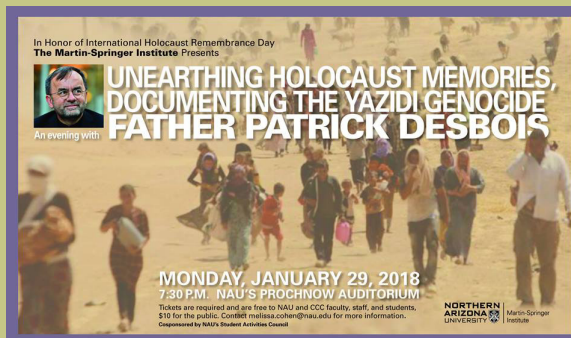
# Our Year in Review

## UNEARTHING HOLOCAUST MEMORIES, DOCUMENTING THE YAZIDI GENOCIDE



In his book *Holocaust by Bullets* Father Desbois writes: *"In my experience, the most difficult part of discovering and gaining personal knowledge of genocide is accepting the truth about what happened."* We invited Father Desbois, who lives in Paris, to talk to our community on International Holocaust Remembrance Day. He spoke about his work on identifying sites in Eastern Europe where Nazi mobile killing squads exterminated Jews, on rising antisemitism in France, and on documenting the Yazidi genocide in Iraq today.

Björn Krondorfer



*I was honored to have been invited to tell my family's story at NAU prior to his powerful presentation. Father Desbois talked about the discovery of thousands of gravesites of Jews including the site in Ukraine where my relatives were exterminated. Sincere thanks to the Martin-Springer Institute for bringing Father Desbois to speak at NAU."*

Sheryl Bronkesh,  
Chair, Generations After -  
Descendants of Holocaust  
Survivors in Greater Phoenix  
Vice President, The Phoenix  
Holocaust Survivors' Association

*"As the child of Holocaust survivors, the work of Father Desbois is extremely personal. He and his organization, Yahad-In Unum, have brought world attention to the deaths of millions murdered by Nazi death squads during World War II, including my grandfather and great*



A delegation of Generations After members traveled from Phoenix to hear Father Desbois

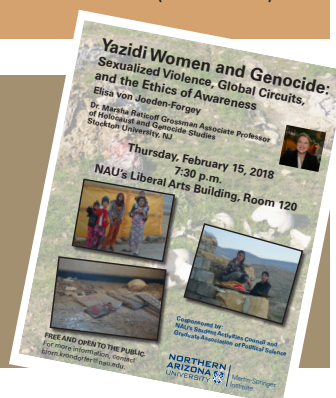


## STRANGERS OR NEIGHBORS

In October 2017, MSI held a three-day roundtable symposium at NAU on *Strangers or Neighbors? Jewish, Muslim, and Christian Perspectives on Refugees*. Jointly organized with the **National Catholic Center of Holocaust Education** (Seton Hill University, PA), a group of 16 scholars from across the nation discussed the volatile situation of refugees. In roundtable conversations, we explored how the religious traditions provide resources for turning strangers to neighbors. The symposium's goal was not to arrive at a mutually agreed-upon political platform but to explore various Muslim, Jewish, and Christian perspectives on refugees. The results of the conference will be available in a special issue of the journal *CrossCurrents* (Fall 2018).

## YAZIDI WOMEN AND GENOCIDE

In February 2018, MSI invited Elisa von Joeden-Forgey to bring to our students' attention the harrowing reality of sexualized violence against Yazidi women in Iraq. Professor Joeden-Forgey had traveled to Iraq to learn first-hand about the genocidal violence against the Yazidi religious minority. In her talk, she also pointed to the ongoing plight of Yazidi women as Western organizations stepped in to offer assistance—at times with unintended adverse effects.



# Our Year in Review

In any given year, the Martin-Springer Institute is involved in dozens of large and small events that address topics relevant to our overall mission. We invite speakers, create opportunities for semester-long student-faculty research teams, offer seminars on the Holocaust and anti-bias training for Arizona educators, travel to various communities for talks and workshops, and collaborate with other NAU units, individual students, teachers, and community leaders. We also network with organizations across the U.S. and internationally. Conversations on sensitive and volatile topics are necessary, though they might be discomforting; thus, we aim at creating spaces for respectful listening even when disagreeing. The aphorism, "We do not care how much you know, unless we know you care" describes well one of our guiding principles.

**BELOW IS A SAMPLING OF SOME OF OUR PROGRAMS IN 2017-2018:**



**ABOVE THE DROWNING SEA**  
NARRATED BY JULIANNA MANGULIES  
Directed by René Balcer and Nicola Zavaglia

On the eve of World War II, tens of thousands of Jewish refugees were trapped in Nazi-controlled Vienna. This is the epic story of their dramatic escape to Shanghai.

A screening of *Above the Drowning Sea*, followed by a discussion with René Balcer (writer-director) and Carolyn Hsu-Balcer (co-executive producer).

**Thursday, February 2, 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.**  
NAU's Liberal Arts Room 120

This event is free and open to the public.



**Dr. Jacob Eisenbach:**  
**Perseverance and Survival during the Holocaust**  
Wednesday, November 1, 2017

THE MARTIN SPRINGER INSTITUTE PRESENTS

**The Mandaans:**  
**A Search for Religious Freedom and Survival**  
A Conversation with **Shahram Ebadfarzadeh**  
(a Refugee from Iran and Representative of the Mandaean Community)  
Introduced and Moderated by Religious Studies Professor Jennifer Hunter

Tuesday, March 27, 2018  
11:00 a.m.

The Church of the Red Rocks, Sedona  
54 Bowstring Drive Sedona, AZ 86336  
Phone: 928-282-7963  
info@churchoftheredrocks.com

**A Palestinian Peace Activist and an Orthodox Jewish Settler Talk Peace**

An evening with  
**Antwan Saca and Hanan Schlesinger**

Tuesday, October 24, 2017  
7:00 p.m.  
Room 120, Liberal Arts  
(Building 18 on the NAU map)  
Free and Open to the Public



**Children in Crisis:**  
**Refugee Children in Greece**  
with Dr. Eugenia Arvanitis, Visiting Scholar, University of Patras, Greece

Monday, November 13, 2017  
5:00 p.m.

Liberal Arts Building

**NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY**  
Martin-Springer Institute

**"Why engage in interfaith conversation?"**  
**"What can we learn from each other when engaging interreligiously?"**  
**"Why did Jewish-Christian dialogue become so important after the Holocaust?"**  
**"Is there a Buddhist-Christian dialogue?"**  
**"What are Dalit and Minjung theologies in the Asian context?"**

**Interreligious Dialogue in a Changing World:**  
**A Conversation with Hans Ucko (Sweden) and NAU Religious Studies Program Faculty**

Wednesday, November 29, 2017, 7:00 p.m.  
Riles, third floor  
Free and open to the public

Hans Ucko is a priest of the Church of Sweden and a member of the World Council of Churches. He has been extensively involved in interfaith dialog, particularly between Christians and Jews, and also Asian religions. He is the author of several books on this subject.

**NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY**  
Martin-Springer Institute

**What Christians always wanted to know about Judaism and Islam:**  
**A Muslim-Jewish Conversation**

Introduced by Björn Krondorfer, University of Marmara, Turkey

Tuesday, October 17, 2017  
The Church of the Red Rocks, 54 Bowstring Drive, Sedona

How do Islam and Judaism see the place of prophets? Views on Jesus? Is Allah in the Qur'an the same God as the God of the Bible? If these and other questions intrigue you, do not miss Saritoprak and Dr. Sik will be followed by an extensive discussion.

**SARITOPRAK, Ph.D.** in Islamic Studies, University of Marmara, Turkey. He holds the Marmara Chair in Islamic Studies at John Carroll University, Cleveland, OH.

**BENJAMIN SIK**, Ph.D. in Islamic Studies, University of Marmara, Turkey. He holds the Marmara Chair in Islamic Studies at John Carroll University, Cleveland, OH.

**NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY**  
Martin-Springer Institute

**Sunday October 15, 2017 7:30 p.m.**

Cline Assembly Hall, NAU  
Free and open to the public

**Roger Waldinger:**  
**Searching for Refuge in a World on the Move**

Dr. Waldinger is Distinguished Professor of Sociology at UCLA and Director of the Center for the Study of International Migration.

This event is part of the symposium **Strangers or Neighbors? Jewish, Muslim, and Christian Perspectives on Refugees**.

For more information, visit [www.martin-springer.org](http://www.martin-springer.org)

**NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY**  
Martin-Springer Institute

**National Catholic Center for Holocaust Education**  
BETH EL HILL UNIVERSITY

**az HUMANITIES**  
EXPLORE. SHARE. EXPERIENCE.



# Our Year in Review

## ART EXHIBIT: *ECHOES OF LOSS*



The exhibit *Echoes of Loss: Artistic Responses to Trauma* opened at the Coconino Center for the Arts on April 7th and closed on June 9th, 2018. Three years in the making, the exhibit presented in visual language the impact of trauma on people, communities, and the environment. The invited artists engaged multiple perspectives through various media, informed by their places of birth (Israel, Czechoslovakia, Iran, Canada, Germany, Uzbekistan) and communal identifications (Native American, Latino, African American, Jewish American), each of them struggling with personally experienced, inherited, or cultural traumata.

Additional programming included two artist talks (*Bullets and Fire; Feathers and Fabric*) and three staged community readings on "Chernobyl Voices" in front of photographs of Chernobyl's nuclear disaster.

The exhibit was curated by Björn Krondorfer and NAU art historian Tara Kohn; they also produced the catalogue. An NAU student team assisted in all aspects of the exhibit: research, design, installation, and as docents. Thanks go to the Coconino Art Center, Flagstaff Arts Council, Flagstaff Community Fund, GeoFund, and Tom and Nancy Brehm.

### NAU STUDENT INTERNS

*"Working on this exhibit taught us to look at trauma with a critical eye and gave us skills to attend to difficult emotions. We learned how to look at uncomfortable, painful situations and to develop empathy. Working on the catalogue, we had the opportunity to speak directly to the artists. The internship has opened our eyes to the challenges and realities of creating an exhibit. And we have come to understand what trauma means for ourselves, for others, and for the world."*

Holly Filsinger  
Hana Lipke  
Savannah Penick  
Terra Smith



## READERS OF "CHERNOBYL VOICES" REFLECT:



*"The raw voices of Chernobyl victims — deep sorrow, anguished cry, perpetual anxiety, unfocused rage, and a sense of loss — have a strong message for us. Their*

*lament shows us the gravity and dangers of nuclear disasters and the enormous damage to people's lives."*

Reiko Akiyama,  
Northern Arizona University



*"Art should be interesting, thought provoking, profound, and sometimes shift your world. The 'Chernobyl*

*Voices' reading at Coconino Center for the Arts here in Flagstaff was all of that. And more."*

Rosemary Lamberson,  
Flagstaff, AZ



*"The art exhibit Echoes of Loss showed us the universality of our human experiences of pain and empathy. Participating in the first-person*

*readings of 'Chernobyl Voices' about losses experienced in Chernobyl's radioactive zone was heart-warming and heart-rending at the same time — a treasured reminder that when we acknowledge our similarities, we have a chance to heal."*

Karren Kinne-Herman,  
Flagstaff, AZ

# Works in Progress

## NAU STUDENT AT THE UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM (USHMM)

Through generous funding by *MicMar Demolition, Wood & Tile Contractors* (Phoenix) MSI is able to support students. In the summer of 2018, MSI sent Chris Harrison to the USHMM in Washington to conduct research in the archives. With this award, *MicMar Demolition* honors the work of Janice Friebaum, past president of "Generations After—Descendants of Holocaust Survivors in Greater Phoenix" and former member of MSI's Advisory Council.

*"I experienced world-class cooperation at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum during my two-week stay in Washington, supported by the Martin-Springer Institute. Accessing the archives for my doctoral work on military conscription and genocide, I learned how conscription policies empowered Holocaust perpetrators."*

*I thank MSI for this opportunity."*

Chris Harrison,  
NAU PhD candidate  
Political Science, International Relations,  
Comparative Genocide Studies



## RESILIENCE PROJECT

In fall 2018, together with Flagstaff's **Pioneer Museum**, MSI is embarking on a year-long, applied research project with a student-faculty team to create an exhibit on *Resilience: Flagstaff Communities Overcoming Adversity*. The aim is to document how people and communities in Flagstaff face and overcome adversity in the past and present. Designed to show the strength of the human spirit, the exhibit will present the resourcefulness of communal wisdom. Under the mentorship of Dr. Bill Peterson (Director, Pioneer Museum) and Dr. Krondorfer, a group of NAU students from different disciplines will conduct historical research and interviews, and help with writing and design.

To view MSI resources,  
please visit:

- [facebook.com/MSIatNAU](https://facebook.com/MSIatNAU)
- [nau.edu/martin-springer/](https://nau.edu/martin-springer/)
- [bedzinexhibit.org](https://bedzinexhibit.org)
- [librarything.com/catalog/martin-springer](https://librarything.com/catalog/martin-springer)
- [azmemory.azlibrary.gov](https://azmemory.azlibrary.gov)

## LOOKING AHEAD TO 2020

MSI is in the early stages of planning two substantial projects:

**INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM:** *Post-Gulag & Post-Auschwitz Legacies* focuses on theologies and interfaith/religious relations.



Together with the **Institute for the Academic Study of Eastern Christianity** at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, MSI will organize the symposium at NAU. Scholars from Russia, Poland, Ukraine, and select other European countries, together with U.S. colleagues of Jewish

and Slavic studies, will search for Jewish and Christian responses to traumatic histories.

**LEADERSHIP PROGRAM:** *Environmental Sustainability, Collective Narratives, and Justice* is a two-week program for graduate students, early career scholars, and community leaders at NAU and **Ben Gurion University** (Israel). The group will travel together to southern Israel and northern Arizona to study environmental justice issues, with a focus on Bedouin and Native American cultures.



*"I am thrilled to be working with such a remarkable institution that is keeping issues such as moral courage, tolerance and justice relevant."*

*It is through the investment of friends of MSI that these programs are possible. Thank you for your support!"*

Maraka Oltrogge,  
Development Director  
College of Arts and Letters  
Northern Arizona University



# Upcoming 2018-2019

## **BEHIND ENEMY LINES: THE STORY OF A JEWISH SPY IN NAZI GERMANY** HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR TESTIMONY BY MARTHE COHN

**Wednesday, September 5, 2018, 7:00 p.m.**

Prochnow Auditorium on the campus of NAU

Ms. Cohn was a Jewish spy who operated in Nazi Germany during World War II. Cosponsored with **Chabad of Flagstaff**. This is a ticketed event.



## **MORAL COURAGE AND MORAL INJURY IN WAR**

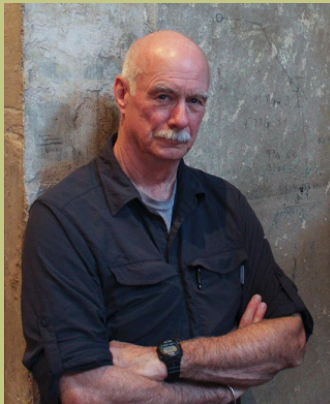
DAVID WOOD, PULITZER PRIZE WINNING JOURNALIST

**Monday, November 5, 2018, 7:00 p.m.**

Cline Assembly Hall on the campus of NAU

David Wood is a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist who has covered war and conflict. His book, *What have We Done: the Moral Injury of our Longest Wars* (2016) is based on his deep reporting in Iraq and Afghanistan and on veterans after they return.

Cosponsored with **NAU's Veteran and Military Services**.  
Free and open to the public.



## **PLUNDERED SKULLS AND STOLEN SPIRITS: WHY REPATRIATION MATTERS**

**Wednesday, November 7, 2018, 7:00 p.m.**

Room 120, Liberal Arts Building on the campus of NAU

Colwell's presentation is part of the Speakers Series *Plundering – Exhibiting – Repatriating: Museum Practices and Native American Traditions*.

This series, which is organized together with the **Museum of Northern Arizona**, will continue in Spring 2019.

Free and open to the public.



## **ITALY AND THE HOLOCAUST**

**Wednesday, October 3, 2018**

7:00 p.m. Liberal Arts Building 120



Valerio Ferme  
(Dean, NAU's College  
of Arts and Letters),  
*Italiani Brava Gente:  
Italy's Dirty Little World  
War II Secret*



Alexis Herr  
(San Francisco  
Holocaust Center),  
*Perpetrators on the  
Periphery: Italian Police  
during the Holocaust*



Exhibit: **ECHOES OF LOSS**

**September 10 – November 9, 2018**

Art exhibit, NAU Riles Building,  
Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

**Thursday, September 13, 2018**

4:30-5:30 p.m.

Opening Reception

Exhibit:

**THROUGH THE EYES OF YOUTH:  
LIFE AND DEATH IN THE BEDZIN  
GHETTO** travels to Poland

**January - March, 2019**

Sosnowieckie Centrum Sztuki –  
Zamek Sielecki, Poland



# Thank You to Our Donors

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United States Holocaust  
Memorial Museum, DC

## INDIVIDUALS:

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Ronald & Linda Borkan  
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David Shaffer

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Rhoda & Merrill Abeshaus  
Robb & Linda Gordon  
Ralph & Doris Martin  
Steven Smith  
Donna Weistrop &  
Dave Shaffer



MSI hosts international  
women leadership group,  
a donor supported event

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### NAU Foundation Account 5138

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please contact Maraka Oltrogge  
[maraka.oltrogge@nau.edu](mailto:maraka.oltrogge@nau.edu)

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#### MSI Director

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#### Program Coordinator

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