



## Nancy Stuber:

### Her Idea Blossomed into a **20-year MCC Tradition**

Ask Monroe Community College alumni and faculty who they credit with the impetus for the college's first Yom HaShoah Commemoration in the early 1990s and you will hear the name Nancy Stuber.

Stuber was in her mid-thirties when she took the *Holocaust: The Journey into the Human Capacity for Good, Evil and Indifference* course with Professor of Psychology Sharon L. Dobkin, Ed.D. The psychology course, developed by Dobkin and Professor of Psychology Charles Clarke, responded to growing student interest in studying the Holocaust and was the first Holocaust-related course offered at MCC.

*"The impact [of studying the Holocaust] was and is spiritual, emotional and personal. ... I no longer keep quiet when I see injustice, hatred, racism, etc. It could happen again—the Holocaust. I try and do my part."*

—Nancy L. Stuber's response to the Project's 10th Year Retrospective Survey, 2001.

Stuber and seven of her fellow students planned MCC's first Yom HaShoah commemoration for April 10, 1991. With the help of professors, the group connected with local Holocaust survivors to extend an invitation to the commemoration. The program featured survivor Hanna MaChali who shared her personal testimony about surviving the Auschwitz concentration camp. The survivors were honored and lit candles of remembrance before an audience of students, faculty and others from the community.

"Each year as students prepare for the Yom HaShoah Commemoration I share Nancy's story," said Jodi Oriel '93, one of Stuber's classmates who now serves as assistant director of MCC's Campus Center and associate director of the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Project (Project). "When I think of the more than 1,500 students who have been impacted by Holocaust studies at MCC, and how student leaders have dedicated themselves to continuing the

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## A Survivor Speaks:

### Lea Malek's Story

By Joshua Valetta,  
Literature of the  
Holocaust student



On Monday December 7, 2009, students enrolled in Assistant

Professor of English Anthony Leuzzi's *Literature of the Holocaust* (ENG 108) class were honored to hear the story of Lea Malek, a Holocaust survivor who only recently began to speak about her wartime experiences. The Jewish Community Federation helped coordinate this opportunity and provided us with an informative sketch of Malek's life from 1939 to 1959:

"Lea Malek was born in Janoshalma, Hungary in 1939. Her father died in a labor camp before her younger sister was born. Lea was five years old when the rest of her family was loaded onto cattle cars bound for Auschwitz. Along the way, the train suddenly stopped and was split. A large landowner needed some slave laborers and the people in Lea's car were sent to work the farm instead of to Auschwitz. Lea would not have survived if that hadn't happened. Her train was part of the failed "Blood for Goods" deal where [Adolf] Eichmann put 20,000 Jews "on ice" for future trading by sending them to work camps in Austria instead of to Auschwitz. Only three Jewish children—Lea, her sister and one other girl—survived to return to their hometown in Hungary. Lea witnessed the brutality of the Hungarian revolution in Budapest at age 16, when she traveled there in hopes of coming to the United States. But the United States had closed its borders so she went to Israel in 1957 where she married and came to the U.S. in 1959."

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*Special 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Issue: Part I*



## Choices that Create a Chain Effect

By Megan M. Scott, president

Just one short year ago, I embarked upon a great journey of transformation. I began studying the Holocaust in a course entitled *Social Psychology of the Holocaust* (PSY 222). I took this course to fulfill a credit necessary for my degree. To be completely honest, the Holocaust scared me. Something about the systemic planning and execution of more than six million people chilled me. When I first learned about the Holocaust in the sixth grade, I remember having nightmares about what we were studying and the monsters that perpetuated these atrocities. I never imagined that after studying the Holocaust for four short months in college, my life as I knew it would completely change.

Prior to my study of the Holocaust and involvement in the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Project, I was a timid and shy young girl. However, as my studies of human rights violations continued, I blossomed into a new person. I have broken out of my comfort zone in more ways than I ever imagined possible. I have become a person who is more confident in her abilities and who realizes the impact she has on the world.

Not only has my transformation been one of personal experience, but I have begun sharing the lessons I have learned through my involvement in the Project with others. Every choice we make creates a chain effect. We can choose to smile at a stranger and, even if we don't realize it at the time, that smile will travel much further than we are able to see. It only takes a small action to create an immense difference. Something that takes as little as sharing information with just one person has the power to result in a much bigger impact.

This past semester the Project worked with members of a Banquet and Event Planning Class (HSP 202) taught by Instructor and Campus Events Director Julianna Frisch in MCC's Hospitality Department. Our joint effort raised \$190 for Water for Sudan. The fund-

raising started by a Hospitality student who heard that the Project raised funds to help Water for Sudan build water wells in southern Sudan. This one student told his class and was able to make such a huge difference from just sharing that little bit of information.

The Project has offered a way for me to work with people who I may not have otherwise worked with, such as the students in the event planning class. It only takes a small amount of people, no matter how diverse and different they may seem, working toward a common cause to make a huge difference. After only four months of fundraising and the 2nd annual Walk for Water in the fall, the Project is less than \$1,000 away from its annual goal of raising \$6,000 for Water for Sudan by June 2010. When reached, the \$6,000 will be matched by an anonymous donor in the community. This summer Water for Sudan will get a check for \$12,000 from students at MCC and another well will be built—enabling another community in southern Sudan to flourish.

See the "chain effect"? Something that at the beginning of the year seemed overwhelming and nearly impossible to reach is nearly completed. Without the collaboration of the diverse student groups and others who supported the Walk for Water—such as WMCC: The Fuse and the Water for Sudan Board of Directors—we would not have even begun to approach our goal. Each of the supporters of the Project and Water for Sudan brought something unique to the efforts to change the situation in southern Sudan through clean drinking water. Those small changes, however, will allow the region to thrive once the basic needs of the villagers are met.

Just as the Project could not have survived the past 20 years without each and every one of its members and supporters, each of our lives has been impacted, helping us to become the people who we are today. The Project has such an immense impact on the lives of those who it touches. Whether it is the villagers in southern Sudan who are affected by the wells or MCC students who discovered and reached their potential in ways they wouldn't otherwise have known, we each have a new awareness of our own impact on this world. The Project is changing the world by changing the lives of individuals one at a time. That is where change lies: within the individual. *How are you going to change the world?* ▲

## What a Difference 20 Years Can Make



By Jodi Oriel '93, associate director and one of the Project's founding members

On Wednesday, April 10, 1991, Holocaust survivor Hanna MaChali begged the audience of Monroe Community College students (including me) to share her story with our mothers, fathers, aunts, uncles, sisters, brothers and friends. Her passionate plea was for us to tell others what happened to her over 50 years ago at Auschwitz. She told us she would not be standing before us if she had not dropped her eye glasses while standing in the supposed shower line. After picking up her glasses from the ground, someone grabbed her and placed her in a different line; it would be the line that saved her life, for the first time. Hanna's story is one of many survivors' testimonies we have heard over the past 20 years. Each time a Holocaust survivor stands before us, I believe it is our responsibility to tell the world his or her story.

On November 9, 1992, the Holocaust/Genocide Studies group became a recognized student club at MCC. The students, faculty and staff in the organization developed a mission to educate others and become an instrument for telling the horrific truth

*"Each time a Holocaust survivor stands before us, I believe it is our responsibility to tell the world."*

—Jodi Oriel '93, associate director and one of the founding members of the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Project

of what happens when an individual, community, government, or world does not protect the rights of others. We had hoped that when the organization was first conceived, the world would not need to continue to learn the lessons from the Holocaust because genocide would cease to exist.

We started very small, with one Holocaust course, two faculty members, and seven committed students, who were mentored by fellow student Nancy Stuber, to commemorate Yom HaShoah for the first time at a community college. We held bake sales to raise money for the "I Remember" ribbons to honor those that were murdered and for the "No Hate" buttons to stop the current genocide in Bosnia. We debated with our peers about the importance of remembering the Holocaust and why gentiles felt it was not just a Jewish issue but a human issue.

In the late 1990s, the Project began to plan and organize educational programming that reflected "historical lessons with contemporary obligations to human rights." We used this philosophy to create a platform to echo the voices of Hanna MaChali and other Holocaust survivors. Over the years we continued our commitment to reflect upon and resonate with the voices of survivors by learning directly from Holocaust scholars, such

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## Facing Radical Evil

*an excerpt from Engaging the Holocaust Narrative with a Secular Midrash*



By Charles Clarke, director

Engaging the Holocaust means facing 'radical evil.' I am a psychologist and I believe we learn most from history when we invest ourselves in it. An operative corollary is that we learn about Evil when we are willing to engage the abyss and place ourselves at psychological risk. That seldom happens in a classroom. Indeed, many educators would argue that it should not happen in a classroom. They might concede that the best their Holocaust students can hope for—should hope for—is a sort of vicarious, safe and 'sanitized' brush with Evil, as when a survivor appears in their midst and tells of his or her temporally and spatially distant experiences. Yet, speaking with even the most articulate witness is a far distance from persuading students, even psychologically engaged ones, to allow for the thought that "that could have been me," "I could have been 'that' victim, perpetrator or bystander." They do imagine themselves to be the righteous rescuer, or the heroic partisan.

Of course, there are endless problems associated with teaching the Holocaust, practical, logistical and philosophical. One immense issue, however, the 'us-versus-them' myth, an instructional tendency—if not overt strategy—that raises a fundamental teaching issue, one as insidious as it is invidious. Too many teachers and far too many students approach the Holocaust as if it were an existential anomaly—terrible, repellant, awful, incomprehensible, not a part of 'us,' yet decidedly a component, a measurement of 'them.'

Neither teachers, students, nor Holocaust scholars, unless they were present at the "catastrophe," can easily or fully imagine themselves as part of the subject matter, whether as victim, perpetrator, bystander or even rescuer. They simply were not 'there.' They are, at best, academic voyeurs; at worst, they are disinterested, disengaged onlookers wondering "what has this to do with me?" Or, perhaps, it provides a distant, universal surrogate for our own sins, or the consoling and patriotic opportunity to proclaim "God bless a triumphantly exceptional America." In any case there is a happy ending, and we are part of it; for we are not them. The danger is nearly universal: it likely will arise in even the best teaching and learning environment unless it is consciously countered by specific and well-conceived strategies. The question then becomes: Can we expect students in the classroom to connect to these ideas without immersing themselves in them, without testing the ease of Evil, without warily examining their belief in our capacity for goodness?

...the Holocaust has become the authoritative lesson plan for teaching about contemporary malevolence, the paradigmatic demonstration of 'Man's inhumanity to Man' It is beyond argument that the Shoah has become a metaphysical touchstone, the benchmark from which to explore and measure the human capacity to inflict damage on the body and culture of the 'disliked other,' a bountiful source of endless moral lessons taught without

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## T H A N K Y O U



*Thank you to HSP 202 students and Hospitality Instructor Julianna Frisch for partnering with Project members to raise \$190 for Water for Sudan!*

Interested in supporting Water for Sudan through MCC? Please send your check, made payable to: **Water for Sudan to Monroe Community College**  
**ATTENTION: Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Project**  
**1000 East Henrietta Road, Rochester, NY 14623.**

## The Two Sides of Anne Frank

By Holly L. Atkinson, past vice president



This past semester I rejoined the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Project for class credit and for personal connection as a human rights advocate. The committee I joined helped to plan MCC's 18th annual Kristallnacht program in November 2009. We had the various tasks of setting up a display, generating poster ideas, and identifying two people to introduce our keynote speaker, Rebecca Erbelding, archivist from the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum. A student was also identified to close the program. I chose to introduce Rebecca Erbelding for this year's Kristallnacht program.

I learned two things from Rebecca Erbelding: The first was about the Karl Höcker Album. Second I learned about Anne Frank, "the person versus the icon." The Höcker Album came from a person who actually took the album, after finding it at Auschwitz. This album contains photos of Dr. Mengele and other Auschwitz officials at the time.

Most people have heard of Anne Frank and her diary. However, Erbelding offered a different perspective. She conveyed examples of how Anne Frank is an icon versus a person. One example that I remember related to the "icon," was a clip from the show *Family Guy*, where one character's (Peter) appetite got him into trouble. The clip shows Peter eating bag of chips and Anne Frank and the people hiding in the Annex with her, who then get caught.

Readers know Anne Frank, the "person," as a teenager who got upset with her parents. She was a normal person who enjoyed writing and hanging out with friends. Anne dreamed of romance and thought she was going to survive the war.

Another, interesting fact I learned from Erbelding there were four diaries, not just the one that people read. These four diaries are categorized A, B, C, and D. However, book B is missing. Also, that the diary that readers read today is a creation of Otto Frank, Anne's father, and a mix of Anne's own diary.

I learned a lot of information this semester from the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Project, especially about Anne Frank, a teenage girl who had hope for the world and for her life. ▲

*"Anne Frank was a real person, with all the good and bad traits that entails. Pop culture has made her into an iconic figure, and that diminishes her value and the value of the diary. Her fame has transformed her into a character, and I think people forget that she was an actual teenage girl who suffered tremendously in the final months of her life and didn't reach her 16th birthday."*

—Rebecca Erbelding,  
U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum archivist  
and native Rochesterian



## Yad Vashem's Ephraim Kaye Explores Holocaust Denial

The Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Project welcomed Ephraim Kaye, director of international seminars for educators at Yad Vashem, The International School for Holocaust Studies and the Holocaust Memorial and Museum in Israel, to MCC on December 3, 2009. Kaye presented "Holocaust Denial & Anti-Semitism" in a highly interactive presentation with MCC students and faculty.

Kaye, an expert on Holocaust denial and its historical implications, discussed how Holocaust denial arose, presented arguments against the Holocaust and provided proof that the Holocaust existed.



*Ephraim Kaye speaks with MCC Human Services student Sonja Johnson who promised to share what she learned from Kaye's presentation with her children and grandchildren.*

"Hitler was solving the problem for all of humanity," Kaye explained. Kaye helped his audience calculate the number of Holocaust victims based on reports the Nazis tried to keep confidential. "Hitler never wrote down an order to kill the Jews. If you feel a little frustrated [over the lack of obvious information], I'm glad I came to Rochester," he said.

Kaye shared Holocaust survivor testimonial footage and images related to Holocaust denial with MCC students. He encouraged the students to "Google" Holocaust and Holocaust denial to a reveal surprising, and disturbing, range of anti-Semitic information.

"You are the last generation who can hear from Holocaust survivors," Kaye said. "Listen to their stories for you are the last generation to hear them from a firsthand source." ▲



*MCC welcomed Yad Vashem's Ephraim Kaye to campus in December. Pictured l to r: Michael Boester, Charles Clarke, Barbara Lovenheim, Ephraim Kaye, Regina Fabbro and William Drumright, Ph.D.*

## Making the Commitment to Uphold Human Rights and Prevent Genocide

By Brandilea R. Trescott, vice president



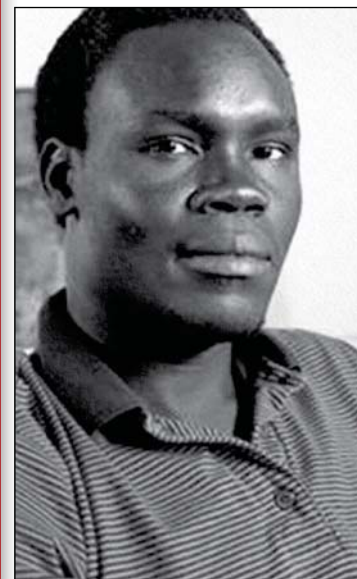
I first joined the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Project back in the fall of 2007. Like most students, I joined due to genuine interest in the subject as well as for class credit. Little did I know how the Project would forever change my life. My involvement in the Project throughout the fall of 2007 was, in some ways, terrifying because of the horrific events that occurred during the Holocaust. It wasn't until the spring of 2008 that I truly began to see how the Project was changing my life.

I returned to the Project in the spring of 2008 out of a profound desire to do more to promote human rights. That semester I joined the 2nd annual Rwanda Remembrance program committee (now known as the Voices of Vigilance program) because its focus was on the Rwandan Genocide that happened during my lifetime. The more I learned of Immaculée Ilibagiza, the guest speaker and Rwandan Genocide survivor, the more inspired I became by the belief that a small group of students could make a huge difference in the lives of others. I remember giving up an entire day of February break to assist in the building and painting of a replica bathroom in which Immaculée stayed with eight other women for a total of 91 days. The bathroom was so small I had difficulty extending my arms fully no matter which direction I stretched them. The challenge the Project offered MCC students to experience what Immaculée had experienced for 10 minutes in our replicated bathroom irrefutably brought Immaculée's story to life. It was at that precise moment that my life changed forever.

The Project moved from being a passing interest into an obsession. Each day spent at a Project meeting was another day that sealed my future plans into doing something to uphold human rights and to prevent genocides like the Holocaust from ever happening again. When I joined the Project three years ago I dreamed of one day becoming a nurse that worked with kids, but now that dream has changed drastically. While I still wish to be a nurse, my future plans for my nursing degree has changed from pediatrics to the possibility of joining Doctors Without Borders, an organization whose primary goal is to help persons in need of medical attention, primarily in Third World countries. I credit my new goal to the time I spent as a member and now as a vice president of the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Project. My wish is that the famous saying "Never Again" will in my lifetime be used in practice rather than in its current theoretical form. ▲

## Author Alephonsion Deng Shares His Story

By Megan M. Scott, president



SUDANESE LOST BOY

It is essential for us to bear witness to the atrocities that have occurred in the past as well as those that continue to occur today. In September 2009 at MCC, I was fortunate to hear Alephonsion Deng share his experiences as one of Sudan's "Lost Boys."

Alephonsion Deng had so much to say about the things he experienced growing up as a young boy in Sudan without parents. He escaped after the civil war arrived in his village. He shared with us his move to the United States and the difficulty of this transition. His story was filled with many lessons. Possibly the most memorable part of his story was how it influenced his views today. After speaking at MCC, Deng participated in a panel discussion hosted by Water for Sudan where he reflected on surviving genocide and promoting human rights. Deng also signed copies of his memoir, *They Poured Fire on Us from the Sky*, for students and community members.

In support of Water for Sudan, the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Project sold necklaces made by one of the Lost Boys discussed in Deng's memoir. The beads used to make the necklaces were traditional Sudanese beads. ▲

## Student Reflections:

# Why Study the Holocaust?

## Prevent Ignorance and Prejudice



By Alicia M. Bruno, student leader

I chose to study the Holocaust for several reasons. The first reason is because I felt that if I knew more of the facts, perhaps in the long run, I could do something to prevent ignorance and prejudice. I found it fascinating to learn how many people were against those who were different and refused to accept individual ethnic backgrounds.

I also study the Holocaust because it gives me a better understanding of what went on during that difficult period and how strong the people and families involved had to be to survive the brutality. Learning the facts has enlightened and inspired me to get involved and prevent others from feeling hateful. I want to help teach people how to overcome ignorance and hate.

I enjoyed listening to the survivors' stories. Their experiences made me think about life and how the people involved were able to stay strong and have the will to survive. People who take the time to understand the Holocaust should be better people as it teaches us all about not repeating the horrible actions and beliefs of the past. Innocent people were killed just because they were not liked. I have a sister who is of gypsy heritage from Eastern Europe. My sister feels ashamed because gypsies were also hated and killed during the Holocaust. I want to help her realize that she has nothing of which to be ashamed. It was no one's fault; the Nazis were looking for scapegoats.

When I first learned about the Holocaust I knew the basics. But as the semester went on and I went to Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Project meetings I learned and understood so much more. The class helped me to understand the facts and the complexity of the Holocaust. ▲

## Understand History

By John C. Little, student leader

I chose to study the Holocaust in 2009 because there has only been one thing about school that I have enjoyed, and that is history. The previous semester I took a World War II class that focused primarily on the "war" factor. I was so interested in this time period, that I decided I would study the Holocaust part also.

I first registered for the *History and Cultural Analysis of the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights* course. I then saw a *Literature of the Holocaust* course, I signed up for that, too, thinking the two courses might feed off each other. For the most part I found it great to be taking both classes at the same time. It allowed me to use information and sources I was learning in one class and apply it to the other class, to my benefit. Analyzing the literature and then studying the history of the Holocaust really gave me a better understanding of the subject. ▲

## Support a Great Cause



By Danielle Daly, student leader

By I never thought I would join a "club" while I was in college, it just never seemed to be worth it and I didn't have extra time available. I joined the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Project during the fall 2009 semester. At the beginning I joined the club to get a grade for a final project, but ever since the first couple of meetings I have really enjoyed going. The club is full of activities that not only provide great experiences, but also support a great cause. Since I have been in the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Project I have had many different experiences that I would have never have thought of pursuing before joining. The club only meets once a week on Tuesdays for an hour in the Brighton Room, right next to the Marketplace in the Flynn Campus Center. This was great because it is only an hour long and one day a week. And as a college student not having a lot of time to do other things is common. Since I have homework, class, work, and other extra activities that consume my life there isn't too much more time for other things.

Since being in the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Project I have met many amazing people and have had the opportunity to do an array of different events. There has been the Walk for Water with Salva Dut, a "Lost Boy" from Sudan and an MCC alumnus; a presentation by Rebecca Erbelding, an archivist from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum; and a personal testimony by Eva Abrams, a Holocaust survivor. Each person told an amazing story that will stay in my memory for a very long time. Each event offered a great, long-lasting experience. The presentation that touched my heart the most was Salva's story of the journey he took and how he has changed so many people's lives by giving villagers in Africa access to clean water.

I remember when Salva came in to talk to the club about Water for Sudan. He talked about his life as a young boy and the struggles he was put through and how he personally overcame unthinkable circumstances. Salva talked about how he was brought to the United States and lived with a family while attending MCC. He talked about the importance of Water for Sudan and how MCC students help raise money to build wells for villages in Africa that are deprived of water. These wells have saved thousands of people and helped build better communities with schools, houses, and health care facilities. The villages that were fortunate to have the wells drilled are now prospering. All of this is possible because one man took a small idea and turned into a life-changing organization. Salva is truly inspirational along with all the other speakers who shared their personal stories with MCC students. The Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Project is a great student organization, with great people. It is worthwhile to join. ▲

## Experience the Walk for Sudan

By Latesha Crosby, student leader

On Saturday, October 17, 2009, I joined many others for a great cause: Water for Sudan. Water for Sudan is a charity to help raise money to assure that the children as well as adults can have clean water in Sudan. On this day many were there for a great cause. There were small children, teens, adults and seniors there to support our cause.

Water for Sudan, Inc. was created as a not-for-profit organization based in here in Rochester, New York. The mission is to increase the amount of safe drinking water for the people in the communities located in South Sudan. Some of the objectives of this project are to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; reduce child mortality, and improve maternal health.

The length of the walk was a mile long; along the walk we also had some terrible weather to accompany us along the way. We also sold bracelets, T-shirts, and water bottles to raise money. Despite the weather, we had a DJ from WMCC to entertain and along the walk/run route there were pictures and posters with facts on them to encourage us. Either way it was nothing like what the Sudanese endure to find contaminated water. Some walk for eight hours just to drink contaminated water. Knowing that, who could complain about walking one mile in cold rain?

The purpose of the money we raised is to help build fresh-water wells in Sudanese villages. This benefits the villagers in so many different ways: Children have more time to concentrate on their studies because their travel time to get water is drastically cut down; schools are settled closer to home; and villages experience fewer deaths associated with sicknesses created by parasites and other things living in the contaminated water.

I met MCC alumnus Salva Dut who is also the president and project director for Water for Sudan Inc. Dut's family still lives in southern Sudan. Dut is from the Dinka community from Tonj, Sudan. Dut is one of the Walking Boys of Sudan which fled the war torn southern regions in the past 20 years. He is very determined to help his country—from June to October he helps raise funds to finance the drilling of wells in southern Sudan.

This has been a great experience for me and it can be for you as well!! More information regarding Water for Sudan is available at [www.waterforsudan.org](http://www.waterforsudan.org). ▲

## Connect with Family and Others

By Leah J. Ciulla, student leader

It all started in middle school when my older cousin told me that she watched a movie called *Schindler's List* and was learning about the Holocaust in her class. As she described the movie, I wanted to know immediately why all these horrible things happened to those people. As I got older, I watched the movie and we began to discuss the Holocaust in my class.

I talked to my stepfather, who is German, about what I learned. My stepfather shared a story with me about how his grandfather was killed in the Holocaust. I told my stepfather I was interested in the Holocaust and liked learning about it. He videotaped specials on the History Channel and movies on the Holocaust and watched them with me. My stepfather also showed me a letter opener he has which has a swastika on it, and I have been highly interested since.

I have been to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. two times and the Holocaust Museum in Florida once. ▲

## Create a Better Future

By Abigail Z. Harris, student leader

I chose to study the Holocaust because all throughout high school it interested me. The Holocaust is a very interesting topic with many facts, events, and reasoning. However, it is not the only point in history on which we Americans should focus. There are numerous other genocides where more people were killed in a brutal way. So, why do we study the Holocaust so closely as compared to other genocides? It is important to understand that while the Holocaust did not directly affect the United States at first, it has transformed our way of thinking about history today. It is also vital to know that America was not gung ho about getting involved in genocide; instead they were pressed to help. It is horrible to think something so life altering only happened 60 years ago and realize that history has a way of repeating itself.

It is stunning to imagine what would happen if Americans were in the place of the Jews and other countries refused to assist us. I believe this is one of the main reasons people research the Holocaust: because the graphic, disturbing images and stories are not fiction; genocide could actually happen to you. In theory, people are scared of seeing their families shot in front of their eyes, or slowly dying of starvation and disease. I know I am. So why did I decide to study the Holocaust in the first place? I study to learn and alter my future. ▲

## Answer Historical Questions



By Lori A. Cupp, student leader

I wanted to take a class about the Holocaust because it was an event that I had heard of, but did not know much about it. After taking Professor of Psychology Charles Clarke's *History and Cultural Analysis of the Holocaust, Genocide and Human Rights* (HIS 275) class, some questions have been answered. I have a better understanding of many of the players.

For every one question answered, two more need to be answered. Because of this class I became involved in the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Project and worked on the Kristallnacht program in 2009. I am currently involved in planning the Voices of Vigilance program for April 2010. I am hoping to continue in the Project next semester if my schedule allows.

I have developed a thirst for learning more about the Holocaust and the people who lived through it. Since starting this class, besides the required reading, I have read *The Diary of a Young Girl: Anne Frank* (The Definitive Edition) by Anne Frank and Mirjam Pressler, *Saving What Remains: A Holocaust Survivor's Journey Home to Reclaim Her Ancestry* by Livia Bitton-Jackson and *The Diary of Dawid Sierakowiak: Five Notebooks from the Lodz Ghetto* by Dawid Sierakowiak. My reading list has grown to about twenty books. I have such a deep respect and admiration for those who had to endure such awful treatment at the hands of the Nazis. Their stories should never be forgotten. I believe I may have become a Holocaust "junkie." Professor Clarke warned this might happen. ▲

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as Franklin Littell, Michael Dobkowski, Franz Mueller, Henry Feingold, Scott Miller, Yaffa Eliach and Christopher Browning. As students of the Holocaust, we learned about ourselves and how we could work together toward a common goal to educate more people. We began to work collaboratively with other area colleges and organizations that shared our vision.

We have explored the Holocaust from many prisms: through bystander intervention, Catholic Church involvement, Christian rescue efforts, Nazi propaganda and hate speech. The study of the Holocaust has given us an increased level of awareness of what happens in our world, our community and right next door. This new level of awareness is what many of us now regard as our responsibility to not stand idly by when human rights are threatened.

I remember seeing a newspaper in 1994 with a photo of children behind barbed wire. The photo was taken in Bosnia in 1994 and reminded me how hollow the words "Never Again" seemed. Today, there are photos from Darfur and Sudan remind us that genocide continues to occur.



I was once told a story about a child and his grandfather as they walked the beach. The changing tides stranded hundreds of starfish on the shore. Every few steps the little boy would reach down pick up a starfish, and throw it back out into the ocean. The grandfather said, "Son, there are hundreds of starfish here. Can't you see that throwing a few starfish back into the sea doesn't really matter?" With a starfish in his hand, the young boy looked up at his grandfather and said, "It matters to this one."

Over the years the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Project has empowered Monroe Community College students to hold on to each of those "starfish" to preserve their lives. That empowerment has come through safeguarding the integrity of each Holocaust survivor's story and taking action in their own communities to ensure their neighbors are treated humanely and with respect. Like that little boy on the beach, MCC students have learned that the power of one person can make a difference in the life of one person or the lives of many. The empowerment our students have learned through the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Project and its mission is as relevant in today's world as it was 20 years ago, and will be 20 years from now. ▲

## The Holocaust and Human Rights Center LeRoy V. Good Library, MCC Brighton Campus Room 2-313

The Holocaust and Human Rights Center (HHRC) is a dynamic collection of over 400 holdings to support Holocaust, genocide and human rights education. The HHRC was established in 1998 to encourage MCC students, faculty and others in our community to explore topics such as good and evil, genocide, racism and human rights and to increase tolerance and understanding between people—throughout history and contemporary times.

**The HHRC can be accessed during regular library hours by visiting the Circulation Desk and asking for the key. For more information, please call Lori Annesi, special collections librarian, at 585.292.2338 or visit [www.monroec.edu/go/hhrc](http://www.monroec.edu/go/hhrc).**

Check out our new Web page!

continued from page 1 *20-year MCC Tradition*

traditions, the emotions are overwhelming. Nancy would have been so pleased with how far the Project has come."

Stuber passed away in 2007.

The Project has become a signature program at MCC, combining academic excellence, cocurricular leadership and community connection. As it did 20 years ago and does today, MCC's Yom HaShoah Commemoration is filled with unforgettable moments



*Members of the Holocaust Remembrance Committee who hosted MCC's first Yom HaShoah Commemoration in 1991.*



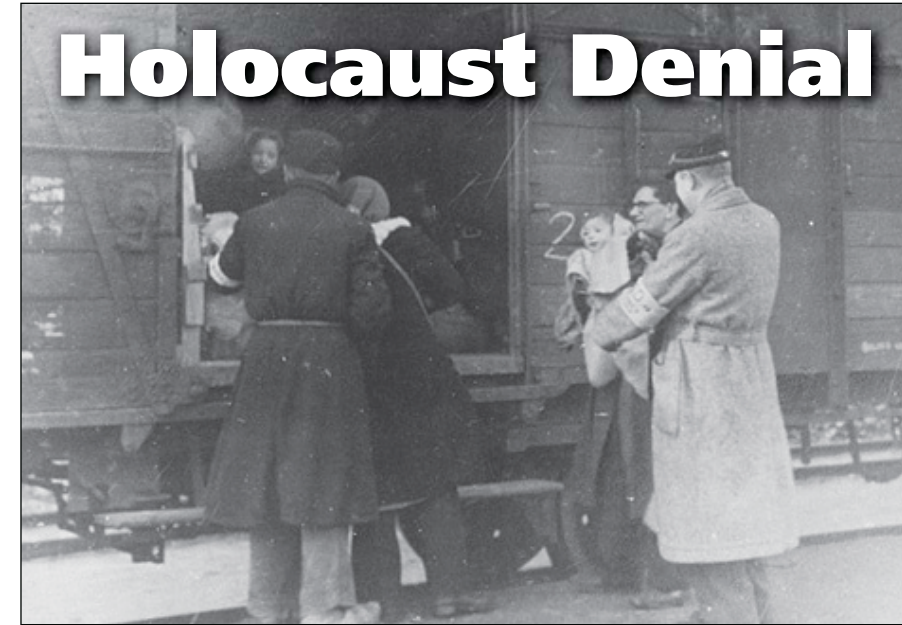
*Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Project Officers Pam Allyn, Brandilea Trescott, Kristen Amann, Megan Scott and Carolyn Spencer at the 20th Anniversary Yom HaShoah Commemoration on April 13, 2010.*

when students first meet and interact with survivors—providing transformational experiences for MCC students and community members. In response to ongoing genocides throughout the world, the Project has expanded the students' experiences to include commemorations and interactions with survivors of the genocides in Rwanda, Sudan, Cambodia, and the Ukraine.

"With the help of her classmates, this one student changed the lives of so many," said Dobkin. "She understood what she had learned and found her voice. Although Nancy is gone, her impact remains today." ▲

## Wading through the Confusion:

# Holocaust Denial



*By Allison DiSalvo,  
Geography of Genocide student*

While coming home from Palmyra, N.Y. one night, I came upon a railway crossing with its lights flashing. Stopped before the crossing gates, annoyed at the thought of having to abide this nuisance, I hoped the train would be a short one. I loathe waiting. But as I watched the railcars whip by, shrill and piercing, their wheels scraped against the metal tracks, I thought about the Holocaust, and how, if I were in Hungary, The Netherlands or Poland 60 years ago, those railcars could easily be cattle-cars. Cattle-cars crammed beyond capacity, standing-room only, 80 to 100+ deep with Jewish men, women and children—humans with little or no food and water, and though they did not know it at the time, little to no hope of survival. Destination: Death Camps. I tried to force myself to visualize what they would look like; contorted faces peering out insufficient square windows. Faces replete with terror, confusion, anger and disorientation, wondering where they were going and for what length of time? What would they find when they arrived?

At once my mind switched to thoughts of the reaction paper on Holocaust denial that I had to construct for my *Geography of Genocide* (GEG 280) course, my banal contribution towards genocide studies. Brooding over my disappointment at missing the lecture at MCC given by Ephraim Kaye of Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies, who is an expert in Holocaust denial, I was resolved to find out more about Holocaust denial. After doing a bit of research on the subject, I felt more confused than when I knew only minute details. Each passage I read in an article, every documentary and news story I watched, only furthered to

tangle my thoughts. How, after the thousands of photos, videos, survivor testimonies, branding in the form of tattoos, mass graves, diaries, SS officials' attestations, is anyone capable of stating the Holocaust never existed?

Iranian president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad claims that the Holocaust is a myth. He described the Holocaust as "ambiguous and dubious." Additionally, Ahmadinejad asks, of the 60 million who died in World War II, "Why is it that only a select group of those who were killed have become so prominent and important?" (MSNBC). The reasoning behind this assertion is the Palestinians and the conflicts they have with Israelis. What? I thought; pardon my ignorance, but does this have anything to do with the Holocaust? I was incapable of wrapping my head around this. It made no sense to me and when I allowed myself to truly think about his statements, I felt a swell of rage at his indelicately spoken, ignorant words. ...

It seems those who serve to reestablish and fan the flame of hatred against the Jews, do so under the guise of "Revisionism" (a distortion of history by those motivated by anti-Semitism, racism and xenophobia), by renouncing the ruthless savagery that Germans perpetrated upon Jewish, Roma, Poles, homosexuals and the disabled. Why deny the Nazis use of the bodies of Jews to make, among other things, soap and lampshades? Although these atrocities are not the hallmark of the Holocaust, these sadistic acts certainly speak to the unimaginable, unthinkable deeds that these deniers attempt to quash. Despite the fact that copious areas of ashes, body parts and other remains have been unearthed at Treblinka, "revisionists" continue their attempt at nullifying this evidence as fabrication (The Holocaust History Project). Much like the Turks denial of the Armenian genocide, these hate-mongers peddle their vile messages as fact.

I must restate my inability to make sense of these denials. I am a rationalist, a realist who requires clear, undeniable evidence before I truly accept an event as factual. But the animalistic brutality of the Holocaust has been authenticated the world over, repulsive and horrific as it may be, through a multitude of sources. Although my notions of the truth matter little in the scope of Holocaust denial, I am convinced there was indeed an attempt to carry out "The Final Solution." There is no doubt, I believe. ▲

Sources cited: Committee for Open Debate on the Holocaust; codoh. "Revisionists Portraits; Fred A. Leuchter, Jr. <<http://www.codoh.com/author/portraits>>. Nova Online. "Holocaust on Trial." 7 December 2009 <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/Holocaust/timeline.html>. The Holocaust History Project. "Holocaust Denial." 7 Dec. 2009 <<http://www.Holocaust-history.org/denial>>. Williams, Brian. "Iran's Ahmadinejad on Holocaust." MSNBC. 8, Oct. 2006. Video. 7 December 2009 <<http://www.youtube.com/watch>>.

*"There is no doubt, I believe."*

# Bystander

By Tony Leuzzi

You  
have  
the right  
to remain  
silent, while a guard,  
who is tall and polished, orders  
a small boy to urinate on his kneeling father.

You  
have  
the right  
to assume  
some stooped procession  
of gaunt men, prodded through the fields  
at gunpoint, are off to cut and gather sunflowers.

You  
have  
the right  
to believe  
the thick, putrid smoke,  
belching billow after billow  
of black from the flues, means all day they are baking bread.

## MANY VOICES, MANY VISIONS



Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Vice President Pam Allyn (far left) and President Megan Scott appeared on 13WHAM's Many Voices, Many Visions with Norma Holland on February 21, 2010. The segment focused on the Project's 20th anniversary Yom HaShoah Commemoration and how the Project has impacted lives in our community for two decades.

continued from page 3 Facing Radical Evil

reference to America's own hallmarks of similar conduct. But so long as the phenomenon of Evil remains tightly anchored to the historically secluded, physically distant and psychologically alien 'Them,' of what value is it? If its myriad potential lessons do not reach 'Us,' here and now, why concern ourselves with an otherwise irrelevant, unique event as it gradually fades into the past? If we stare into today's mirror and see only freshness, goodness and light, why worry about the harrowing of history, much less the symptoms of diminishing life in our own culture's epoch? We are not comfortable looking at the 20th Century as an age of defilement of life, anymore than we are willing to look at our current attachment of self to unbridled material consumption. Our ruthless, arrogant, self absorbed, selfish, and uncompassionate domination and exploitation of nature and poor peoples is driven by an ideology of property and capital rights devoid of all compassionate morality.

If we look carefully, however, and with personal honesty, we can glimpse the currency and immediacy of our own demons tucked within the Holocaust narrative. This demands a spirituality that "must include fulsome reminders that our ethical impulse to do right by others is embedded in our being, and the dark impulses that are also embedded in our being must be overcome." Intuitively, but seldom consciously, we recognize emotionally that we are looking at a mirror of our own existence. The "Them" merges with 'Us.' ▲



## Walk for Water: All in the MCC Family

Support of the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights President runs in the MCC family. Pictured above (l to r) Project President Megan Scott, Assistant Professor of Philosophy Matthew Hachee, Project Assistant Director and Instructor of English Regina Fabbro and their daughter, Sophie. Hachee and Fabbro serve on the Project's Advisory Board and Advisory Team respectively.

The Walk for Water hosted in October 2009 at MCC's Brighton Campus helped the Project come within \$1,000 of its annual fund-raising goal to support Water for Sudan. Water for Sudan Founder and CEO Salva Dut was on hand to cheer on and personally thank participants. Salva Dut talks about the importance work of Water for Sudan and its impact on Sudanese villages.



## Book Review: The Men with the Pink Triangle

By Kathryn Downey,  
Literature of the Holocaust student

As students of Assistant Professor of English Anthony Leuzzi, we read a novel *The Men with the Pink Triangle* by Heinz Heger. This is a story about the unthinkable and tragic experiences that homosexual men had to endure during the Holocaust.

Friedrich-Paul von Groszheim, the main character in this novel, shares his stories and memories of what happened to him and

other men in the Holocaust. This novel not only answers the questions we all have of what happened to those in the concentration camps and the transports, but also it illustrates a hierarchy that was within the concentration camp. Von Groszheim was one among the lowest in the concentration camp. He was Jewish and homosexual which was, at that time, viewed as evil.

The novel talks about relationships that are made within the camp, and what Von Groszheim had to do to survive in the concentration camps. His story explores corruption and bartering with prison guards and camp officials and how he used that to his advantage to help him survive. *The Men with the Pink Triangle* has all the aspects of the Holocaust that a person would want to know, even exploring the disturbing and cruel punishments that the men would have to go through. As you read, you understand the significance of the title and how labels and symbols can affect a person's status within the concentration camp.

A major theme that is seen throughout the novel is how people have to become numb to the physical and mental pain they are put through in the camp to survive. With such a powerful theme, it makes for a very moving and influential story. This novel is one of my favorites out of all the Holocaust books I have read because it gives the reader facts about the Holocaust, it has an impactful story, and woven between the facts and his story is a theme about life and death that every person thinks about but never has to experience. ▲

Thank you to those who commemorated  
Monroe Community College's  
20th Anniversary Yom HaShoah  
on April 13, 2010. Look for  
tributes, stories, and  
photos in the next issue  
of Memorandum.



Holocaust, Genocide,  
and Human Rights Project  
at Monroe Community College

## Advisory Board

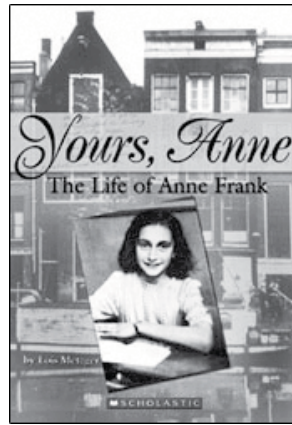
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Regina Fabbro, Assistant Director  
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Professor of English, MCC (retired)  
John Lovenheim  
Community Volunteer and Director, MCC Foundation Board  
Renée St. Louis  
Associate Director, MCC Foundation

## Project Advisory Team at MCC

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Michael Boester Assistant Professor of Geography	Matthew Hachee Assistant Professor of Philosophy
William Drumright, Ph.D. Assistant Professor of History	Linda Ingraham Project Assistant, Liberal Arts
Rosanna Condello Assistant Director, College Relations	Anthony Leuzzi Assistant Professor of English

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	Gina DiPonzio	Alexandra Moravan	Alexis Zwetsch



## *Yours, Anne*

MCC students performed *Yours, Anne*, a musical by Enid Fetterman and Michel Cohen, in November 2009. Based on Anne Frank's diary, the musical tells how Anne and her family lived in fear and desperation as they hid from the Nazis. The musical was directed by Instructor Jim Simmons and produced by the Visual and Performing Arts Department and supported by the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Project.

*"I weep for the children who'll never have children.*

*I weep when they're frightened and cold.*

*What is there to hope for?*

*What is there to hope for?*

*Growing up – when they'll never grow old."*

— "For the Children," from *Yours, Anne*

### Check it Out! ✓

## American Geographers Launch Geography and Human Rights Web Site

The Association of American Geographers (AAG), based in Washington, D.C., has launched a Web site that recognizes roles for geographers and other scientists "in efforts to realize human rights." The Geography & Human Rights Clearinghouse and Forum is available at [http://aag.org/geography\\_and\\_human\\_rights/index.htm](http://aag.org/geography_and_human_rights/index.htm) and includes a bibliography on geography and human rights research, as well as links to numerous non-governmental organizations (NGOs), research centers, and scientific associations that focus on human rights issues, often while drawing upon geographic methods or technologies.

For the past two years, the AAG has worked together with the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) to help create the AAAS Coalition on Science and Human Rights. The coalition brings together scientific organizations that recognize a role for science and scientists in efforts to realize human rights. It aims to facilitate communication and collaboration on human rights within and across the scientific community, and between the scientific and human rights communities. ▲



## Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Project

at Monroe Community College

Monroe Community College's unique organization for telling the stories of the Holocaust and other genocides while transforming individuals to become advocates for human rights.

**Educate. Commemorate. Advocate.**

*continued from page 1* **Lea Malek**

In a thick but clear Hungarian accent, Malek confessed to us that she is not a professional speaker; still she managed to tell an inspirational story of suffering and triumph, a story that began with the pain and prejudice she suffered even before being transported. Because she was so young, her memories of 1939 to 1941 were helped along by her grandmother's stories, historical research and other survivors' testimonies.

Malek vividly remembers the harsh conditions she and her family endured while heading to Auschwitz. At a particular train stop on the way, her aunt gave birth. The child was said to have been stillborn, which prompted her aunt to throw the baby over the fence to people on the other side, in the hopes that someone would give it a proper burial.

"I was only five but I grew up very fast," she explained. "One of my jobs was to protect my younger sister from harm. You might think a five year old couldn't do it, but I learned because I had to." In her fight to survive, she often walked to the fences at the edge of the farm property where she and her family worked. There, she would beg people on the other side for bread. Some were able and willing to spare bits of food while others found it entertaining to pretend to offer her food only to pull away their hands when she reached for them.

Unfortunately, Malek's struggles didn't stop when she and her family were liberated from the farm in 1945. She returned to Hungary only to learn that neighbors had stolen her family's goods while they were away. Because she was only one of a few Jewish children to survive, there were no Jewish schools for her to attend. She was, therefore, sent to study at a Catholic school where students and teachers mocked her for being Jewish.

Although Malek now lives in America, that, too, did not come without a struggle. When she first tried to emigrate in 1957, Malek was denied entry. Although this was a difficult blow, she understood the country's quota system and moved to Israel instead. Two years later she and her husband moved successfully to America where they raised three children and were blessed with nine grandchildren. She is extremely proud of her family and says that they are proof to Hitler that Jews will survive and continue, despite his efforts to eliminate them. Although she has known her share of suffering, she remains optimistic and feels hate is "useless." ▲

*"Why hate?*

*It just makes you bitter."*

— *Lea Malek, Holocaust Survivor*