Holocaust Awareness Weeks Series 2012: Public Relations Packet

Series Title: Genocide Past and Present: Presentations Observing Holocaust Awareness Weeks, April 2-18, 2012

Statement: Holocaust Awareness Weeks is an interdisciplinary series of events and seminars that investigates various aspects of modern genocide and roughly coincides with the commemorations surrounding National Holocaust Awareness Weeks. Our programs focus on the origins, events, and experiences of genocide in the modern era, looking not only at all of the groups systematically targeted by the Nazi regime in the 1940s, but also by those who were the victims of government-sponsored atrocities such as the Armenian Massacre, the Cambodian genocide, ethnic cleansing and genocide in Rwanda, Iraq, and the Balkan region, and the current genocides taking place in Nigeria, Myanmar, and the Darfur region of the Sudan. Our goal is to bring together local Grand Junction residents with the Colorado Mesa University academic community to focus on the issues of education, respect, and diversity within our overall populace. Once again, we host a Field of Flags display on the central campus, which will showcase flags that represent the many different groups targeted during the Holocaust.

All of these events are free and open to the general public except the Theater Dept. production of The Diary of Anne Frank.

Campus sponsors for the seminars and Field of Flags display: Social and Behavioral Sciences Dept. of Colorado Mesa University, Gay-Straight Alliance, CMU Hillel, the Phi Alpha Theta History Honors Society, and the Associated Student Government. In addition, the CMU Dept. of Theater and Dance production of The Diary of Anne Frank is sponsored by Chevron. The Holocaust Remembrance Service is sponsored by Congregation Ohr Shalom.

Our Field of Flags display flags were generously donated by local business, Grand Junction Pipe and Supply.

Information contacts and interviews

For all campus events, contact: Vincent V. Patarino Jr., Ph.D., Assistant Professor of History, Dept. of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Colorado Mesa University. Phone: 970-248-1490; e-mail: vpatarin@coloradomesa.edu Any of the individual presenters may be interviewed, but check first with Dr. Patarino, who will then contact them.

For the Congregation Ohr Shalom Holocaust Remembrance Service contact Mr. David Eisner, david@davideisnerlaw.com

For information about the Theater and Dance Department’s production of The Diary of Anne Frank contact the box office at 970-248-1604 or on the web at coloradomesa.edu/moss
2012 Events Schedule

Week One: April 2-5

Monday, April 2, 2012, 1:00 p.m.
CMU Campus, College Center Field:  **Moment of Silence Dedication for “Field of Flags Display”**
Sponsored by the Social and Behavioral Sciences Dept. of Colorado Mesa University and constructed by student members of GSA, Hillel, and Phi Alpha Theta, the Field of Flags display on the campus green southwest of the University Center presents over 2,000 flags representing all of the major groups targeted by the Nazis in World War II, including the Jews, Poles, Soviet Citizens, Communists/Socialists, Homosexuals, Jehovah Witnesses, Freemasons, the Roma, Sinti, and the disabled. Each flag represents 5,000 individuals and colors will match the various known color schemes used by the Nazis. Flags will be displayed two weeks, from Monday, April 2 through Saturday, April 14. Flags were generously donated by Grand Junction Pipe and Supply. Posted signs with details about the Field of Flags were created by members of the Gay-Straight Alliance.

Monday, April 2 at 6:30 p.m.
CMU Campus, Houston Hall 139
**Vincent Patarino, “They had nice coats. They brought pictures’: Paradise Camp and Nazi Propaganda”**
Assistant Professor of History, Vincent Patarino, will screen director Frank Heimans’ moving 1986 documentary, *Paradise Camp*. The film details how Nazi lies brought Jews to the newly-established Theresienstadt Ghetto in Czechoslovakia willing and eagerly, because they were under the impression that it was a spa. The Nazis turned the town into a film set, which was used to fool the Swiss Red Cross that the camp was a model Jewish community, when in truth it was not at all. Featuring interviews by the camp survivors, archival footage, paintings and drawings created by the survivors, and excerpts of the Nazi propaganda film *Hitler Gives a Town to Jews*, the film explores how easily the Nazis manipulated truth and perpetuated an elaborate hoax on the allies. Discussion will follow.

Tuesday, April 3 at 4:30 p.m.
CMU Campus, Houston Hall 139
**Clare Boulanger, “Why We Kill and Why We Can Kill”**
Clare Boulanger, Professor of Anthropology, will discuss how human beings are not the only creatures capable of murdering their own kind *en masse*. Chimpanzee troops, for example, have carried out especially gory raids on neighboring troops, methodically pursuing and slaughtering even those animals that flee. The good news is that for both chimpanzees and humans, this sort of behavior does not seem to come naturally. Killers must first convert potential victims into “not us,” a process that involves considerable advance preparation. In humans, the principle of “not us” eventually gave rise to concepts of ethnicity and race; again, however, such thinking is not innate but situational, arising in response to resource scarcity and the desperate competition that subsequently ensues. These “weak links” in the behavioral chain of events leading to warfare and genocide provide us with the assurance that it is possible, though of course not easy, to break such chains.
Tuesday, April 3 at 6:30 p.m.
CMU Campus, Houston Hall 139
**Eric Sandstrom, “The Holocaust Wasn’t Journalism’s Finest Hour: What Would Aristotle Do?”**
Assistant Professor of Mass Communications, Eric Sandstrom notes how media coverage of the Holocaust raised troubling questions about the performance of American journalism during World War II. Why a scarcity of news about the annihilation of six million Jews? Had *The New York Times* done a better job of telling the world about Hitler’s Final Solution, could he have been stopped? Such questions presume journalists failed to adequately report the biggest story of the 20th Century. To measure the Fourth Estate’s successes and failures, Sandstrom suggests an ethical yardstick serves the purpose well by methodically applying philosophical models against moral dilemmas, which the media faced. The results may provide a cautionary tale for today’s journalists and the public they are entrusted to serve.

Wednesday, April 4 at 4:30 p.m.
CMU Campus, Houston Hall 139
**Susan J. Konantz, “The Holocaust in Children's Picture Books?”**
How does a society provide Holocaust awareness to its youngest members? Susan J. Konantz, lecturer in Developmental Education, WCCC/CMU suggests that the answer to that question lies in a group of picture books written during the last thirty years. These illustrated narratives exemplify the ability of children’s books to provide Holocaust information in an authentic yet compassionate way. During the presentation, the audience will have an opportunity to dialogue about the appropriateness of the information in the picture books for the emotional level of the readers.

Wednesday, April 4 at 6:30 p.m.
CMU Campus, Academic Building (ACB) 111
**Laura Mourning, “Genocide Today: the Karen of Myanmar (Burma)”**
Laura Mourning of Developmental Education will lecture on the current situation in Myanmar and the genocide of its native people, the Karen, who continue to flee to Thailand and other neighboring countries. While the recent release of activist Aung San Suu Kyi from house arrest is encouraging, the military dictator General Ne Win continues to terrorize the population. Mourning will use recent video clips from Myanmar and will include a guest speaker who served with the Free Burma Rangers. Discussion will follow.

Thursday, April 5 at 4:30 p.m.
CMU Campus, Houston Hall 139
**Barry Laga, “Representing Absence: The Holocaust and the Rise of the Counter Monument”**
Clearly there is a danger in not representing the Holocaust, and this danger has led many, as James Young points out, to draw ever more attention to the Holocaust. In fact, “Holocaust memory has begun to find its critical mass in something akin to a Holocaust ‘museum boom’.” Young goes on to point out that “Holocaust memorials are produced specifically to be historically referential, to lead viewers to an understanding or evocation of events.” However, reverential counter-monuments, complex in concept and vexing in design, challenge traditional assumptions about the purpose and role of monuments and complicates the debates about a *Gedenkkultur* or "remembrance culture.” Dr. Laga, a Professor of English, will discuss the design, function, and impact of various Holocaust memorials and counter-monuments. Drawing upon a recent trip to Germany, particular attention will be given to Peter Eisenman's Monument to the Murdered Jews of Europe, Daniel Liebeskind's new Jewish Museum, and Berlin's new Topography of Terror museum. The PowerPoint presentation invites participants to
comment on the nature of art, the difficulty of representing trauma, and the role of monuments and memorials.

**Thursday, April 5 at 6:30 p.m.**
CMU Campus, Houston Hall 139

**Erika Jackson, Screening of the film *Sarah’s Key (2011)***
One of the most recent films to discuss the infamous *Vélodrome d’Hiver* round-up of Paris’ Jews on July 16, 1942, *Sarah’s Key* retells the story of the horrible conditions Jews endured in one of the city’s indoor bicycle-racing tracks before their subsequent transit to Auschwitz. Based on the international bestseller by Tatiana de Rosnay, the emotional detective story transitions between the work of an American journalist (Kirsten Scott Thomas) who persuades her magazine to write a piece that chronicles the 60th anniversary of the painfully event, and the historical experience of 10-year-old Sarah, who on that fateful day in 1942, instructs her brother to hide in a cupboard in her family’s Marais district apartment. An Assistant Professor of History, Dr. Jackson will invite discussion of the key themes addressed in the film following the screening.

**Week Two-Three: April 9-18**

**Monday, April 9 at 4:30 p.m.**
CMU Campus, Houston Hall 139

**Adam Rosenbaum, “The Holocaust: A Shoah Like No Other or Just Another Genocide?”**
The Holocaust, the attempted extermination of Europe’s Jews by Nazi Germany and its allies during the Second World War, is one of the most significant events of our times. Like the French Revolution, it represents a turning point in modern history, marking a rupture between the world which existed before and the one that followed. While some scholars continue to emphasize the uniqueness of the Holocaust, pointing to the central role of the death camps, the systematic and bureaucratic character of the “Final Solution,” or the Nazis’ obsessive determination to rid the world of the Jewish people, the Holocaust was clearly not the only instance of twentieth-century genocide, either before, during, or (most obviously) after the Second World War. This historiographical-based presentation by Assistant Professor of History Adam Rosenbaum will address the simple question: was the Holocaust unique, or just an extreme example of a larger phenomenon? Discussion will follow.

**Monday, April 9 at 6:30 p.m.**
CMU Campus, Houston Hall 139

**Michael Onyebuchi Eze, “Ethnic-Religious Genocide in Contemporary Nigeria”**
This lecture by Visiting Scholar Michael Onyebuchi Eze of the Center for African Studies, Stanford University, takes a look at the “silent” ethnic/religious genocide currently taking place in Nigeria. For the past four years, an Islamic fundamentalist sect known as *Boko Haram*, which in the Hausa language means “Western Education is evil”, has massacred non-Muslims, especially Christians in the northern part of Nigeria. The worst massacre occurred on Christmas day of 2011, when three churches were simultaneously bombed during worship. This silent genocide occurs on a daily basis in Nigeria and yet, such news barely makes headlines in the Western media. Within Nigeria itself, such daily killing has become acceptable as a norm and part of an everyday national narrative! The irony is that the leaders of the *Boko Haram* sect are all Western educated elites, chauffeured in the most expensive Western-made vehicles.
Tuesday, April 10 at 6:30 p.m.
CMU Campus, Houston Hall 139
**Cynthia Lebowitz, Screening of Conspiracy**

On January 20, 1942, 15 men gathered in a villa on the outskirts of Berlin for a clandestine meeting that would ultimately seal the fate of the European Jewish population. Ninety minutes later, the blueprint for Hitler’s Final Solution was in place. They weren't doing it in the spirit of passion, but because they felt it was necessary and that their lives would not be better until they got rid of an entire race of people. Adolf Eichmann prepared 30 top-secret copies of the meeting’s minutes. By the fall of the Reich, all had disappeared or been destroyed—except one. The Wannsee Protocol, found in the files of the Reich’s Foreign Office, is the only document where the details of Hitler’s maniacal plan were actually codified, and serves as the basis for Conspiracy. Discussion will follow the film screening.

Wednesday, April 11 at 4:30 p.m.
CMU Campus, Houston Hall 139
**CMU Chapter of Phi Alpha Theta, Screening of The Killing Fields (1984)**

Phi Alpha Theta, CMU’s History Honors Society, will present a portion of the film, The Killing Fields. The film depicts the complexity of the genocide in Cambodia during the 1970s under the Khmer Rouge, which was one of the most devastating genocides recorded since the Holocaust. The course of the film addresses the takeover in the early days of Pol Pot’s rule, and follows a Cambodian translator and New York Times journalist as they attempt to leave the country in fear of being killed by the new regime. Discussion will follow the film screening.

Wednesday, April 11-Saturday, April 14 at 7:30 p.m.
CMU Campus, William S. Robinson Theater
**Theater Dept. Production of Wendy Kesselman’s adaptation of The Diary of Anne Frank”**

Directed by Jeanine Howe

Arguably one of the most important pieces of 20th-century literature, Wendy Kesselman’s gripping expansion of the original stage play incorporates newly discovered writings of Anne Frank’s diary. Hidden in the apartments behind Otto Frank’s business complex, the Frank family and four others make their new home, which is dubbed the “Secret Annex” by Anne. Encompassing a stay of two and a half years, the residents learn to accept their seclusion from the outside world and their conflicting emotions and viewpoints about each other. The play concludes with the discovery of the Secret Annex by Nazi sympathizers and Otto Frank’s rendition of the fate of his family and the other occupants. Sponsored by Chevron. Rated PG for adult situations and violence. Tickets: $20 for adults; $15 for seniors; $6.00 for students.

Thursday, April 12 at 4:30 p.m.
CMU Campus, Houston Hall 139
**Sarah Swedberg, Screening of Paragraph 175**

Among those persecuted in Nazi Germany were gay men and lesbians. The film, Paragraph 175, documents the lives of several gay men and one lesbian who experienced this persecution. Following the viewing of the documentary, Dr. Sarah Swedberg, Associate Professor of History, will lead a question and answer session about the film and about homophobia in both the past and present eras.
Friday, April 13 at 3:00 p.m.
CMU Campus, Mesa Experimental Theatre (Black Box)
Connie Foutz Monroe, Lecturer and Choreographer, Dept. of Theater of Arts; John Nizalowski, Lecturer of English, and Suzanne Bronson, senior, Dept. of English, “The Diary of Anne Frank: Our Point of Entry”
A multi-media, poetry, and dance performance. This innovative performance of evocative poetry and dance, combined with traditional music was developed specifically as a companion piece to the production of *The Diary of Anne Frank*.

Wednesday, April 18 at 7:00 p.m.
Traditional Holocaust Remembrance Service held at Congregation Ohr Shalom synagogue, 441 Kennedy Avenue, across from Grand Junction High School.