**9/11: Brandeis Reflections Five Years Later**

On the fifth anniversary of the attacks of 9/11, the Brandeis community came together not only to remember the tragedy, but to reflect on the myriad ways in which we have all tried to heal in its aftermath. The day was marked by a series of on-campus events designed to look to the future as well as the past.

It began at 8:45 a.m., with a moment of silence in front of the library to commemorate the instant the first plane hit the towers. When words were spoken, they urged us all to overcome the natural desire for revenge by working for true and lasting peace. Hope and compassion, reminded Father Walter Cuenin, must never become victims to violence.

Throughout the day, students participated in a Mitzvah Marathon in which they performed good deeds to honor the memory of those who died. “Mitzvah” comes from the Torah, where it refers to commandments in Jewish law; but less formally, the word has come to define any act of human kindness. Some participants in the Mitzvah Marathon gave to charity, others made food for homeless shelters or get-well cards for hospitalized children. The intent was to bring people closer and to demonstrate how easy it can be to make a difference, however small, in the life of another.

Several students attended a brown-bag lunch at which they described how the events of 9/11 have shaped their lives in the five years since. Others chose to voice their thoughts and memories by writing them on the windows of the Shapiro Campus Center with dry-erase pens provided by Student Activities. Perhaps the most salient observation to come out of those recollections was the fact that 9/11 was a moment that unified a nation and politicized a generation. For many students who were in high school on Sept. 11, 2001, coming to Brandeis was a decision rooted in their newfound interest in social and political activism.

A message left anonymously on the window of the Shapiro Campus Center on Sept. 11, 2006

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**FROM THE DIRECTOR**

Re-inventing Decency

In his play “Via Dolorosa,” which opened for a short run at Brandeis on September 14, 2006, British playwright David Hare recounts a turbulent journey through Israel, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Toward the end of his travels, he visits Yad V’shem, the Israeli memorial to the Holocaust, where he encounters an exhibit featuring a 1943 speech given by Heinrich Himmler in which the Nazi leader is praising the German people for their participation in the “elimination” of the Jews. Noting that the SS officers to whom he was speaking knew what it feels like to see 1,000 bodies before them, Himmler praises them for managing, “apart from exceptions due to human weakness, to have remained decent.”

The day after the “Via Dolorosa” opening, Cynthia Cohen, the executive director of the Slifka Program, called my attention to President George W. Bush’s press conference in the White House Rose Garden. Speaking of his request to Congress for authorization of “coercive” interrogation techniques, the President defended the Detainee Treatment Act as an opportunity to provide “more clarity for our professionals.” After all, he noted, those people authorized to conduct interrogations “are decent citizens who don’t want to break the law.”

It is painful to see the leader of the United
The International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life

The mission of the International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life is to develop effective responses to conflict and injustice by offering innovative approaches to coexistence, strengthening the work of international courts, and encouraging ethical practice in civic and professional life.

Staff

Daniel Terris, Director
Leigh Swigart, Director of Programs in International Justice and Society
Marc McPhee, Associate Director
Christopher Moore, Communications Specialist, Newsletter Editor
Lynn Weisel, Department Coordinator
Kanan Makiya, Faculty Associate
Stephanie Gerber Wilson, Special Projects Manager

Slifka Program in Intercommunal Coexistence

Cynthia Cohen, Executive Director, Director of Coexistence Research and International Collaborations
Mari Fitzduff, Professor of Coexistence and Director of Master’s Program
Theodore A. Johnson, Assistant Professor
Jennifer Burke, Program Administrator
Jessica Berns, Program Manager,
Coexistence International (CI)
Kristin Williams, Program Coordinator, CI

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The Slifka Program in Intercommunal Coexistence welcomes the Class of 2006-07 to the Master of Arts in Coexistence and Conflict. Fifteen students representing Croatia, Latvia, Malawi, The Netherlands, Pakistan, Palestine, Rwanda, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Uganda and the United States have begun the 16-month program. The students will spend an academic year in residence at Brandeis (September–May), followed by a three-month field placement and completion of a master’s paper by December 2007. For complete student bios, visit www.brandeis.edu/programs/Slifka/masters/bios.html.

Coexistence International Releases ‘Barometer’ Report

In the spring of 2006, Coexistence International (CI) conducted two “Barometer Exercises” in which participants aligned themselves along a spectrum of opinions depending on the extent to which they agreed with two differing statements. The exercises aimed to explore the commonalities and differences in the core values held by those who work in coexistence and related fields. The report of CI’s findings is now available online at www.brandeis.edu/coexistence/pubs/barometerreport.html.

IN THE NEWS

Staff Highlights

Cynthia Cohen, Marci McPhee and Leigh Swigart all received promotions effective July 1, 2006. Cohen is now the executive director of the Slifka Program in Intercommunal Coexistence, while retaining her title as director of coexistence research and international collaborations. McPhee is associate director of the Center, and Swigart is the new director of programs in international justice and society. Dan Terris has been named to the International Advisory Board of the Peter C. Alderman Foundation, whose mission is to provide caregivers in post-conflict countries the tools to treat those who have suffered from terrorism and mass violence. Marci McPhee was asked to deliver the keynote address at a candlelight vigil sponsored by STAND (Students Taking Action Now: Darfur) to commemorate the second anniversary of the U.S. declaration of genocide in the Darfur region of Sudan.

The Center Welcomes

Ted Johnson and Stephanie Gerber Wilson

Theodore A. Johnson joins the Slifka Program in Intercommunal Coexistence as an assistant professor for the 2006-07 academic year. A senior program manager with Mercy Corps Conflict Management Group, Johnson has served as a consultant in dispute resolution programs in South Africa, Cyprus, Iraq and Saudi Arabia. He is teaching courses in mediation, research methods and conflict and development.

Stephanie Gerber Wilson is the Center’s special projects manager. She manages the university’s partnership with Al-Quds University and manages a Center fundraising initiative and campus-wide strategic projects. She holds a Ph.D. in Middle Eastern Studies from Brandeis and has worked part-time at the Center since January 2001. Before coming to Brandeis, she worked as a public relations account executive.

Coexistence International

Coexistence International (CI) is a non-profit organization with headquarters in Waltham, Massachusetts. CI aims to explore the commonalities and differences in the core values held by those who work in coexistence and related fields. The report of CI’s findings is now available online at www.brandeis.edu/coexistence/pubs/barometerreport.html.

Back Row: Madhawa Palihapitiya, Aejaz Karim, Borislava Manojlovic, Romain Rurangirwa, Andrew Ginsberg, Seung Yeo, Slava Madosky, Ashad Sentongo, Yulanna Hilajeva. Front Row: Sophia Robbana, Nedaa Taweel, Moussokoro Kane, Inga Sarsune, Judith van Raalten
Not Pictured: Sarah Stanlick
“Before 9/11, I lived with blinders on. After 8:45 am on Sept. 11, the blinders flew off and I found myself standing in the crossfire of hatred.”

Susan Retik, Co-founder Cycling Forward

An expert on the theme of remembrance after tragedies, Indiana University history professor Ed Linenthal spoke on the cultural politics involved in erecting memorials. Linenthal has published books on the creation of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and the Oklahoma City National Memorial. He acknowledged the importance of remembering those lost to violence, but he cautioned that doing so can be a very contentious process among survivors. Everyone has a stake in the outcome, he said, and everyone is deeply invested in the details. Sensitivity and patience are required every step of the way.

“Brandeis Reflections Five Years Later” was bookended by two events that epitomize the struggle to heal after 9/11. On Sept. 10, 2006, Brandeis students volunteered at Cycling Forward, an annual three-day trek from Ground Zero to Boston that raises money for widows in Afghanistan. On Sept. 20, Cycling Forward co-founder Susan Retik shared her story with the Brandeis community. Retik was seven months pregnant with her third child when American Airlines Flight 11 hit the North Tower, with her husband on it. Deeply moved by the support she received, she chose to reach out to widows in Afghanistan whose husbands and sons were killed in the American-led war there, widows who did not have the same support.

“Before 9/11, I lived with blinders on,” she said. “After 8:45 am on Sept. 11, the blinders flew off and I found myself standing in the crossfire of hatred.” Quoting Cycling Forward cofounder and 9/11 widow Patti Quigley, Retik said, “You can’t always choose your role in life, but you can choose the way you play it.”

In the past five years, many have looked for lessons to be gleaned from the death and destruction of 9/11. If there is anything to be learned from the response of the Brandeis community on Sept. 11, 2006, it is that looking forward and turning toward each other rather than away is a vital step in healing the scars of the past.

The Center Welcomes New Advisory Board Members

The Center is pleased to welcome David M. Malone and Nancy Kassebaum Baker as the newest members of its International Advisory Board.

David M. Malone serves as Canada’s high commissioner to India and resident ambassador to Nepal and Bhutan, overseeing Canada’s multilateral and economic diplomacy. A career Canadian Foreign Service officer, he has represented Canada as a member of the U.N. Economic and Social Council and the chair of the U.N. Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. From 1998 to 2004, he was president of the International Peace Academy, an independent research and policy development institution in New York. Malone has published extensively on peace and security issues in a variety of journals. His most recent book, The International Struggle over Iraq: Politics in the UN Security Council 1980-2005, was published in August 2006.

Nancy Kassebaum Baker served as a Republican senator from Kansas from 1978 to 1997. During that time, she sat on the Foreign Relations Committee, the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee (104th Congress) and the Commerce Committee (1981-1987). She currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Atlantic Council of the United States, which promotes constructive U.S. leadership and engagement in international affairs, and the Commission for Africa, a 16-member body created in 2004 and chaired by Prime Minister Tony Blair. She is also a member of the Independent Task Force on Strengthening Palestinian Public Institutions in association with the Council of Foreign Relations.

For more information on the Center’s board, go to www.brandeis.edu/ethics/about/board.html.
Know Your Rights!

The Center is pleased to announce the establishment of Know Your Rights!, a collaborative project with the West African Research Center/Association and the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights. Know Your Rights! aims to create and disseminate critical information on human and peoples’ rights in selected African languages, thereby making this critical information available to those who otherwise would not have access to it. This category includes people who have had limited access to formal education, women, rural populations and other marginalized groups. The principal sources to be used are the legal instruments of the African Commission.

Know Your Rights! has the potential to make a significant contribution to preparing countless numbers of people for participation in the democratic processes of their countries, the African continent and the global community. While the discourse on human rights and the elaboration of instruments has progressed apace in the higher echelons of leadership, its dissemination to larger populations has been hindered by the lack of materials describing these rights in the everyday languages spoken by most people. As long as critical human rights documents are available only in official (i.e., European) languages in which few are literate, widespread knowledge of human rights cannot be achieved.

This project will be carried out over several years and has five principal activities:

- To identify strategic target languages on the African continent, focusing on those with a large speaker base or trans-border status, that will serve as the languages of translation for human rights documents.
- To make an inventory of existing materials pertaining to rights, democracy and citizenship (e.g. national constitutions and human rights declarations) in each of these languages, noting also documents in other African languages. These materials will be catalogued and will serve as a reference to be used in the project’s terminology and translation work.
- To develop a template for the terminology issues relevant to the project on the basis of the above inventory. The template will include a lexicon of key human rights concepts in the original language versions of the legal instruments (French and English).
- To translate the five legal instruments of the African Commission into the target languages, to digitize them and to post them on the website of the African Language Materials Archive, with cross references to other relevant websites like that of the African Commission.
- To disseminate the translated documents across the continent by carrying out a publicity campaign in each country among educators, print and oral media journalists, and civil society organizations. Dissemination of human rights concepts through the spoken word will be especially important in reaching target audiences.

From May 15 to 19, Leigh Swigart, director of programs in international justice and society, and John Hutchison, African Language Coordinator and professor of linguistics at Boston University, attended the 39th Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights in Banjul, The Gambia. The purpose of the trip was to formally propose this project to the assembled commissioners and to request the Commission’s assistance. Several commissioners had previously attended various Center events, including the Brandeis Institute for International Judges. Know Your Rights! was enthusiastically received by the African Commission and deemed to be an important step in promoting rights on the continent.
In the summer of 2005, Brandeis initiated a partnership and exchange program with Al-Quds University, an Arab university in Jerusalem, designed to build a Palestinian civic institution, provide education opportunities for students, faculty and staff, and foster cultural understanding. Since that time, a number of components of the partnership have progressed, providing opportunities for learning and development on both sides.

In March and April 2006, four American Studies graduate students from Al-Quds spent two weeks at Brandeis, accompanied by Professor Mohammad Dajani. During their stay, Zeina Barakat, Eliana Zeidan Berkley, Dalia Labadi and Urieb Samad attended American Studies lectures and classes and met Brandeis faculty and students. On March 29, they participated in a public celebration that included a photo exhibition of Al-Quds and the surrounding Jerusalem area, Palestinian food and Middle Eastern music. Because they were in the midst of researching their theses, the students also attended Brandeis library orientations and spent substantial time researching their theses and meeting with faculty members and other students.

Imad Abu Kishek, vice president for administrative and financial affairs at Al-Quds, has been in residence at Brandeis since July 2005. From May 1 to 5, seven of his deputies visited Brandeis in the Administration & Finance Exchange to learn more about Brandeis’s operations and how they might enact strategic change at Al-Quds. Each Al-Quds visitor paired with a Brandeis counterpart and participated in a weeklong series of discussions about Brandeis business practices with appropriate Brandeis functional specialists. In addition, the entire group of visitors attended presentations about Brandeis business practices in the areas of human resources, budget and planning, and financial affairs. Throughout the week, informal lunches and dinners enabled the Brandeis and Al-Quds counterparts to share ideas informally and develop rewarding personal relationships.

Al-Quds University has recently integrated its media, public relations and fundraising functions into a single unit. The partnership’s Communications Exchange, begun in December 2005, is providing key opportunities for Al-Quds personnel to learn new technology and new methods, and to develop new materials. The exchange began with an assessment visit to Al-Quds by Lorna Miles, Brandeis University’s senior vice president for communications, and Mike Lovett, the university photographer. This visit was followed in May 2006 by short-term residencies by Rola Alafandi, the Al-Quds director of public relations, and Daniel DeWolff, graphic designer and web developer. While at Brandeis, Alafandi and DeWolff worked in various parts of the Communications Department. Al-Quds is in the process of producing new public relations materials, specifically designed to enhance the university’s fundraising capacity. By the end of the partnership, Al-Quds will have increased its capacity for the production of print and online publications.

Also in May 2006, one Brandeis administrator and one faculty member traveled to Al-Quds to launch the Effective Teaching exchange. Sue Lanser, chair of the Women’s and Gender Studies Program, and Elaine Wong, associate dean of arts and sciences for undergraduate education, made plans for several Al-Quds faculty members to come to Brandeis for a visit in the 2006-07 academic year. One Al-Quds faculty member visited Brandeis from October 16 to 20, three Al-Quds faculty members are scheduled to come to Brandeis from October 30 to November 4, and three more will visit in the spring.

As part of the partnership’s documentation effort, a short documentary film will be released in fall 2006 featuring partnership participants from Brandeis and Al-Quds. Begun in September 2004, it documents two years of university partnership and provides a video record of the project. The video will be used to raise additional funds for the ongoing partnership.

(Top) Zeina Barakat and Dalia Labadi, two American Studies graduate students from Al-Quds University; (Lower left) Paul O’Keefe, director of sponsored programs at Brandeis, and Ameen Dawabshe, director of grants and projects at Al-Quds; (Lower right) Feras Barakat, the general accountant at Al-Quds, and Tony Chiefe, senior director of financial systems at Brandeis
APRIL
Alan B. Slifka, the benefactor for whom the Slifka Program in Intercommunal Coexistence is named, met with students in the Coexistence and Conflict master’s program as well as undergraduates studying at Brandeis through the Slifka Scholarship, which brings one Jewish and one Arab student from Israel to campus each year for four years of study.

MAY
James Carroll, columnist for the Boston Globe and member of the Center’s International Advisory Board, published House of War: The Pentagon and the Disastrous Rise of American Power (Houghton Mifflin), chronicling the U.S. military’s amassing of power from World War II to 9/11 and the ensuing invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq.

Ly Daravuth, former Brandeis International Fellow (2003-04), acted as the dramatic consultant for a 10-week U.S. tour of “Cambodian Stories,” a performance that combines action-painting with choreographed movement as artists use the human body and Cambodian landscape to express the hope and rebirth of a nation ravaged by Pol Pot’s genocidal regime.

AUGUST
Michael Ratner ‘66, a member of the Center’s International Advisory Board, received a 2006 Alumni Achievement Award, which honors graduates who have made distinguished contributions to their professions or fields of endeavor. It is the highest form of University recognition bestowed exclusively on alumni.

SEPTEMBER
Cynthia Cohen met with a delegation of civic and cultural leaders from Uganda who were participating in a Conflict Resolution program under the auspices of the U.S. State Department and WorldBoston, a non-profit, non-partisan organization that seeks to educate the public about international affairs.

Hans Corell, a member of the Center’s International Advisory Board, gave the keynote address at a global issues forum in Berlin titled “International Law in Flux.”

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PATTERNS OF CONFLICT, PATHS TO PEACE
Coexistence International and Theatre Without Borders convene sessions at the International Peace Research Association (IPRA) Biennial Conference

How is theatre contributing to building peace around the world? What can the fields of coexistence, theatre and ritual learn from and contribute to each other? These are among the questions explored by Coexistence International, in partnership with Theatre Without Borders, during several sessions convened at the IPRA conference from June 28 to July 3.

The panels at the IPRA conference were designed to provide opportunities to discuss the interface among theatre, ritual and peacebuilding. All three domains emphasize the importance of certain qualities of presence – states of calm alertness and engaged detachment that allow for explorations of the new and for possibilities of transformation. Good theatre, compelling ceremony and effective peacebuilding practice share this interest in nourishing particular qualities of presence. This shared interest can become the basis for collaboration and reciprocal learning among the fields.

Several ideas for collaboration on practical levels emerged. Peacebuilders saw that artists have tools to help address communities’ needs to tell stories, heal wounds and imagine better futures. At the same time, peacebuilders might be able to help artists build audiences and extend the impact of their work. Community-based peacebuilding groups might be able to sustain conversations and relationships that are initiated by shorter-term theatrical initiatives.

On the whole, the artists, cultural workers and peacebuilders who participated in the IPRA sessions reported that the lively debates and cross-fertilization of ideas were energizing and supportive, and that they found new sources of inspiration, new ideas for their practice and new questions to consider.
Re-inventing Decency

Continued from page 1

States defending torture in the same language with which a Nazi leader extolled the “final solution.” Striking though the juxtaposition may be, however, I do not cite it in order to suggest a false parallel between state-sponsored genocide and individual acts of torture committed under the guise of the law.

Instead, I wish to call our attention simply to the time-honored tradition of making an appeal to “decency” to lacquer over violence. This dangerous appeal celebrates the appearance of goodness and the willingness to suppress individual conscience in the service of the moral and political direction of one’s earthly commanders.

The word “decent” comes from the Latin verb meaning, “to be fitting, to be appropriate.” I suppose in one sense that the debased use of the word in our own time might itself be fitting, given what atrocities the Roman leaders themselves thought “appropriate” from time to time. Yet, in another sense, the very concept of decency has something powerful to offer us, and our language is not so rich that we can afford to let words themselves be hijacked in the service of hypocrisy.

In the first sentence of the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson wrote that the purpose of the document itself was to make a public case to the world in accordance with “a decent respect to the opinions of mankind.” The document that gave birth eventually to the United States begins with the assertion that there is something altogether decent — fitting, right, appropriate — about “respect” for the ideas and thoughts of people around the globe. The origins of the United States lie not in arrogant superiority to the collective wisdom of the nations, but in the search for a common conversation about how best to pursue the “inalienable rights” to which individuals were entitled.

The resonance of “decent” in the Declaration reminds us that decency does not have to suggest the mere veneer of morality, the suppression of conscience. It can instead mean the rigorous search for the fitting, appropriate, right response to the situations in which we find ourselves. To be “decent” is not to be passive, or hypocritical, or mediocre, or callous. It is instead to find the response commensurate with the needs of the moment. Those needs are many and various. Some moments call for respect, some for humor, others for outcry or restraint or the call to collective action. All of these responses can be decent. The trick is to know which is required when.

Indecency, after all, is the harm caused by the wrong response at the wrong moment.

Obedience, when resistance is called for, is indecent. So is the lavish excess of outrage, when constructive action would be more fruitful. Indecency is mockery when empathy is needed, violence when restraint is fitting, silence when outspokenness is required, self-righteousness when humility is called for.

Decency, so conceived — the right response at the right moment — is a modest aspiration, to be sure. It is a long way from high ideals like justice and truth and peace. But rescued from its perverted use, decency is a means towards those ideals, a way of judging and testing our own actions as well as those of others. A reinvented sense of decency might save us from ourselves.

Daniel Terris, Director

Slifka Program Teams with MusicUnitesUs for New Intercultural Residency Series


Kalhor, born in Iran, is a Grammy-nominated artist who has composed works for Yo-Yo Ma, the Kronos Quartet and some of Iran’s most renowned vocalists. He is partnering with Erzincan, a brilliant improviser who started his own Baglama Music Academy in Istanbul. This pairing brings together the music of two cultures that have much in common: the Persian classical tradition and the Turkish Sufi (Alevi) tradition. These powerful duets, which meld seamlessly, are performed on the Persian kamancheh (spike fiddle) and on the Turkish baglama, (a lute sometimes known as the saz) to astonishing effect. The tour coincides with the release of a unique recording of their music.

Amazones, the women Master Drummers of Guinea, is widely recognized as one of the most extraordinary drumming ensembles in the world. Featured in the award-winning IMAX film “Pulse: A STOMP Odyssey,” it has always been, by custom, all male. Now, for the first time ever, these famous men share the stage with women Master Drummers. With Amazones, a brave new adventure begins for West African women — a socio-cultural departure from tradition, fired by a fervent determination to attain the level of the great “djembefolas.”

For more information on the series and for a schedule of performances, visit www.brandeis.edu/MusicUnitesUS.
UPCOMING EVENT

March 15 & 16, 2007

Pieces of the Coexistence Puzzle: Democracy, Human Rights, Development and Gender

Coexistence International and the Center are sponsoring a two-day conference on the Brandeis University campus, in cooperation with the Program in Sustainable International Development, the Department of Politics and the Dean of Arts & Sciences at Brandeis, with support from the Martin Weiner Lecture Fund. The conference will explore complementary approaches to coexistence work. Conference sessions will explore the relationship between coexistence work and work in related areas such as democracy, development, gender and human rights.

The conference’s keynote address will be delivered on March 15 by Radhika Coomaraswamy, Special Representative of the U.N. Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. Boston-area practitioners and scholars, as well as faculty and students from area academic programs are encouraged to attend. The event will be open to the public.

For more information, visit Coexistence International’s website at www.brandeis.edu/coexistence/events/events.html.

NEW CENTER PUBLICATION

Complementarity and Cooperation: International Courts in a Diverse World

summarizes the proceedings of the fourth Brandeis Institute for International Judges, held in January 2006 in Dakar, Senegal. BIIJ 2006 assembled participants from nine international courts and commissions for four days of confidential dialogue and debate. The Institute was directed by Center board member Richard Goldstone, former chief prosecutor of the U.N. International Criminal Tribunals for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia and former justice of the Constitutional Court of South Africa, and by Linda Carter, professor of law at the University of the Pacific McGeorge School of Law. Funding for the institute was generously provided by the JEHT Foundation, the Ford Foundation-West Africa, the Rice Family Foundation and the David Berg Foundation.

To read an online copy of the report, visit www.brandeis.edu/ethics/resources/publications/BIIJ2006.pdf.