’DEIS Impact! Exploring Social Justice on Campus and Around the World

Have you witnessed a play when, at a particular moment, the quality of the audience’s attention was deepened and transformed? Have you felt lifted up by the quality of the light in a photograph? In December we at the Center experienced such a moment during our symposium “Just Performance: Enacting Justice in the Wake of Violence,” which explored the justice-seeking possibilities and limitations of trials, truth commissions, theatrical works and rituals. In a panel on Cambodia, poet Tararith Kho shared a detailed account of the decimation of his village by the Khmer Rouge. Just when we organizers were discreetly checking our watches, Kho began to chant a poem in Khmer. It was as if the room became filled with the spirits of the deceased. Few could understand the words, but everyone grasped viscerally that while the international community’s concerns might be addressed through trials, the survivors’ profound need for acknowledgement would be satisfied more through the performance of poems.

Brandeis University is undertaking a vigorous strategic planning process in which we are asking, among other questions, whether and how the arts can be linked with justice. In the magazine’s first two issues, we have featured a series of articles on this theme. ‘DEIS Impact! is a unique collaboration between the Undergraduate Student Union and the International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life. The idea for ‘DEIS Impact grew from a question: What if students and professors from all across campus came together with guests from all around the world to examine what “social justice” really means from a variety of perspectives, and to celebrate the ways Brandeis University contributes to making the world better?

Herbie Rosen ’12, then Student Union President, championed the event from the first planning meetings in the summer through the success of the event many months later. “I never realized how possible it would be to create a ‘festival of social justice,’” says Rosen. “My hope is that ‘DEIS Impact will not be the only time we are highlighting social justice and Brandeis’ impact on the global scene. ‘DEIS Impact...”

[continued on p. 4]
The International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life

Mission: 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.

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IN THE NEWS

Staff Highlights (January – June)
In collaboration with Search for Common Ground and the Alliance for Peacebuilding, Cynthia Cohen convened a conversation at the United States Institute of Peace on building an infrastructure for the field of peacebuilding and the arts. She also co-led a workshop on “Acting Together: Accessing Creativity to Transform Conflict” at the Justice Institute of British Columbia. Marci McPhee presented “It’s Not Just a Summer Internship Abroad: Integrating Student Experiences on Campus” for the International Careers Consortium conference at Wellesley College. Naoe Suzuki had a solo exhibition, Blue, at the Kniznick Gallery at Brandeis’ Women’s Studies Research Center and exhibited drawings in a group show at the Art Garden in Shelburne Falls, Mass. Leigh Swigart attended “Judicial Process and the Protection of Rights,” the first judicial dialogue event for United States Supreme Court and European Court of Human Rights judges. Dan Terris discussed “Law and Justice at Brandeis” with Brandeis President Fred Lawrence and several dozen alums following the swearing in of 16 Brandeis alums to the bar of the U.S. Supreme Court. David J. Weinstein was a panelist at “Faces of Feminism,” hosted by the Brandeis Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance.

New International Advisory Board Members

The Center welcomes Jules Bernstein and Gillian Sorensen to its International Advisory Board.

Jules Bernstein ’57 is a Washington, D.C.-based labor lawyer who has advocated for workers’ rights for more than a half-century. While counsel to the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, he helped organize the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. Bernstein serves on the boards of directors of the National Labor College, Interfaith Worker Justice and the National Employment Law Project. At Brandeis, he established the Louis D. Brandeis Legacy Fund for Social Justice, which supports Brandeis students, enhances campus life, and promotes the issues of social justice that Louis D. Brandeis championed. A Brandeis graduate, he received the Brandeis Alumni Achievement Award in 2007.

Gillian Sorensen, senior advisor at the United Nations Foundation, is a national advocate on matters related to the United Nations and the United States-United Nations relationships. She has served as U.N. assistant secretary-general for external relations, as special advisor for public policy to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and as New York City Commissioner for the United Nations and Consular Corps. Sorensen is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, served as a board member of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and was a delegate to three national presidential conventions. Sorensen’s late husband Ted C. Sorensen was the Founding Chair of the Ethics Center’s Board.

Africa, Europe, the Middle East: A Sorensen Summer

Wrote Sekumbo in an update from Tanzania: “I see, understand and almost know what needs to be done but I don’t know where to start....Education can be equally empowering as it is frustrating.”

Updates from all of the Fellows: brandeis.edu/now/2012/july/sorensenfellows.html
Center Convenes Global Judicial Colloquium in Haifa

The Ethics Center convened the Global Judicial Colloquium in Haifa, Israel in July, as part of a larger training academy at the University of Haifa Faculty of Law for domestic judges from around the world. The 23 participants represented many types of jurisdiction and hailed from across the globe: Africa (Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, and Uganda), Asia (India and the Philippines), Europe (Albania, Latvia, and Romania), Israel and the United States.

Domestic judges engaged in intensive dialogue with their counterparts serving in the international arena. The international judges who participated were René Blattmann (Bolivia) of the International Criminal Court, Erik Møse (Norway) of the European Court of Human Rights (and formerly of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda), and Jacob Wit (The Netherlands) of the Caribbean Court of Justice.

Participants discussed topics related to the intersection between domestic and international judicial spheres: the application of international law in domestic courtrooms, the implications of the International Criminal Court’s complementarity principle on domestic judicial work, and the issue of jurisdictional overlap between national and international bodies.

Leigh Swigart, Director of Programs in International Justice and Society, and Dan Terris, Ethics Center Director, led a session at the colloquium related to their ongoing research on the international judiciary.

The international judges who participated are all alums of the Brandeis Institute for International Judges, the model for the Brandeis Judicial Colloquia series. To date, the Center has held colloquia in West Africa, North America, South America, and India.

The Global Judicial Colloquium was supported by the Rice Family Foundation.

New Report from 2012 Institute for International Judges

“The International Rule of Law: Coordination and Collaboration in Global Justice” is an account of the discussions of 17 judges from 12 courts and tribunals, who were hosted by the Ethics Center last winter in Spain for the eighth Brandeis Institute for International Judges (BIIJ).

The 2012 Institute aimed to explore what international judges and their institutions – in conjunction with national and regional counterparts – can and should do in the effort to promote the rule of law around the world. Participants spoke openly of the challenges they face as agents of justice in a world where national interests and disregard for international institutions often complicate the critical mandates they have been given.

“The International Rule of Law” explores issues critical to contemporary international justice, including conflicts and coordination among jurisdictions, power politics and its impact on courts, the emergence of indigenous rights law, and the role of international judicial institutions in enhancing global justice.

The Brandeis Institute for International Judges is the only regular gathering of its kind of judges from international courts and tribunals across the globe. BIIJ 2012 was supported by a grant from the Rice Family Foundation.

Contact the Ethics Center to request a print copy, or read the report here: brandeis.edu/ethics/pdfs/internationaljustice/biij/BIIJ2012.pdf

For more on Programs in International Justice and Human Rights: brandeis.edu/ethics/internationaljustice
should be a reminder of our commitment to social justice and a celebration of what we as a campus are engaged in.”

Center Associate Director Marci McPhee says ‘DEIS Impact “builds on the passionate discussion and action already happening at Brandeis. This festival of social justice has allowed the campus community to celebrate and explore the many ways people can work together to change the world, and look ahead to what still needs to be done.”

‘DEIS Impact was made possible in part by the generous support of the Louis D. Brandeis Legacy Fund for Social Justice, which supports Brandeis students, enhances campus life, and promotes the issues of social justice that the former U.S. Supreme Court justice championed throughout his life. The Legacy Fund was founded by Jules Bernstein ’57, a new member of the Ethics Center’s International Advisory Board (see page 2), and is funded in part by Bernstein and his wife, Linda Lipsett.

Ruth Messinger, President of the international NGO American Jewish World Service, delivered the keynote address, “Local is Global: Bridging Domestic Action and Global Impact.” Heller School Professor Laurence Simon, co-founder of AJWS, shared remarks as well. (Read an excerpt from Messinger’s talk on the facing page).

The next ‘DEIS Impact is already in the works, scheduled for February 1st to 11th, 2013, with Student Union President Todd Kirkland ’13 at the helm. “I am excited for the second ‘DEIS Impact,” says Kirkland. “The Student Union will play a vital role in ensuring longevity for this event. With continued student involvement ‘DEIS Impact can and should become one of the staples of the Brandeis community, similar to the Festival of the Arts.”

The ‘DEIS Impact 2013 keynote speakers will be Eliza Dushku and her mother Judy Dushku, speaking about their work with THRIVE-Gulu, which addresses issues of child soldiers, sex slavery and other post-conflict concerns in Uganda. Judy Dushku, professor of politics at Suffolk University, is the founder of THRIVE-Gulu; Eliza Dushku, star of Buffy The Vampire Slayer, Bring It On and many other films and shows, has had a significant role supporting the organization.

To be a part of planning the second ‘DEIS Impact festival of social justice, or to propose an event and request funding, see page 8 and go.brandeis.edu/DEISimpact

A film screening about the Feminist Art Movement, a conversation about PTSD and veterans of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, an art installation in the campus center, a peace vigil, a Muslim Friday prayer service – ‘DEIS Impact encompassed a striking array of topics, happenings, departments, clubs and guests.

A few highlights:
• Global Family Literacy: Lesotho, Haiti and Waltham
• Legal Impact: How to Leverage a Law Degree for the Social Good
• Playback Improvisation Workshop: Exploring Social Justice on Campus through Art, Ritual and Social Interaction
• The Pursuit of Social Justice in the Abrahamic Faiths
• Self Defense and Women’s Rights: Tae Kwon Do Workshop and Speaker on Gender-Based Violence
• Social Justice in the Brandeis Curriculum
• Stress: The Hidden Health Cost of Racial and Ethnic Discrimination

The full list, with photos and details: brandeis.edu/ethics/atbrandeis/DEIS_Impact/DetailedSchedule.html

‘DEIS Impacters
‘DEIS Impact was planned, publicized, and facilitated by a core committee of Brandeis students known as the “‘DEIS Impacters” – Katherine Alexander ’12, Dillon Harvey ’14, Amber Kornreich ’12, Herbie Rosen ’12 (a steering committee member), Aziz Sohail ’13 and Miriam Wong ’14 (a steering committee member). These students helped design the scope of the week, publicize it in all corners of campus, and ensure the success of events throughout the week.
Local is Global: Bridging Domestic Action and Global Impact

For 25 years American Jewish World Service (AJWS) has worked to empower marginalized people around the world. In her DEIS Impact keynote address AJWS President Ruth Messinger led a dynamic discussion about how AJWS approaches development abroad and at home. She described the transformative impact of education, volunteering and advocacy, from far-flung grassroots NGOs working in the field, to Jewish advocates for food justice lobbying on Capitol Hill, and proposed new ways individuals can support movements for change around the world.

Special guest Professor Laurence Simon, co-founder of AJWS and Executive Director of Graduate Programs in Sustainable International Development at Brandeis University's Heller School for Social Policy and Management, reflected on his vision at the creation of AJWS and on the remarkable 25-year history of the organization he helped launch.

The evening was sponsored by the Ethics Center and the Undergraduate Student Union, along with the Hornstein Jewish Professional Leadership Program, the Near Eastern and Judaic Studies Department, and The Louis D. Brandeis Legacy Fund for Social Justice.

The keynote and discussion video is online: brandeis.edu/ethics/events/DEISimpact2012.html

As you go out into the world... try to really recognize what we're all taught... that everyone is equally made in the image of God, or whatever force you choose to believe in, but that people know their own minds.

You as students are lucky enough to be at an incredible university. You have opportunities from time to time to pose your own questions to professors, to shape courses, to form extracurricular organizations. And you know what? You usually know what you want.

The situation is precisely the same for the peoples of the world. And as much as I want many of you to go into international work, and as much as I hope that somewhere in this audience is the future Secretary of State or future head of the Agency for International Development, I want to remind you that Westerners do not have all the answers.

I want to tell you that the developing world...is littered – literally – with buildings that were built by well-meaning clubs. Ask a community, “What is that building up on the hill?” and they say “Well, you know, 10 years ago people came here and they built a school.” I say, “Oh, really?” “Yes,” they say, “but we have no money for teachers.” Or “That’s not the place for a school.” Or “That’s not really what we needed – but they came and that’s what they wanted to do.”

Not only is that disrespectful of the fact that people best know what they need and need your help in making it come true, but... it gives a lousy reputation to the Westerners who go to these countries. People arrive with obvious wealth and resources and physical, human power and then they do something that's in their brains that they think is what the community needs – not what the community says it wants.

So as you go out into the world... globally, domestically, whatever – try to really recognize what we're all taught, which is that everyone is equally made in the image of God, or whatever force you choose to believe in, but that people know their own minds. That they have their own vision. They may need some education, they may need some resources, they are likely to need some money, they may need some technology and training – but they know what they need.
Linking the Arts with Justice

Institution will link the arts with our social justice mission. As Director of the Center’s Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts I believe making the arts and social transformation part of the identity of this university would be a good thing: for students, for the institution, for the emerging field of peacebuilding and the arts, and for communities around the world seeking justice.

The moment when Khō’s chanting transformed a conference hall into a sanctuary exemplifies some of the unique capacities of the arts. His haunting melody reached beneath the reflective, rational tone my colleague Leigh Swigart and I had established in our remarks. His poem embraced what might seem utterly incompatible impulses: toward mourning and rage, toward the particular and the universal. The beauty of his rendering invited and supported our acknowledgment of the brutal ugliness of the history he recounted. (And the art forms of one’s own culture can be even more resonant than those from another’s.)

The critical challenges of this century will not yield to solutions developed through rational processes alone. Global inequities, climate change, resource scarcity, broken governance systems, our reliance on destructive approaches to addressing conflict: all will require something more than strategies wrought by even our best analysts. They will require understanding that is compellingly vivid, informed by senses, emotions and spiritual faculties as well.

By linking the transformative power of the aesthetic with the strategic power of the rational we can frame problems in ways more susceptible to solution. By linking the creative arts with our social justice mission Brandeis can cultivate capacities for the cross-cultural, interdisciplinary, multi-modal inquiry that effective leadership will surely require in coming decades.

Peacebuilding and the Arts

Farhat Agbaria, a coexistence facilitator based at Givat Haviva and Seeds of Peace, will be in residence at Brandeis from September 19 to 30, sponsored by the Ethics Center. Agbaria has facilitated encounters between Israelis and Palestinians for decades, and has been connected to the Center since 1998, when he explored coexistence and the quest for justice as a Brandeis International Fellow.

His visit is in conjunction with the exhibition “Dor Guez: 100 Steps to the Mediterranean” at the Rose Art Museum, which explores overlooked narratives of the Christian Palestinian minority in the Middle East.

Agbaria, himself a Muslim Palestinian Israeli, will co-facilitate weekend workshops with Cynthia Cohen, Director of the Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts, focused on the relationship between dialogue and art. The sessions are designed for artists, cultural workers and leaders of cultural institutions who work or plan to work in zones of violent conflict around the world – including the United States.

During his residency Agbaria will meet with Brandeis students and faculty, engage student social justice leaders and arts-related club leaders in a discussion of how the arts can relate to social justice work, and will lead several class sessions.

Farhat Agbaria residency info, opportunities to engage with him, Dor Guez exhibit details: brandeis.edu/ethics/events/Agbaria.html

See a related Ethical Inquiry: Should peacebuilders encourage oppressed people to empathize with their oppressors? – researched and written by Shoshana Zeldner, MA Coexistence and Conflict ’12: brandeis.edu/ethics/ethicalinquiry/2012/September.html

Acting Together:
A Reflection on Art and Understanding

After a recent screening of the Center’s Acting Together on the World Stage: Performance and the Creative Transformation of Conflict at the University of British Columbia’s Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies, Rena Sharon, UBC Professor of Collaborative Piano Studies and a Distinguished Scholar in Residence at the Wall Institute, reflected on the role of art in academia. An excerpt:

It has been my contention...that Art wears a sort of invisible burka in our society – suppression fueled by overt contempt that perhaps belies a fear of Art’s mysterious power to trigger passionate shifts in hearts and minds. [...]Improving the productive work relationship between artists and researchers is of crucial importance to the comprehensive and integrated understanding of the human entity.

...Acting Together on the World Stage is...an artistically-wrought documentary which transforms our understanding through its compelling presentation of artistic creations. Its blend of passionate commentaries and beautifully filmed performances is so fluid that an hour passes without notice while an immensity of profound new knowledge is absorbed and inhabited emotionally.

The film presents such breadth, so much global history both known and erased, so many charged images and rich stories that to properly comment we would either have to sit mute for hours in stunned awareness – or talk until dawn....

Read other responses, and the full text of Prof. Sharon’s letter: brandeis.edu/ethics/peacebuildingarts/actingtogether/reflections_responses
Social Justice and the University: Perspectives from the U.S. and Abroad

Some say universities are simply in the “knowledge business.” Others contend a liberal arts education should propel students to action, particularly in the realm of social justice. What is the right answer for Brandeis University?

In March, members of the Center’s International Advisory Board discussed this question at an open forum introduced by Provost Steve A. N. Goldstein. Panelists included leaders in business, education, government and law from South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sweden, the U.S. and Venezuela.

A lively conversation with a packed room of students, faculty and staff touched on issues such as equity and access to higher education, the level of student commitment to international affairs, and freedom of expression on campus.

Michael Ratner ’66, President Emeritus, Center for Constitutional Rights, recalled that when he was an undergraduate at Brandeis and a graduate student “there were no classes around anything to do with social justice.” This has changed, noted Ratner, who feels strongly that social justice concerns are part of the university, “particularly...when it comes to what our own country is doing in the world.”

Richard Goldstone, a former Justice of the Constitutional Court of South Africa, shared his view, based on his experience in South Africa, that students’ voices mean more “in relation to issues where they can speak with some expertise – about their own university, about students in their country, and about issues which affect them as students... I’m not suggesting they shouldn’t be involved in broader issues,” he said, “but that should be the main focus.”

Read more and see photos: brandeis.edu/ethics/news/2012/2012.march.13.html

HIGHLIGHTS OF RECENT EVENTS

JANUARY
The Center hosted the Brandeis Institute for International Judges in Spain (see page 3).

Sex Segregation in Israel: Where Do You Sit? was screened and discussed by the Hadassah-Brandeis Institute’s Project on Gender, Culture, Religion and the Law.

FEBRUARY
The first ‘DEIS Impact was held (see page 1).

The presidents of the Population Institute and Pathfinder International discussed the documentary Mother: Caring for 7 Billion.

MARCH
Helen Zia spoke on “From Vincent Chin to Marriage Equality: Reflections on Hate Violence, Human Rights, and Interconnectedness, 30 Years After,” sponsored by the Brandeis Asian American Student Association.

The Center hosted “Social Justice and the University” (see article above).

Center International Advisory Board member Diego Arria, former Permanent Representative of Venezuela to the United Nations, spoke about politics and business in Venezuela with Brandeis International Business School students, faculty and staff.

“Disrupting the Script: Raising to Legal Consciousness Sexual Assaults on Black Women,” convened by Anita F. Hill and Bernadette J. Brooten, was hosted by the Feminist Sexual Ethics Project.

Student folk dance troupe B’Yachad hosted “Musika Rox: Rhythms of the Middle East.”

APRIL
During the Queer Resource Center’s “Queerologues” performers talked about sex, sexuality and gender.

MAY
The Heller School’s Justice, Peace, and Coexistence Working Group’s “Preventing Electoral Violence: The Role of the State, Civil Society, and the International Community” featured speakers from the Friends Committee on National Legislation, the Institute for Defense Analyses and Seton Hall University Law School.

JUNE
“Acting Together on the World Stage” (see page 6) was screened and discussed at The Boston Foundation.

JULY
The Center hosted the Global Judicial Colloquium in Haifa (see page 3).

Interested in Ethics Center Cosponsorship? See: brandeis.edu/ethics/events/cosponsorship

Students from “Advocacy for Policy Change” (LGLS 161b) shared their work at “Present and Defend” in April. Lina Bui ’13 and Clair Weatherby ’12 (l-r) discussed their work related to Bill H. 3818: “An Act relative to sentencing and improving law enforcement tools.” The course will be offered again in the spring.
Exposures: Photography and the Politics of Looking
• October 31, 2012, 2 - 5 pm
Rose Art Museum, Lee Gallery
A discussion of the photographic image and its resonance with politics, featuring commentaries by Dor Guez, an Israeli artist whose work is being exhibited at Brandeis during Fall 2012 (see page 6); Catherine Cissé van den Muijsenbergh, Executive Director of the Institute for Historical Justice and Reconciliation; and other guests. Hosted by the Center in collaboration with the Schusterman Center for Israel Studies and the Rose Art Museum.
Free and open to the public. For more information, see brandeis.edu/ethics/events

National Cohesion in Insecure States: Experiences from Africa
• October 18, 2012, 5 pm
Rapaporte Treasure Hall, Goldfarb Library
Keynote address of Michel Noureddine Kassa, Country Team Leader for the Initiative for a Cohesive Leadership in the Democratic Republic of Congo.
Mistrust, rivalries, and manipulation of the legacies of the past are among the hurdles societies face after conflict on the way to national cohesion and peace. How can we pursue sustainable and ecologically responsible development in a globalized and exposed puzzle of nations, networks and interests?
Mr. Noureddine Kassa will be at Brandeis October 15-19 as the Center’s sixth Distinguished Visiting Practitioner, hosted by Alain Lempereur, Director of the Master’s Program in Coexistence and Conflict.
Free and open to the public. For more events during the weeklong residency: brandeis.edu/ethics/events/Kassa.html

Save the Date: February 6, 2013
‘DEIS Impact Keynote Address: Film and TV star Eliza Dushku and her mother Judy Dushku, professor of politics at Suffolk University. (See page 4 for details.)

Interested in Ethics Center Cosponsorship? See: brandeis.edu/ethics/events/cosponsorship