FROM THE DIRECTOR – DANIEL TERRIS

Expression and Engagement

As a scholar trained in United States history and culture, I was distressed to learn late last year that the American Studies Association (of which I was formerly a member, many years ago), voted in favor of an academic boycott of Israeli universities. I was pleased that the Brandeis American Studies Program spoke out against the ASA’s action. Yet I was ambivalent about the Brandeis program’s decision to withdraw from its institutional affiliation with the ASA. Responding to an objectionable boycott with another form of withdrawal makes me uneasy.

This issue unfolded at the same time as a more local controversy: the suspension by the Brandeis University administration of its 10 year old partnership with Al-Quds University, a Palestinian institution. Brandeis also suspended the president of Al-Quds, Professor Sari Nusseibeh, from the International Advisory Board of the International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life.

The presenting cause of both suspensions is what the Brandeis administration refers to as organizational interference, putting the university’s academic freedom at risk. The ASA’s action, on the other hand, was about academic freedom in Palestinian universities. It is not a question of one form of academic freedom vs. another; it is a question of two types of academic freedom, both of which are subject to debate and challenge.

On the occasion of the Ethics Center’s 15th anniversary, we are celebrating 15 years of Sorensen Fellows. Six undergraduate Sorensen Fellows each year are supported by the Center in ethics-related summer internships in the U.S. or abroad, bookended by courses for preparation and reflection.

“When the Center started in 1998, the first thing we did was to create a program with undergraduates – later named the Sorensen Fellowship – partly to show our commitment to young people, and partly because it’s an investment in the future,” says Center Director Dan Terris.

In the years since, Sorensen Fellows have worked on six continents on issues they are committed to, laying the groundwork for careers and lives attentive to social justice and fostering richer, more ethical public life. Their post-Fellowship paths vary widely.

Since graduating from Brandeis, Dworin has applied her experiences in Northern Ireland as she continues to serve at-risk teens, first as a youth worker in Chicago, then as a public school teacher in Bronx, New York, and now as Director of Curriculum and Instruction at Umoja Student Development Corporation, which partners with the Chicago Public Schools on a range of social/emotional and restorative justice initiatives.

In 1999 Sorensen Fellow Wendi Adelson ’01 traveled to Argentina to work with The Mothers of Plaza de Mayo-Linea Fundadora. Today she is a professor at Florida State University College of Law, where she directs a student-led legal clinic that provides free legal services to homeless, disabled and undocumented patients in Tallahassee.

2001 Sorensen Fellow Yaser Robles ’03 traveled to Cape Town, South Africa for his Fellowship, working with Ikamva Labantu, a South African after-school program that partners with high schools to provide educational support and academic coaching.

In 1999 Sorensen Fellow Daniel Koosed ’08 (third from left) in Arusha, Tanzania in 2007.

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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New Independent Study/Internship Opportunity Offered in Spring 2014: Cultural Work and Social Transformation

Cynthia Cohen is working with Jane Wilburn Sapp, a distinguished African American musician, educator activist and cultural worker on a major project called “A Way Out of No Way,” documenting Sapp’s 40 years of experience working in communities struggling for social justice. Students are invited to join the project as interviewers, transcribers, archivists, researchers, writers and event producers. They are welcome to work as volunteers, or more intensively for credit as interns (in PAX92a4) or researchers in a group independent study (PAX92a4). More info: brandeis.edu/ethics/peacebuildingarts/jsapp

Bringing International Law to Campus

The Center’s Programs in International Justice and Society hosted a series of discussions for undergraduates this fall. Christoffer Wong of the Faculty of Law of Lund University in Sweden explored the question of how judges are elected to international courts and tribunals and whether a new approach is warranted. Linda E. Carter, Co-Director of the University of the Pacific McGeorge School of Law’s Global Center for Business and Development, discussed the challenges that current events in Kenya and Syria pose to the International Criminal Court. Leigh Swigart, Director of the Center’s Programs in International Justice and Human Rights, hosted a screening of “Sexual Violence and the Triumph of Justice,” and discussed how the crime of sexual violence can be addressed through international law.
Integrity is the cornerstone of my work.” So says one of Boston’s preeminent photojournalists, Don West, whose series of life-sized portraits with accompanying oral histories will be featured at Brandeis in February, during the ‘DEIS Impact “festival of social justice.” (See box at lower right.)

Don West uses his camera to provide a visual witness to people’s history. His collection “Portraits of Purpose” features a pantheon of local and international African-American leaders and their allies. His subjects have devoted their lives and their careers in service of the democratic ideals of freedom and equality for all peoples, deeply influenced by their experiences in the civil rights, black power, women’s and anti-apartheid movements. They include emerging and veteran leaders, unsung heroes and internationally renowned figures in the fields of politics, business, education, philanthropy, and law as well as arts and culture.

His quietly compelling images and the oral history excerpts invite viewers into the hearts and souls of these people. We see them with their families, or engaged in the struggle to improve conditions for their communities.

“I try to give a position of power and stature and value to every one of the people I photograph,” says West. “Portraits of Purpose: Focusing on Social Justice Leaders in Boston and the World” exhibit curator Daniela Dimitrova ’16 intends to create a space at Brandeis “in which the visitors have a conversation with the works, each other, and the narratives presented to them.”

Meeting Mandela

West, active in the anti-apartheid movement for years, was assigned to be official photographer of Nelson Mandela’s 1990 visit to Boston, soon after his release from Robben Island.

“When I finally had the opportunity to shake Mandela’s hand,” says West, “I was at a loss for words, barely getting out a sentence of appreciation for his life and work. But I sensed that words were not needed. When he smiled and reached out to shake my hand, it felt like his large and strong hands swallowed mine in his.”

“Leadership for social justice is to be admired and respected, but not romanticized,” West reflects. “In our desire to celebrate Nelson Mandela’s life – an iconic figure who triumphed over South Africa’s brutal apartheid regime – people will try to homogenize his views into something everyone can support. Let us always remember that despite his nearly universal popularity, Mandela was a truth seeker, and was first and foremost a political activist and agitator who did not shy away from controversy.”

West’s portrait of Nelson Mandela will be part of the exhibition at Brandeis – especially meaningful as Mandela’s grandsons, Kweku Mandela-Amuah and Ndaba Mandela, are the ‘DEIS Impact keynote speakers.

Seeking Lives of Purpose: Events at Brandeis February 1-10

The exhibition of West’s work at the Slosberg Music Center Lobby at Brandeis is part of “Seeking Lives of Purpose,” a series of events hosted by the Ethics Center’s Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts, the Graduate Student Association and students in Cindy Cohen’s course “Arts of Building Peace” (PAX250), with support from several other campus organizations:

Students will bring the portraits to life through storytelling performances that will pop up around campus. “We especially want to bring these stories to communities on campus that rarely get involved with arts,” says Jen Largaespada ’16, coordinator of this aspect of this event.

Activist, musician, educator and cultural worker Jane Wilburn Sapp will lead a songwriting workshop in which participants will draw themes and inspiration from the exhibit, and from their experiences and aspirations for social justice leadership.

Sapp will also offer a performance and presentation, “Ain’t You Got a Right to the Tree of Life: Spirituality and the Quest for Justice in the African-American Musical Tradition.”

A reception with both artists will be held in the Slosberg Music Center on February 5 from noon to 2 p.m. West will share his photographs of Mandela’s 1990 visit to Boston, and Sapp and West will discuss the contributions of music and photography to documenting community history and aspirations.

Details of these events: go.brandeis.edu/DEISimpact
Adjudicating Sexual Violence Under International and Domestic Law: The Case of the Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Center convened a unique group of judges in the Netherlands this fall to discuss how sexual violence can be effectively addressed through the courts. Judges from civilian and military jurisdictions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) were joined by international judges from the African Court of Human and Peoples’ Rights, the International Criminal Court, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and the Special Tribunal for Lebanon.

Interest was high, despite substantial logistical challenges to bringing this group together. As a result, several participants joined the colloquium via videolink.

The judicial colloquium was a collaborative effort of the Ethics Center, the U.S.-based NGO Physicians for Human Rights, and the Institute for Historical Justice and Reconciliation, an NGO based in The Hague.

A highlight was an appearance by Dr. Denis Mukwege, a renowned Congolese gynecologist and founder of a hospital that has treated hundreds of rape victims in the eastern DRC. He spoke to participants about the partnership that must exist between judicial and medical communities in the DRC if rape and other forms of sexual violence are to be both punished and healed. This benefits individual victims and Congolese society, said Dr. Mukwege.

At its close, the Congolese and international judges spoke of the importance of this gathering in strengthening their commitment to end impunity for crimes of sexual violence, to reach out to fellow judges who share their vision, and to partner with civil society groups when possible.

This colloquium was made possible by the support of the Sigrid Rausing Trust, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, and the Rice Family Foundation.

More info and slideshow: brandeis.edu/ethics/news/2013/2013.October.28_Nov.1.html
Intersectionality is an emerging field of critical inquiry and practice that examines how social inequalities are organized, endure and change. Scholars and practitioners claim that race, class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, age, ability, religion and/or nation constitute interconnected systems of power that produce complex social inequalities. They use intersectional frameworks to understand how individual and group identities, social institutions, cultural beliefs and political practices are situated within and shaped by intersecting power relations, albeit differently from one social location to the next.

Well, that still sounds pretty benign. I would call your attention to, for those of you who are not familiar with this, something like the body politics of the early feminist movement in Boston, that started with the whole notion of women’s bodies and said, “I have realized that what’s missing from the definition is social justice, the very reason that I argued that we needed intersectional analysis in the first place.”

“I have realized that what’s missing from the definition is social justice, the very reason that I argued that we needed intersectional analysis in the first place.”

“Who gets to decide what happens to my body?” And out of that comes the Boston Women’s Health Book Collective, and the book Our Bodies, Ourselves, and then out of that comes a growing recognition that women don’t all have the same bodies — some of the bodies are older, some of them are younger, some of them are black, some of them are differently described, and they have different issues and different needs — and then lo and behold that women do not control their bodies just by themselves, that social institutions are there. It’s not a question of getting a good identity: “I have a good body image, therefore I’m free.” It wasn’t that... It was something bigger, that reached out to see the constellation of social institutions and how they intersected to produce this particular thing called “body politics,” which then has policy implications around questions of reproductive rights. So it was an organic kind of discussion that looked at identities not as just discrete things that people owned or that were internal, but things that were situated in social space. Now intersectionality became the term that described that type of interactive looking at power and how it had certain outcomes.

Putting social justice central to any scholarly project is risky in these times of academic discipline. We run the risk of being “disappeared,” of watching the very thing you love being taken away and changed into something that is unrecognizable. …

At my last editorial meeting with my co-author, Sirma Bilge, she reminded me, she said “There’s a lot at stake here. If we propose a definition that does not have social justice at its core, how honest a definition is that?” So I don’t know where to go with this. Putting social justice central to any scholarly project is risky in these times of academic discipline. We run the risk of being “disappeared,” of watching the very thing you love being taken away and changed into something that is unrecognizable. ...

So intersectionality as a knowledge project that is committed to social justice finds itself pinioned between the rock of taking on intellectual and political agendas that ironically limit its emancipatory potential, and the hard place of seeing the tremendous human need for an analytical framework that can engage social injustices.
supporting democracy in post-apartheid South Africa by providing educational and economic resources to community members and townships. Robles – the second in his family to complete college – recently earned his doctorate at the University at Albany, and teaches in the Department of Africana and Latino Studies at SUNY Oneonta. His research focuses on resistance to injustice in Latin American and Latino communities.

“The Sorensen Fellowship is really the foundation for what I’m doing now,” he says. “And it makes my job easier to be able to share those experiences with my students.”

Also, Robles notes, “the Fellowship helped my Brandeis experience tremendously. I got more involved with clubs on campus, everything related to social awareness. It encouraged me to continue to go abroad and do volunteer work. I did two study abroad programs, one in Cuba and one in Brazil, to continue my work. I did two study abroad programs, one in Cuba and one in Brazil, to continue my work.

Will Chalmus ’07 calls his 2006 Sorensen Fellowship internship with Playback Theatre in the U.S. and Australia a “career-changer.” After graduation he became a member of the board of directors for the worldwide Center for Playback Theatre, and returns to Brandeis University this spring to teach a course on Playback in the Department of Theater Arts.

Sorensen Fellow Daniel Koosed ’08 spent the summer of 2007 in Arusha, Tanzania as an Academic Intern at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR). (See photo on page 1.) He went on to write his senior anthropology thesis about the ICTR.

During law school Koosed returned to Arusha as a legal intern, and assisted a trial chamber in drafting a genocide judgment that was upheld on appeal in The Hague. He later published a law review article about the ICTR in The University of Miami International & Comparative Law Review.

He graduated from the University of Miami School of Law in 2012, and joined the firm Rodney & Bernstein, P.A. in Miami as an associate immigration attorney. In 2010 Madeleine Stix ’12 interned with the Spirit of Youth Association for Environmental Service in Cairo, pre-Arab Spring, working with Egypt’s Coptic Christian community. She has been working since August 2012 at CNN in Atlanta. “It is both difficult and amazing taking part in the coverage of Egypt,” reflects Stix, “especially having completed my Fellowship six months before the revolution. I hope to return one day to work with the Zabaleen community again.”

2012 Sorensen Fellow Andrea Verdeja ’14 was awarded the 2013 undergraduate Elise Boulding Award from the Peace, War and Social Conflict section of the American Sociological Society, for her paper “The Merging of Times: Palestinian Refugee Identity Within the West Bank” – written as a part of her Sorensen Fellowship. The Elise Boulding Award is presented annually to one undergraduate student and one graduate student in recognition of an outstanding paper. Verdeja’s paper can be found in the 2012 Sorensen anthology, “Tracing Roots: Uncovering Realities Beneath the Surface.” (See sidebar for the link to the Sorensen Fellowship publications.)

The journeys of these Fellows are among the many featured on the Center’s website and Facebook page that continue to inspire Brandeis students.

In summer 2013 the six students of the 16th cohort joined this legacy, contributing their efforts at and reflections on internships in Bulgaria, Kenya, Senegal, Uganda and the United States.
A “Social Justice Street Team”

A residence hall common room. A late-night club meeting. A set of online course materials. YouTube.

In these places and more the Ethics Center’s “Social Justice Street Team” has been connecting the Brandeis community with Center resources.

Officially called the Ethics Center Leadership Council (ECLC), this team of three undergraduates works together and independently to build engagement with and awareness of the Center’s resources. They reach out to students, faculty and staff at Brandeis and other schools and organizations, and promote and enhance interactive conversations about topics concerning social justice.

This fall the team was Erica Granor ’15, Amelia Katan ’15 and Talia Lepson ’16. Shota Adamia ’15 will join them in the spring while Granor is studying abroad.

Every ECLC member has stories of a student excited to learn of a Center-supported course or initiative, or a club leader discovering a relevant resource and the possibility of cosponsorship funding for an upcoming event. (See cosponsorship details at the bottom of this page.)

This spring look for blog posts, a new video and more from the ECLC.

Learn more or request an ECLC presentation or consultation relevant to your club, course or interests: brandeis.edu/ethics/atbrandeis/ECLC

HIGHLIGHTS OF RECENT EVENTS

SEPTEMBER
The ‘DEIS Impact Launch Party’ kicked off planning for the 2014 “festival of social justice” (see page 8).

OCTOBER
Eight Brandeis students shared their overseas experiences and exchanged advice at the Symposium for International Justice Internships, cosponsored by the Office of Study Abroad.

At “Year Abroad, Queer Abroad” a panel of Brandeis students spoke about their study abroad and internship experiences in the context of their LGBTQ identities. Cosponsored by Triskelion and the Office of Study Abroad.

Hillel and the Interfaith Chaplaincy hosted “An evening with Rabbi Ronald Kronish ’68 and Kadi Iyad Zahalka: The role of religious dialogue in pursuit of peace.”

Indian documentary filmmaker Paromita Vohra screened and discussed her film Partners in Crime. Sponsored by the Department of Anthropology.

The Gittler Prize was awarded to eminent scholar Patricia Hill Collins ’69, PhD ’84 (see page 5).

Civilian and military judges from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and international judges gathered in the Netherlands for a Center colloquium about addressing sexual violence (see page 4).

NOVEMBER
Mentors for Urban Debate and the Brandeis Academic Debate And Speech Society hosted the Greater Boston Policy Debate League Tournament at Brandeis, featuring area high school students.

Three peacebuilding leaders from around the world visited Brandeis as part of an emerging peacebuilding and the arts network: award-winning Thai theatre artist Narumol Thammapruksa Kopp, Kitche Magak of Kenya and Nilanjana Premaratna of Sri Lanka.

The Schuster Institute for Investigative Journalism brought journalist Parmy Olson to campus to discuss “Investigating the Hacktivists of Anonymous.”

“I’m Gonna Sit at the Welcome Table” – Cultural worker Jane Wilburn Sapp visited Cynthia Cohen’s course to discuss resilience, cultural work and development in the African-American community. (See pages 2 and 3 for more about Sapp.)

“Memory, Culture, and Political Organizing in Mexico,” a talk with artist and activist Edith López Ovalle, was sponsored by the Mexico Solidarity Network.

DECEMBER
Students in the Immigrant Support Services Practicum (EL94a) taught by Marci McPhee shared their learnings from work with organizations in Waltham supporting immigrants.

The 2013 Sorensen Fellows presented reflections on experiences in Bulgaria, Kenya, Senegal, Uganda and the U.S. in “Parallel Paths: Journeys, Explorations and Reflections” (see page 6).

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

**'DEIS Impact! A “Festival of Social Justice”**

*February 1 - 10, 2014*

**Brandeis University Campus**

The Ethics Center and the Student Union present the third annual weeklong 'DEIS Impact, featuring talks, performances, exhibits, discussions, and more.


Full schedule & keynote ticket info: go.brandeis.edu/DEISimpact

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**Inaugural Richman Distinguished Fellowship in Public Life Lecture**

*March 25, 2014, 5:00 p.m.*

**Rapaporte Treasure Hall, Goldfarb Library, Brandeis University**

Angela Glover Blackwell, the founder and chief executive officer of PolicyLink, will visit Brandeis March 24-25 to meet with students and faculty to discuss the field of social justice and provide insight on effective social justice advocacy. Blackwell is a leading national voice in the movement to use public policy to improve access and opportunity for all low-income people and communities of color, particularly in the areas of health, housing, transportation, education, and infrastructure. The lecture is free and open to the public.

Nominations for the 2015 Richman Fellowship are due March 1. Details: brandeis.edu/ethics/events

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**New Center Resources**

In the regular online “Ethical Inquiry” series, we call attention to a wide range of issues with implications that may be personal, political, or even global. We highlight a broad array of opinion from journalism, academia, and advocacy organizations. Our intent is to illuminate and explore the complexity of some of the most vexing ethical questions of our time. Recent topics include:

- The Ethics of Corporate Social Responsibility
- What are the Ethics of Hate Crimes Legislation?
- The Ethics of Legalizing Medical Marijuana
- Helping or Hurting? The Ethics of Voluntourism

You can write one too...if you are a Brandeis University student (undergrad or grad) or alum. Contact David Weinstein at djw@brandeis.edu.

To be notified of new “Ethical Inquiries” follow us on Facebook or Twitter: facebook.com/EthicsBrandeis twitter.com/EthicsBrandeis