Accessing Genocide Testimonies

Ferris State University History Program in partnership with Steven Spielberg’s Shoah Visual History Archive invites faculty interested in the history of twentieth century genocide to a demonstration of Visual History Archive now available through FLITE. Participants will learn how to access over 54,000 eye witness accounts of many of the twentieth centuries most notorious genocides.

This 45 minute session is offered by Dr. Barry Mehler, Ferris Professor of History, Director of the Institute for the Study of Academic Racism and Chair of the Ferris Visual History Archives Project.

Monday at 6:00pm in IRC 104

Remnants - A Live Performance by Henry Greenspan

“REMNANTS combines history and scholarship, art and drama, to inform our understanding of the Holocaust in ways that are as moving and poignant as they are challenging and surprising. Penetrating, gripping, masterful--those are only a few of the words that this distinctive work deserves.”

--John K. Roth, Edward Sexton Professor of Philosophy and Director, The Center for the Study of the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights, Claremont McKenna College

REMNANTS is based on twenty years of the playwright’s conversations with Holocaust survivors. Forty minutes in length, the piece is stark and minimalist, each segment recreating moments in which survivors reflect not only on the destruction but also on their lives in the aftermath. Typically, performances of the play are followed by a discussion between playwright and audience. Thus, a presentation of REMNANTS lasts from one hour to ninety minutes.

REMNANTS was first produced for radio in 1992 and distributed to NPR stations across the United States. As a stage play, REMNANTS has been presented at more than two hundred venues throughout the U.S. and Canada as well as in Britain, Israel, and the Czech Republic. The play has been a winner of the Henrico National Competition, the Attic Theater Center New Plays Festival (Los Angeles), the New Hope Performing Arts Festival, the National Script Competition of the Midwest Radio Theatre Workshop, and the Michigan Public Broadcasting Focus Award. Recent presentations have included performances at the John Houseman Theater (New York), the British Library (London), the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (Washington, DC), and the Magdeburg attic theatre in the former Theresienstadt concentration camp--a space used for performances during the Holocaust itself.

Monday at 7:00pm in BUS 111

Free and open to the public.
How do Holocaust Survivors Retell their stories?

Presentation by Henry Greenspan

Drawing on more than forty years of sustained conversation with Holocaust survivors, this program will compare the ways Holocaust and other genocide survivors retell their life experiences with the ways all of us do. Are there essential differences? Does it matter if we are retelling traumatic experiences, and--if so--how? Does it matter if we are speaking “for posterity”--as for the Shoah Visual History archive--compared with more everyday conversation? Do survivors speak differently--both in style and content--when they are formally in the role of “witness” compared with how and what they say in other circumstances?

The program will be highly interactive, inviting participants, as comfortable, to reflect on the ways they retell their own formative life experiences, and how that may vary in different contexts, for different purposes, with different listeners.

Tuesday at 11:00-11:50am in IRC 120.

Rabbi Peter Mehler, “Living with Survivors.”

Rabbi Peter Mehler has spent over forty years living among survivors, counseling survivors and serving survivor communities religious needs. He was involved in the beginnings of the Shoah Visual History Project and will discuss his experiences with survivors in his community who were recruited for the first interviews in the early 1990s.

Wednesday at 4:00-6:00pm in IRC 104

Outcomes and Assessment – Panel Discussion

A panel discussion by participants from our Summer Training Institute:

Panel Participants:
Ghada Mahdi
Bernadette Fox
Tracy Busch
Scott Cohen
Melissa Smith

Opening Remarks: Paul Blake

Moderator: Barry Mehler

Thursday at 11:00–11:50am in IRC 104

Light refreshments served at 4:00pm with presentation starting at 4:30pm

Anyone with a disability who needs special accommodations to attend this event should contact (list telephone number and contact email here) at least 72 hours in advance of event.