THIRD ANNUAL SUMMER SEMINAR ON THE HOLOCAUST

During the last week of June, twenty participants engaged in an intensive seminar that examined historical, pedagogical, and moral issues related to the Holocaust. Academic scholars from UVM, St. Michael's, Trinity, Dartmouth, and the United States Department of Justice Office of Special Investigations, as well as seven eye-witnesses to the realities of Nazi terror were among the presenters throughout this third annual five-day course. University undergraduates, graduate students, and elementary, middle, and high school teachers from across Vermont were provided comprehensive insight into the people and forces that helped shape events before, during, and after the Holocaust. Combined with an evening lecture series over four nights by Holocaust survivors and scholars, the course provided a solid historical foundation for those seeking to teach the Holocaust, or issues related to the effects of prejudice, discrimination, and intolerance of others, to students young and old.

The first day of the seminar addressed several historical fallacies related to the Holocaust. Frank Nicosia, Professor of History at St. Michael's, focused on the roots of antisemitism in Germany before the Nazi period. Detailing the larger scope of European antisemitism that was not restricted to Germany, Nicosia placed the hatred of the Jews in the context of biological racism that flowed beneath the surface of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century thought rather than focusing on religious differences.

Doris Bergen took on the task of debunking thirteen common misconceptions about the Holocaust. Commenting on such topics as the theory that Hitler had "Jewish blood" to the perception that Jews were the only targets of mass murder, or that the German churches, Catholic and Protestant, spearheaded a powerful resistance against Nazism, Bergen detailed with precise examples the reality behind each falsehood.

The husband and wife team of Leo Spitzer and Marianne Hirsch from Dartmouth College explained the role of film in the interpretation and teaching of the Holocaust. Speaking on issues of gender as well as historical accuracy, and artistic interpretation, Spitzer and Hirsch offered film clips and critiques that fostered discussion.

The second day of the seminar was devoted to Holocaust survivors providing eye-witness testimony to various stages of Nazi terror. Gabe Hartstein told how he and his closest family members were rescued from forced marches to transports bound for extermination centers by the Swede, Raoul Wallenberg, in Budapest, Hungary.

Author-in-residence, Aranka Siegal, shared vignettes of her life before, during, and after the Holocaust. As a teenager, the fabric of Siegal's world was ripped asunder by the reality of Auschwitz, death marches, and Bergen-Belsen.

Gabrielle Tynauer commented on the impact she experienced of having her father arrested by Adolf Eichmann in Vienna and then being suddenly thrust out of Austria to begin an uncertain life as a refugee in Italy, France, and finally, the United States.

Yehudi Lindeman, a professor of English at McGill and the director of Living Testimonies in Montreal, described the uncertainty and tumultuous process of being shuttled from one hiding place to another as a young boy in the Netherlands.

Harry Conway recalled how the political, social, and economic impact of the rise of the Nazis to power transformed the Germany of his youth from a familiar, nurturing, and welcoming environment to a hostile and indifferent world his family abruptly left behind in November 1938.

Finally, UVM instructor of Hebrew and Yiddish, Henia Lewin documented her return to Lithuania and the sites where she was kept hidden from the dragnet of the Nazi juggernaut that swept the Baltic states in the summer of 1941 and throughout 1942. She also spoke about her quest to find those who rescued and harbored her during the years of German occupation.

The third day of the seminar commenced with another eye-witness perspective. Marion Pritchard began her session by showing the film "The Courage to Care", a documentary portraying the actions of some

Continued on page 2
After Dachau

Twisted Cross. The German Christian

Peter Fechter

Tourist Union

The Warshaw Memorial

In memory of the victims of the Holocaust.
Summer Seminar Preview

The Department of Elementary Education is pleased to announce the Summer Seminar Series for 2023. This year's seminar will focus on current trends and best practices in early childhood education.

The seminar will be held on July 10th at 9:00 AM in the Great Hall on the University of Vermont campus. Registration is now open, and we encourage all educators to attend.

For more information, please visit the Department of Elementary Education's website.