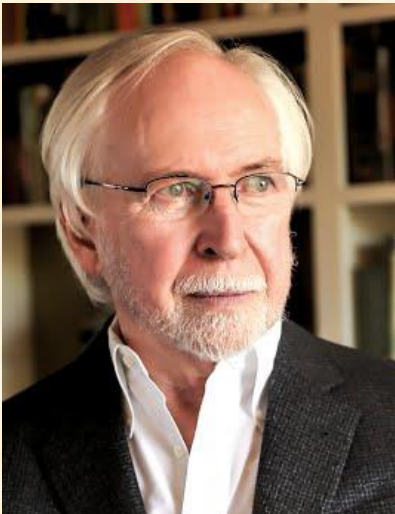


BOSTON COLLEGE

Center for Christian-Jewish Learning 2017-2019 Report



www.bc.edu/cjlearning



Table of Contents

Director's Welcome.....	1
Report of Ruth Langer, Associate Director.....	2
Corcoran Visiting Chairs in Christian-Jewish Relations	4
Center Courses.....	6
Center Programs.....	7
Jewish-Christian Lecture Series.....	12
Annual Corcoran Chair Conferences.....	14
"Altruism" Graduate Student Seminar.....	16
<i>Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations</i> , the Journal.....	17
Center Contact Information.....	18

Director's Welcome

Discussions regarding Jewish, Christian, and Islamic relations have increased in our age as a vital concern for the international community, especially for the religiously affiliated university that should be particularly able to appreciate our culture's complexity. As a Catholic university, Boston College aspires to decipher and communicate the spiritual dynamics that run through our political and economic systems. Our Center for Christian-Jewish Learning has continued to contribute to the spiritual learning that fosters both interreligious dialogue and interfaith friendship.



James Bernauer, S.J.

An important trend in the practice of Jewish-Christian interreligious conversation is its extension to Muslim participants. We at the Center had initiated this inclusion in the academic year 2016-2017 with an interdisciplinary seminar for graduate and professional students on the themes of poverty and charity. In 2018-2019 the Center inaugurated another seminar on the issue of altruism in the Abrahamic faiths, a theme that seemed very desirable in today's moral climate. The emphasis on the relationships among the three faiths was also evident in the selection of the Corcoran Visiting Professor that year, the Pulitzer Prize winning author Jack Miles who has composed three volumes on God which reflect the perspectives of the three religious communities (*God: A Biography*; *Christ: A Crisis in the Life of God*; *God in the Qur'an*). Professor Miles organized a conference, "Merciful God, Punitive God," that treated the tensions between traditional and contemporary understandings of the Almighty. It was a sign of the Boston College faculty's diverse strengths that so many were invited to participate in this conference: Prof. Pamela Berger (Fine Arts), Profs. Cathleen Kaveny and Natana DeLong-Bas (Theology), and Prof. Eve Spangler (Sociology). Their generosity to the university community is often on display. For example, each year Prof. Spangler leads a group of Boston College students to Israel/Palestine and such initiatives are necessary because I do believe that the failure to understand and to reconcile the Israeli and Palestinian communities is the single greatest current threat to the future vitality of interfaith harmony.

The previous year's Corcoran Visiting Professor was Christine Helmer of Northwestern University who examined throughout the year of her tenure Martin Luther's anti-Jewish interpretations of the Bible in her own scholarship, teaching and in the international conference she organized at Boston College. We were grateful to have her with us during the year that marked the 500th Anniversary of the Protestant Reformation's beginning. The Corcoran Professor for 2019-2020 is Katharina von Kellenbach who has been involved in Jewish-Christian dialogue for many years and whose book *The Mark of Cain: Guilt and Denial in the Post-War Lives of Nazi Perpetrators* so impressed me with its scholarship and wisdom when I first read it and recommended it to my students. While at Boston College she will continue her study of the positive virtues that guilt may foster.

My own scholarship in recent years has emphasized the historical relationships between Jesuits and Jews and two long term projects have recently come to completion. By the end of this year my book *Jesuit Kaddish: Jesuits, Jews and Holocaust Remembrance* will be published by the University of Notre Dame Press. Last year I had the privilege of acting as the guest editor of a special issue of the *Journal of Jesuit Studies* that included, among other essays, brief biographies of the fifteen Jesuits who have been honored by Israel's Holocaust Center, Yad Vashem, for having risked their lives or lost their lives trying to protect Jewish life during the Nazi years. These heroic individuals are almost totally unknown, even among Jesuits, and I feel personally indebted to Yad Vashem for its recognition of them. My teaching has continued with a regular course on the Holocaust that always attracts a significant number of Jewish students and, thus, provides an opportunity for interfaith conversation. In recognition of the 100th Anniversary of the end of the First World War I also offered a course on spiritual recovery from the war and this enabled me to present one of my favorite Jewish thinkers, Martin Buber, to another generation of young students.

July, 2019, brought me to Paris where I participated in meetings of Jesuits who are involved in Jewish-Christian dialogue. These international gatherings began in 1998 and I have been a regular participant in

them since then. While in Paris we met with many French leaders from different Jewish traditions and from the Catholic Church. As a result I have come to appreciate again the anxiety about the renewed growth of anti-Semitism that is felt by both Jews and Christians, especially in Europe. The analysis of anti-Semitism and its roots will continue as an important topic for us at the Center in the years ahead.

I hope that you will find this report to be an encouraging sign of Boston College's commitment to interfaith understanding and friendship. The Center's accomplishments are fruits of the energetic and generous contributions of its two Associate Directors, Professor Ruth Langer and Dr. Camille Fitzpatrick Markey. It is a real privilege for me to work with them.

James Bernauer, S.J.
Kraft Family Professor
Director, Center for Christian-Jewish Learning

Report of Ruth Langer, Associate Director



Ruth Langer

Once again, it has been a busy two years. I continue to represent the Center in wide-ranging venues, from local to international. In direct work for the Center and Boston College, I continue as co-editor of *Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations*, sharing in the oversight of soliciting articles, shepherding them through the peer-review process, and then working with the authors to copyedit and ensure clear communication of their ideas. Sometimes this is simple; sometimes it means intensive editing, particularly for authors whose first language is not English. The journal remains small, but it is being widely cited and functions as the premier academic journal in its field.

Teaching remains a second venue of direct service at Boston College. One course each semester is in the university's Theology core. Since I was hired in 1995, this has been the two-semester course "Religious Quest" which in my version introduced Judaism and Christianity through an extended dialogue between the two. As of this fall, the Theology core is shifting to individual one-semester courses. While more students will be exposed to Christian-Jewish dialogue and its fruits, a single-semester course requires a different pedagogy—a new challenge. I also continue to teach a roster of "upper-level" courses, open to upper-level undergraduates through Ph.D. students. These courses are a mix of more advanced courses explicitly exploring Jewish-Christian relations and courses about aspects of Judaism and Jewish thinkers that when taught in the Boston College context become dialogic. Over the past two years, I have taught courses on the theology of Abraham Joshua Heschel, theologies of Israel (mostly Jewish, but two sessions addressing Christian understandings), a course on Christian-Jewish dialogue, and a course on Jewish liturgy.

I also currently am directing five doctoral students, each with his or her own specific focus, but all bringing Judaism and Christianity into discussion with each other. Two are writing their dissertations (one expects to defend in the fall of 2019 and will be on the market for an academic job), two will be taking their comprehensive exams this year, and one has another year of coursework.

When our last biennial report went to press, I had just completed six years as chair of the Council of Centers in Jewish-Christian Relations, our North American collaboration mostly of university-based centers. I have

remained active at its annual meeting, giving a talk last year in a series of programs related to Israel's 70th anniversary. The fall 2019 meeting will celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America's important 1994 declaration to the Jewish community that formalized their process of rethinking Martin Luther's anti-Jewish legacy. I am organizing and taking part in a public dialogue on liturgical issues for that. I also continue to be an actively invited participant in the meetings of the Christian Scholars Group in Jewish-Christian Relations and in a national Jewish-Evangelical dialogue convened in Washington, DC, each June. At the 2019 meeting, I, together with Nick-Scott Blakely, a Ph.D. student at Fuller Theological Seminary, discussed supersessionism from Jewish and Christian perspectives. In a specifically Jewish context, I was also part of the faculty for Limmud New York in February 2018, a three-day festival of Jewish learning. Several of the sessions I taught dealt with Jewish-Christian relations.

On the international dialogue scene, I gave one of the plenary talks in a session on Reconciliation at the annual meeting of the International Council of Christians and Jews in Budapest in July 2018, speaking on "Tzedakah as a Jewish Route to Reconciliation." In more scholarly contexts, I participated in a large conference in Frankfurt in May 2018 designed to bring the fruits of dialogue to German religious educators. In October 2018, I spoke on the early evidence for Jewish liturgical use of Psalms at a conference in Erfurt, Germany, addressing the role of Psalms in Jewish and Christian liturgies. That paper will be published in their conference volume. I presented another new paper in January 2019, this time on the portrayal of Christians in the commentaries increasingly being published with Jewish liturgical texts, at a gathering of international scope addressing new directions in Jewish-Christian dialogue sponsored by our sister center at Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia. I also lectured in the public program associated with a gathering of Jewish and Christian liturgists in Jerusalem in March 2019. My presentation addressed the challenges created by the overlap Jewish festivities and Christian seasons of solemnity in our spring holidays. Finally, in July 2019, I was the only Jewish speaker at a conference in Sibiu, Romania on the Byzantine Liturgy and the Jews. This paper was jointly developed with Fr. Dr. Demetrios Tonia, dean of the Greek Orthodox cathedral in Boston, a graduate of our Ph.D. program, and an active participant in Greek Orthodox-Jewish dialogue. All of these were venues for building relationships and understanding as well as for professional growth.

In between writing these various talks, working with my Ph.D. students, and editing for the journal, I am trying to push forward on a large, long-term research project looking afresh at what we can know about the emergence of rabbinic liturgy when we apply up-to-date methods to the sources. While that project is percolating, some other publications have appeared and more are pending, more than half addressing issues relevant to Jewish-Christian relations. In addition, the large project to develop resources for dialogue about Israel and Palestine in which I have been engaged for eight years or so submitted a volume of essays and materials for dialogue groups last fall to Paulist Press's Stimulus series. Given the international scope of this project, the hours devoted with my co-editors to copyediting the essays submitted was massive. The book is slated to appear in the summer of 2020, titled *Engaging in Dialogue about the Land: A Resource Book for Jews and Christians*. It contains sixteen original articles and a curriculum designed to facilitate dialogue about multiple understandings of the Land.

Finally, I have been humbled to receive two honors. My graduate *alma mater*, Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, awarded me its Graduate Medallion in May for service to the academic community with integrity and a meaningful contribution to scholarly activities, research, writing, teaching and the life of the mind for the past twenty-five years. In November, the Center for Catholic-Jewish Studies at St. Leo's College (Florida) will grant me their Eternal Light Award.

Ruth Langer
Professor of Jewish Studies
Center Associate Director

Corcoran Visiting Chairs in Christian-Jewish Relations

Christine Helmer, 2017-2018

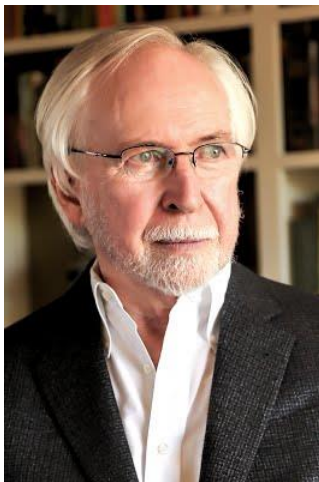
Christine Helmer was the 2017-2018 Corcoran Visiting Chair in Christian-Jewish Relations. Prof. Helmer (Ph.D. Yale) is Professor of German and Religious Studies at Northwestern University. In June 2017, Professor Helmer was awarded an honorary doctorate in theology from the faculty of theology at the University of Helsinki in Finland. Her area of research and teaching specialization is Christian theology from historical, systematic, and constructive perspectives. Her work is focused on German intellectual history with primary interest in the theology of Martin Luther, the philosophy and theology of Friedrich Schleiermacher, and the flourishing of scholarship on Luther and on religion in early twentieth-century Germany, known as the Lutherrenaissance. Prof. Helmer is the author of many articles and books, including her monograph *The Trinity and Martin Luther* (Zabern, 1999) and her new book *Theology and the End of Doctrine* (Westminster John Knox Press, 2014).



Christine Helmer

During Prof. Helmer's tenure as the Corcoran Chair, she focused her scholarship on the combined influence of the Luther Renaissance and the Jewish Renaissance on the modern study of religion and then the tragic end of this story with the appropriation of the Luther of the Luther Renaissance by National Socialism and its deployment in the Nazi racial regime. She worked on her book *How Luther Became the Reformer* (Westminster John Knox, 2019), which traces the story of how early twentieth-century German theologians constructed the myth of the "Here I stand Luther" as prototype of modernity at the end of the First World War. In her book, Prof. Helmer argues that the construction of this myth was decisively anti-Catholic and anti-Jewish in addition to bearing the seeds of fascism that would become full-blown in 1932. She also taught a graduate seminar entitled "Martin Luther and His Interpreters" and organized an international conference on Luther's anti-Judaism in the context of late medieval Europe.

Jack Miles, 2018-2019



Jack Miles

Jack Miles was the Center's 2018-2019 Corcoran Chair in Christian-Jewish Relations. Dr. Miles is a winner of the Pulitzer Prize, a Guggenheim Fellowship, and the MacArthur Fellowship. He is Distinguished Professor Emeritus of English & Religious Studies at the University of California / Irvine, Senior Fellow for Religion & International Affairs with the Pacific Council on International Policy, and General Editor of the *Norton Anthology of World Religions* (2014). His writings on religion, politics, and culture have appeared in numerous national publications, including *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The New York Times*, *The Boston Globe*, *The Washington Post*, and the *Los Angeles Times*. His first book, *God: A Biography* (Knopf, 1995), won the Pulitzer Prize for Biography or Autobiography in 1996 and has been translated into sixteen languages. Other books include *Christ: A Crisis in the Life of God* (Knopf, 2001)—a *New York Times* Notable Book of the Year in 2002—and *God in the Qur'an* (Knopf, 2018). Dr. Miles pursued religious studies at Pontifical Gregorian College, Rome, and the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, and holds a doctorate in Near Eastern languages from Harvard University (1971).

As the Corcoran Chair, Dr. Miles organized an interdisciplinary and interreligious conference examining classic and current moral theories of war and peace as rooted in identities of God.

Katharina von Kellenbach, 2019-2020

Katharina von Kellenbach is the 2019-2020 Corcoran Visiting Chair in Christian-Jewish Relations. Prof. Kellenbach is Professor of Religious Studies and former Chair of the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies at St. Mary's College of Maryland, the National Honors College of the State of Maryland. In 2018-2019, she was Convener of the ZIF Research Group "Felix Culpa: Guilt as Culturally Productive Force" at the Center for Interdisciplinary Research (ZIF) in Bielefeld. A native of West Germany, she studied Evangelical Theology in Berlin and Göttingen (1979-1982) and received her PhD in 1990 at Temple University. She became active in Jewish-Christian dialogue and Holocaust Studies while studying in Philadelphia and completed her dissertation on *Anti-Judaism in Feminist Religious Writings* (Scholars Press, 1994). Her areas of expertise include Holocaust Studies, Jewish-Christian relations, feminist theology, and interreligious dialogue. Publications include *Anti-Judaism in Feminist Religious Writings* (Oxford University Press, 1994), *The Mark of Cain: Guilt and Denial in the Lives of Nazi Perpetrators* (Oxford University Press, 2013), and forthcoming *Composting Guilt: The Purification of Memory after Atrocity* (Oxford University Press, 2020).



Katharina von Kellenbach

During Prof. Kellenbach's tenure as the Corcoran Chair, she will continue her research on Jewish and Christian perspectives on guilt, complete her book *Composting Guilt: The Purification of Memory after Atrocity*, teach a graduate level course, and organize a conference around themes of Jewish and Christian memory and guilt.

Center Courses

Spiritual Recovery after World War I

World War I, the centenary of which we observed recently, inflicted an atrocious wound on Western culture. Although most of the war's physical destruction has been repaired, its psychic injury still festers. This course studies a cornerstone in the spiritual history of the 20th century. We examine the two major routes for recovery from the injuries of World War I: Fascism, that advocates permanent struggle as the meaning of life, and Personalism which embraces intense human encounter as the road to healing, as, for example in the thought of Martin Buber. (James Bernauer, S.J.)

The Holocaust: A Moral History

The tragic event that ruptured modern western morality is examined from a variety of perspectives. This course examines the testimony of both its victims and its perpetrators. Special attention is given to consideration of the intellectual and moral factors which motivated resistance or excused indifference. The course concludes with interpretations of its meaning for contemporary morality and of its theological significance for Christians and Jews. (James Bernauer, S.J.)

Exploring the Theology of Abraham Joshua Heschel

A refugee from the Nazis, Abraham Joshua Heschel became one of the most beloved and influential Jewish theologians of his day. He advised the bishops in formulating their new teachings about Jews and Judaism at the Second Vatican Council, he marched with Martin Luther King in Selma, he protested the Vietnam War, and he dialogued with other leading Christian theologians. This course is an exercise in comparative theology, engaging key elements of Heschel's writings and the Judaism expressed in them in order to investigate their potential for contributing to the self-understanding of Christians and practitioners of other religions. (Ruth Langer)

Israel in Jewish Theologies

Israel, both the people and the land, are central to Jewish theology as concrete manifestations of God's covenants. This course explores the evolving meanings of these concepts from the Bible to today, looking at themes like peoplehood, life in the land, exile from it, and (messianic) return. The second part of the course focuses specifically on the theologies of a range of modern Jewish thinkers, with the goal of helping students to understand aspects of contemporary Israel and its meaning to world Jewry. (Ruth Langer)

Jews and Christians: Understanding the Other

Interreligious dialogue requires interreligious understanding. This course builds a foundation for genuine dialogue between Jews and Christians by posing fundamental theological questions in a comparative context. Students gain an understanding of the other tradition while also deepening their understanding of their own, discussing such matters as the human experience of God, the purpose of human existence, the nature of religious community, and the ways that the communities respond to challenges, both contemporary and ancient. (Ruth Langer)

Jewish Liturgy: Its History and Theology

Embedded in rabbinic prayer is a concise statement of Jewish theology. After an examination of the precursors of rabbinic prayer and of the development of the synagogue as an institution, this course examines the structures and ideas of the prayers themselves as they have been received from the medieval world. This creates a context for a deeper discussion of some key Jewish theological concepts as well as a comparison of Jewish and Christian liturgical traditions. (Ruth Langer)

Martin Luther and His Interpreters

The aim of this course is to query the construction of Luther as modern Protestant by returning to the sources, his most important theological works. In this course students read Luther himself and analyze his writings in order to figure out in what respects he was indeed a Catholic theologian and a reformer of the Church. Students analyze the structure of his thought, his rhetoric and polemic, and his theological ideas

and commitments. During this process students gain some familiarity with Luther's medieval theological sources in addition to the twentieth-century Protestant theologians who took him for granted as their own. (Christine Helmer)

Religious Quest: Comparative Perspectives

This course explores Judaism and Christianity through their apparent points of contact as well as their differences. The spring semester of this course delves into the creation narratives of Genesis, studying the two communities' interpretations of the biblical text and how it and its interpretations shape people's lives. It considers such topics as birth and death, marriage and reproductive ethics, ecology, economic justice, and the Sabbath. (Ruth Langer)

Center Programs

Film Screening: *Shores of Light*

September 25, 2017

The Center hosted a screening of Yael Kitzir's *Shores of Light* (2015), a documentary unveiling the story of a displaced persons camp for Holocaust refugees in 1940s Italy. The film follows the stories of three Israeli women born in the camp in Santa-Maria-di-Leuca as they decide to discover the footprints left by their parents. Director Yael Kitzir states, "the film weaves rare historical footage with unique current testimonials capturing a ray of light after great darkness." Rivka Cohen, one of these Israeli women, spoke at the event, discussing her research and the film's background. She stressed the Italian compassion and welcome they were greeted with while making this film. According to Cohen, "strong feelings of fraternity after 70 years helped restore [their] faith in human decency."



Shores of Light (Yael Kitzir, 2015)

Luther in America

Christine Helmer

October 5, 2017

Christine Helmer, Professor of German and Religious studies at Northwestern University and the Center's 2017-2018 Corcoran Visiting Chair in Christian-Jewish Relations, gave a talk on recent scholarship on Luther in America. Prof. Helmer described the view of a "Protestant Luther" which characterizes Luther scholarship in Germany beginning at the turn of the twentieth century, while the "Catholic Luther" portrayal takes the ecumenical spirit of Vatican II as inspiration to see Luther as historically rooted in the Middle Ages. Prof. Helmer discussed how American Luther scholars contributed to an emerging understanding of Luther as Catholic theologian who loves philosophy. This event was co-sponsored by the Boisi Center for Religion & American Public Life and the Center for Christian-Jewish Learning.



Christine Helmer

The Other Peace Process: Interreligious Dialogue, A View from Jerusalem

Rabbi Ron Kronish

October 23, 2017



Ron Kronish

Rabbi Dr. Ron Kronish, Founding Director of the Interreligious Coordinating Council in Israel (ICCI), spoke on his book, *The Other Peace Process: Interreligious Dialogue, a View from Jerusalem* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2017). Rabbi Kronish's book describes the message and the methods of interreligious dialogue and action in the context of the political peace process, as well as the peace-building processes and programs which occur in Israel and the region. His book draws on personal experiences and stories derived from involvement in the field for more than twenty-five years.

Charity as a Transformative Experience

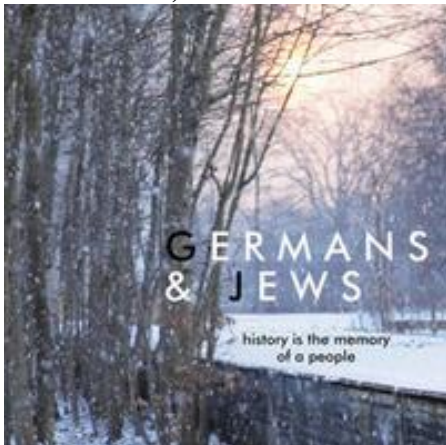
November 2, 2017



This colloquium shared with the wider campus community the work of the 2016-2017 Center-sponsored interfaith and interdisciplinary seminar "Poverty and the Poor, Between Justice and Charity." Seminar participants' presentations on the subject of charity as a transformative practice were followed by a panel discussion concerned with the personal experiences of seminar participants.

Film Screening: Germans and Jews: History is the Memory of a People (2016)

November 12, 2017



The Center hosted a screening and discussion for Janina Quint's 2016 documentary film *Germans and Jews: History is the Memory of a People*. The film explores the country's transformation from silence about the Holocaust to facing it head on, and its remarkable current state as one of the most democratic societies in the world with the fastest growing Jewish community in Europe.

Songs of Liberation: Passover Songs from Exodus to Today

Robert Cohen

March 20, 2018

Music historian Robert Cohen delivered a musically rich presentation on celebratory Jewish songs of liberation. He spoke on—and shared musical samples of—the content of varied musical settings of Jewish songs, including songs for Passover seders and throughout the week of Passover, songs of liberation that the world has sung inspired by the Exodus from Egypt, and songs about freedom, praise, thanksgiving, spring, and love.



Robert Cohen

Justification by Faith: The Reason for Separation Between Jews and Christians?

Reflections on Paul, Luther, and Jewish Tradition

Jens Schröter

April 9, 2018



Jens Schröter

Jens Schröter, Professor of New Testament Theology and Exegesis and New Testament Apocrypha at Humboldt University Berlin, delivered a lecture on current Pauline studies reexamining the meaning of justification in Paul's theology and its relationship to Jewish tradition. His talk explored what Paul in his Letter to the Romans has to say about Jewish and Christian belief in God, on justification by faith and its relation to Jewish thought, and whether Luther got it right in interpreting Paul—and the significance of these insights on Jewish-Christian relations today.

Coming to Terms with the Nazi Past after 1945: The Catholic Church and National Socialism A Lecture Commemorating *Yom HaShoah*, Holocaust Remembrance Day

Mark Edward Ruff

April 12, 2018

Mark Edward Ruff, Professor of History at Saint Louis University and a specialist in German and modern religious history, delivered the Center's 2018 Yom HaShoah lecture. His presentation addressed the question: Why has public criticism of the German churches for their conduct during the Nazi era been disproportionately directed at the minority Catholic Church and not at the majority Protestant churches? Prof. Ruff argued that the attack on the Catholic Church's conduct were proxy wars for larger battles over church-state relations in the new Federal Republic of Germany during the first several decades after the Second World War.



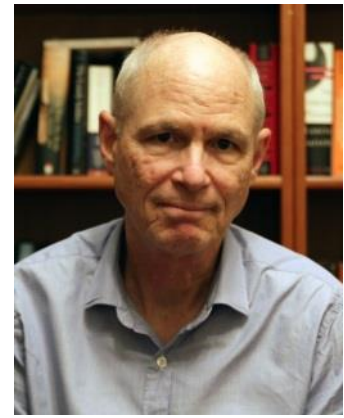
Mark Edward Ruff

Fatal Discord: Erasmus, Luther, and the Fight for the Western Mind

Michael Massing

April 19, 2018

Author Michael Massing spoke about his dual biography *Fatal Discord* (HarperCollins, 2018) which examines two key figures of European history—Erasmus of Rotterdam and Martin Luther—whose rivalry gave rise to two enduring, fundamental, and often colliding traditions of philosophical and religious thought. Massing argued that their conflict represents the clash of not just two headstrong individuals but also of two distinct worldviews—Erasmus the humanist, embracing the brotherhood of man and the diversity of cultures within it, and Luther the evangelical, stressing God’s power and Christ’s divinity and insisting that all recognize those beliefs as absolute and binding. Massing presented their conflict as a fault line in Western thinking—the moment when two influential schools of thought, Christian humanism and evangelical Christianity, took shape. This event was co-sponsored by the Boston College Theology Department and the Center for Christian-Jewish Learning.



Michael Massing

The Dead Sea Scrolls after 70 Years: What Have We Learned

Angela Harkins

April 24, 2018



Angela Harkins

In this presentation, Angela Harkins, Associate Professor of New Testament at Boston College School of Theology and Ministry, discussed the impact that the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls has had in the twentieth century, and their contributions to the understanding of the time period just prior to the emergence of Christianity. This event was co-sponsored with the School of Theology and Ministry.

**Sixth Annual John Paul II Lecture in Christian-Jewish Relations
Christian Privilege, Christian Fragility, and the Gospel of John: How American Race Relations
inform Jewish-Christian Relations**

Amy-Jill Levine

October 14, 2018

Amy-Jill Levine, University Professor of New Testament and Jewish Studies at Vanderbilt Divinity School, delivered the Center's Sixth Annual John Paul II Lecture in Christian-Jewish Relations. Her talk argued that despite the Roman Catholic Church's condemnation of anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic statements, problems remain in Catholic biblical studies and homilies. Studies of American racism, especially after the 2017 in Charlottesville, VA shed light not only on why prejudice remains but also on how to combat it. Prof. Levine's talk sought to advance Jewish-Catholic relations by showing how and why dialogue is needed.



Amy-Jill Levine

**Understanding Jesus Means Understanding Judaism:
A Workshop for Clergy, Religious Educators, Bible Study Leaders, Sunday School Teachers,
and Fellow Travelers**

Amy-Jill Levine

October 15, 2018

Prof. Levine facilitated a workshop for religious educators and others involved in faith formation that aimed to correct false and negative stereotypes of Jews and Judaism, bring new meaning to Jesus' parables, prayer, and piety, and offer a new path for Jewish-Christian relations. Workshop topics included interpretation of Torah, the role of women, family values, attitudes toward Samaritans and gentiles, the Jerusalem Temple, and "the Jews" in the Gospels.

**Jesuits, Jews, and Holocaust Remembrance
A Yom HaShoah Commemoration**

James Bernauer, S.J.

April 25-26, 2019



James Bernauer, S.J.

James Bernauer, S.J., Center Director and Kraft Family Professor, presented his talk "Jesuits, Jews, and Holocaust Remembrance" at Boston College's 2019 Yom HaShoah Commemoration: Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, Prelude to the Holocaust. Conference sponsors included the Boston College Art History & Film Department, Jewish Studies, and the Center for Christian-Jewish Learning.

Jewish-Christian Lecture Series

The Center invites Boston College professors teaching a course with connections to Jewish-Christian relations to apply for Center sponsorship of a guest lecturer for his or her course. These lectures are open to the greater Boston College community in addition to professors' students.

The Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament

James VanderKam

November 13, 2017

Prof. James VanderKam, John A. O'Brien Professor Emeritus of Biblical Studies at the University of Notre Dame, spoke in Prof. Angela Harkins' "Second Temple Judaism" course on the topic of the Dead Sea Scrolls, their history, significance, and aid in understanding the New Testament.



James VanderKam

Confronting Racism: The Prophetic Politics of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel and the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Susannah Heschel

November 14, 2017



Susannah Heschel

Prof. Susannah Heschel, Eli Black Professor of Jewish Studies at Dartmouth College, spoke in Prof. Ruth Langer's "Exploring the Theology of Abraham Joshua Heschel" class about the theological writings and deep religious commitment of her father, Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, and the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The Jewishness of the Gospel of Mark

Lawrence Wills

October 3, 2018



Lawrence Wills

Prof. Lawrence Wills, Ethelbert Talbot Professor Emeritus of Biblical Studies at the Episcopal Divinity School, Cambridge, MA, spoke in Prof. Angela Harkins' "Gospel of Mark" Class. His talk set forth the arguments for recognizing the Jewishness of the Second Gospel through a close reading of the Gospel of Mark.

Matthew and the Jewish Leaders: From Text to Film

Adele Reinhartz

March 25, 2019

Adele Reinhartz, Professor in the Department of Classics and Religious Studies at the University of Ottawa, spoke in Angela Harkins' "Gospel of Matthew" Class. This lecture discussed two passages from the Gospel of Matthew that have had a long and unfortunate legacy in Jewish-Christian relations, chapters 23 and 27. Professor Reinhartz showed how these two Gospel texts have been portrayed in two cinematic features: Pier Paolo Pasolini's film, *The Gospel According to St. Matthew* (1964), and in *Jesus of Montreal*, directed by Denys Arcand (1989).



Adele Reinhartz

Annual Corcoran Chair Conferences

Luther's Anti-Jewish Interpretation of the Bible: A Case Study in Christian-Jewish Relations in Late Medieval Germany

2018 Corcoran Chair Conference

March 25-26, 2018

Conference Rationale: This conference situated Luther's interpretation of the Bible, particularly the Old Testament, in the late medieval context of Christian-Jewish relations. Topics included: Christian learning of Hebrew, access to medieval rabbinic interpretations, and Christian biblical reading practices that involve anti-Jewish polemics.



*Ecclesia and Synagoga from Notre-Dame
de Strasbourg*

Conference Presentations

Deeana Klepper (Boston University)

Reading Nicholas of Lyra in a German Landscape: The Reception of Lyra's Exegetical Work in Context

Hans-Martin Kirm (Protestant Theological University Amsterdam/Groningen)

The Concept of "Jewish Servitude" and its Ambiguities in Late Medieval Contexts:
The Case of J. Pfefferkorn and J. Reuchlin

G. Sujin Pak (Duke Divinity School)

Anti-Judaism in Luther's Exegesis of Old Testament Prophecy

Yaacov Deutsch (David Yellin College, Israel)

Christian Hebraism in the Late Middle Ages (1400-1520)

Volker Leppin (University of Tübingen)

The Use of Jewish Exegesis in the Christian Late Middle Ages, Humanism and Luther:
The Example of the Psalms

Sarah Bromberg (University of Massachusetts/Lowell)

From Manuscript to Print in Jewish and Christian Biblical Commentary: Visual Imagery
in Copies of Nicholas of Lyra's *Postilla litteralis super totam Bibliam*

Respondent: Candace Kohli (Northwestern University)

Stephen Burnett (University of Nebraska)

Luther, the Rabbis and Biblical Understanding in his Anti-Jewish Polemics of 1543

Ari Geiger (Bar Ilan University)

Hebraism in the Absence of Hebrews:

Nicholas of Lyra between Hebraism and Anti-Jewish Polemics

Graham White (University of St. Mary's London)

Luther's Pragmatics and His Conflict with the Jews

Yosi Yisraeli (The Hebrew University)

Converso Beginnings of a Christian Biblical Reform? From Paul of Burgos to Martin Luther

Philip D. Krey (Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia)
 The Mystery of the Salvation of the Jews in Romans 9-11 in Nicholas of Lyra,
 Johannes Bugenhagen, and Martin Luther
 Respondent: Brian T. German (Concordia University/Wisconsin)
 Aaron Moldenhauer (Northwestern University)
 Christology in the Old Testament: Luther and Lyra
 Kirsi Stjerna (Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary)
 Martin Luther's "That Jesus Christ Was Born a Jew"
 Respondent: Brooks Schramm (United Lutheran Seminary)

Merciful God, Punitive God: *Interdisciplinary Reflection on Scriptural Warrants in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*

2019 Corcoran Chair Conference

April 7-8, 2019

Conference Rationale: Black is an essential color in any painter's palette, but in contemporary religious thought, it sometimes seems that black has become a banished color. God's love is cherished, but God's anger is elided in tacit embarrassment. The antinomy *mercy/justice* is readily acknowledged, but the latter half of the parallel pair *pardon/punishment* is avoided. Is the moment at hand for a reconsideration of the place of anger and punishment in past or present language and thought about God?

Classic and current moral theories of war and peace in all three of the great monotheisms—*bellum justum*, *milkhemet mitzvah*, *jihad*—are all rooted in core apprehensions of the identity of God as merciful or just, pardoning or punishing, indulgent or vindictive, warlike or peacemaking. Clearly, there are timeless scriptural warrants on either side of these antinomies, but there have also been, over the centuries, recurrent and timely elaborations of those warrants. In this conference, speakers from several disciplines reflected on those elaborations, addressing a question rewarding even when it is disturbing.



Michelangelo, Creation of the Sun and Moon, Sistine Chapel

Conference Presentations

Pamela Berger (Boston College)
 Hidden in Plain Sight: Changing Perceptions of the Dome of the Rock
 Patrick J. Ryan, S.J. (Fordham University)
 Neither Moloch nor the Velveteen Rabbit
 Reuven Firestone (Hebrew Union College)
 Savagery and the Sacred: The Rhetoric of Terror and Its Consequences in the Scriptural Monotheisms
 Respondent: Katherine McAuliffe (Boston College)
 Omri Boehm (The New School)
 The *Akedah* and the Conscience of Contemporary Israel
 Respondent: Eve Spangler (Boston College)
 Bruce B. Lawrence (Duke University)
 Allah – Merciful or Punitive (or Both)?
 Respondent: Natana J. DeLong-Bas (Boston College)
 M. Cathleen Kaveny (Boston College)
Prophecy Without Contempt and the Current American Moment
 Respondent: Yehudah Mirsky (Brandeis University)

Altruism (Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Perspectives) and Our Responsibility for the Other: An Interreligious and Inter-disciplinary Investigation

2018-2019 Center Seminar for Graduate Students

The Center sponsored a graduate student seminar aimed at fostering interreligious and interdisciplinary dialogue among graduate students interested in the subject of altruism as a moral ideal and also as a moral challenge that the three Abrahamic (Jewish, Christian, and Islamic) faiths have addressed, each in its own way. The seminar was led by Garrett Kiriakos-Fugate (Ph.D. candidate in Islamic studies at Boston University), Hans Harmakaputra (Ph.D. candidate in Theology at Boston College), and David Maayan (Ph.D. candidate in



Theology at Boston College). The seminar raised questions such as “who is my neighbor?” “does my responsibility to the stranger have limits?” and “if so, what are they?” More profoundly, the seminar sought to examine ways in which implicit norms of practice implied by the answers which each tradition offers to such questions are counterbalanced by super-normative moral ideals that call upon the faithful to do what cannot be demanded of them. The seminar was interreligious in that the group’s leaders and participants were practitioners of each of the three Abrahamic faiths while also welcoming participation on the part of individuals adhering to other faiths or, to no faith at all. The seminar was also purposefully interdisciplinary, spanning the fields of history, philosophy, theology, and law in readings and discussions. Graduate students from the disciplines of philosophy, social work, theology, and education, participated in the seminar.

On May 2, 2019, seminar participants hosted a colloquium open to the Boston College campus community that served as the concluding event to the seminar. Seminar facilitators Garrett Kiriakos-Fugate, Hans Harmakaputra, and David Maayan gave presentations on the subject of altruism as a practice in the three Abrahamic faiths and moderated a discussion among seminar participants and event attendees.

Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations



The Center for Christian-Jewish Learning publishes *Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations*, the electronic journal of the Council of Centers on Jewish-Christian Relations (CCJR). Prof. Ruth Langer and Dr. Camille Fitzpatrick Markey, Center Associate Directors, serve on the editorial board, as Co-Editor and Managing Editor respectively. This academic journal, the only one fully dedicated to Christian-Jewish relations, publishes peer-reviewed articles, major addresses from the Council of Center's conferences, and book reviews. It may be accessed freely on the internet at its website www.bc.edu/scjr.

The Journal publishes peer-reviewed scholarship on the history, theology, and contemporary realities of Jewish-Christian relations and reviews new materials in the field. Volume 12 (2017) included ten peer-reviewed articles, including a special section of peer-reviewed articles on the 2015 document from the Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, entitled “The Gifts and the Calling of God are Irrevocable.” Volume 12 also included a special review section on Amy-Jill Levine’s *Short Stories by Jesus: The Enigmatic Parables of a Controversial Rabbi* (HarperOne, 2014) with four reviews and a response from the author, as well as 21 additional book reviews, and one proceeding of the CCJR annual meeting. In 2018, volume 13 included four peer-reviewed articles and 23 reviews. Volume 14 (2019) currently includes four peer-reviewed articles, one proceeding of the CCJR annual meeting, and twelve book reviews.

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