

THE ACKERMAN CHRONICLE



CONFLICTING REALITIES: THE 49TH ANNUAL SCHOLARS' CONFERENCE

Seventy-five years ago, the Allies liberated the extermination camp, Majdanek. Meanwhile, Nazis deported hundreds of thousands of Hungarian Jews to their death. The final year of the Holocaust appeared paradoxical, containing both liberation and annihilation that led to conflicting realities for victims and perpetrators. At times, the future of the Reich and individual fates seemed uncertain and murky. At this year's Annual Scholars' Conference on the Holocaust and the Churches (ASC), students and scholars examined these divergent and complex viewpoints through interdisciplinary approaches. Nearly sixty presenters from around the world explored aspects of the Holocaust that do not necessarily appear in the traditional narrative. Topics included theology, microhistories, global responses, representations, memorialization, the aftermath of the Holocaust, and contemporary thought. *(continued on page 2)*

The end of the war contained uncertainties for both victims and perpetrators. Above, Hungarian Jews arrive at Auschwitz during one of the late-stage deportations in 1944.

SPOTLIGHT

April 7 at 2PM: The Annual Sunday Lecture Series continues with its second of the three Ackerman Center Professors' lectures. March 31st's lecture featured Dr. Patterson and his lecture, "Death and Ghetto Death." This Sunday, Dr. Ozsváth will present "When We Remember: The Murder of the Hungarian Jews, March 19, 1944 - May 1945" in JO 4.614. For more information, visit our website: utdallas.edu/ackerman/events





This year marks the 49th anniversary of the ASC and the second anniversary of its new home at The University of Texas at Dallas. In 1970, Rev. Hubert Locke* and Dr. Franklin Littell* founded the conference to bring people from many faiths and backgrounds together to study the Holocaust and uphold its legacy. Throughout the years, the conference traveled across the United States and abroad to promote interfaith, interdisciplinary and international scholarship. In 2018, UT Dallas and the Ackerman Center became the permanent home for this annual conference. Following an opening dinner, the conference spanned two days featuring two keynote speakers, scholarly presentations, a public lecture, and roundtable discussions.

On Sunday, Dr. Mark Roseman (bottom left) delivered the keynote address “Diverse Vantage Points: Rescue and Resistance in History and Memory - A Microstudy.” *(continued on page 3)*

In his upcoming book, *Lives Reclaimed: A story of Rescue and Resistance in Nazi Germany*, Roseman questions the dominant concept of rescue, and offers a retrospective, multi-faceted narrative of what it means to resist while living under a dictatorship.

* of blessed memory

He argued that the existing paradigm of the “rescuer” is too narrow and explored unpublished letters between the Bund, a small group of Weimar German activists who made efforts to assist persecuted Jews, and Jews in concentration camps alongside diaries, Gestapo reports and oral testimonies from survivors. The correspondences express that both groups experienced overwhelming feelings of helplessness, which may reframe the way we consider rescuers.



Dr. Ozsváth at the 49th ASC

During lunch, Dr. Zsuzsanna Ozsváth shared her personal story as a Holocaust survivor. It was a chance for conference attendees to visit with her one on one. They flocked to her side to thank her, ask her questions and express how deeply moved they were by her story.

The day concluded with a public event, “The Texas Liberator: Witness to the Holocaust.”



Above: Special guest Dr. Aliza Wong discusses her work on the Texas Liberator Project. Read more about this event and the project on page 8.

Monday’s keynote speaker Dr. Adán B. F. Garcia traveled to Dallas from Mexico City’s Museo Memoria y Tolerancia and delivered an inspiring presentation called, “MMyT, Education, Memory and Human Rights,” which outlined the museum’s multi-faceted approach to public education and raising awareness of the Holocaust, genocide, discrimination and human rights in order to boost tolerance. *(continued on page 4)*



THROWBACK: The enduring efforts of the Museo Memoria y Tolerancia to teach the legacy of the Holocaust fostered a collaborative relationship with UT Dallas's Ackerman Center and the Center for U.S.-Latin America Initiatives (CUSLAI) in January of 2018. This academic alliance is a forum for presenting scholarly lectures, symposiums, conferences and workshops as well as sponsor student internships. Left: Dr. Adán B. F. Garcia and Dr. Nils Roemer solidify their affiliation with a handshake.

The conference's closing Eternal Flame Award ceremony honored Dr. Ozsváth. The flame on the award (right) is made up of the Hebrew letters “זכור” (zayin-khaf-vav-resh), spelling *zakhor*, which means “remember.” Despite the freezing weather, the conference succeeded in committing itself to the meaning of The Eternal Flame, which is an ever-enduring fire that calls us to remember the six million who perished. Though we must face the sad reality that survivors are leaving us, the ASC through its participants and supporters, its speakers and its listeners, protect that flame so that the memory never extinguishes. ●



To read about the Eternal Flame Ceremony, turn to page 10.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF REVEREND LOCKE



"If there is any hope for the world, it lies in recognizing and acknowledging our capacity as human creatures to wreak havoc and destruction on one another."

Reverend Hubert G. Locke

1934-2018

This year's conference was dedicated to the life and legacy of Rev. Hubert G. Locke, co-founder of the Annual Scholars' Conference on the Holocaust and the Churches, who passed away last June. A man of faith, compassion and vision, Rev. Locke devoted his life to civil rights, justice and serving his community.

We were honored to share the experience of the 2018 conference with Rev. Locke before he left us. He expressed his joy that UT Dallas and the Ackerman Center had become the permanent home for the conference. *(continued on page 6)*

"For the past forty-eight years, Hubert Locke has been our point on the compass."

Dr. Marcia Sachs Littell
Past President of the Annual Scholars' Conference
Professor Emeritus, Holocaust and Genocide Studies
Stockton University

"The Annual Scholars' Conference was blessed by his vision and the depth of his humanity."

Dr. Hank Knight
director of the Cohen Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies
Keene State College

“His work on Christian-Jewish relations and of the German Church Struggle and the Holocaust was not only pioneering but inspiring.”

Dr. Michael Berenbaum
director of Sigi Ziering Institute Professor of
Jewish Studies
The American Jewish University

He particularly enjoyed the diversity of UT Dallas and the conference participants at the 48th Annual Conference in March 2018. After witnessing a panel that united Middle Eastern, Indian, and Latin American young scholars, he remarked that Dr. Roemer should encourage further diversity.

Locke was born in Detroit, Michigan on April 30, 1934. He led a remarkable life, both intellectually and as a leader in the community. During the twelve years he served as reverend of the non-denominational Church of Christ of Conant Gardens in Detroit, he earned his master’s degree in comparative literature from the University of Michigan in 1961. In 1962, he put off his doctoral pursuits and became a leader in the Civil Rights movement. His book, *The Detroit Riot of 1967* (1969), documents what his eulogy describes as “the worst civil disorder in twentieth-century urban America.”

Devoted to studies on the Third Reich and the churches, he founded the ASC alongside the late Dr. Franklin Littell. His publications on the subject earned him international prestige as a Holocaust scholar. Throughout his life, he continued to research, write, speak publicly and teach. He never lost his dedication to bettering society. Although he never formally completed his doctoral studies, he received honorary doctoral degrees from the University of Nebraska-Omaha, the University of Bridgeport, Richard Stockton College, Payne Theological Seminary of Wilberforce University, University of Akron, and the Chicago Theological Seminary. *(continued on page 7)*



Rev. Locke with Dr. Littell at the
2018 ASC

Words cannot fully express the impact his endeavors made on Holocaust scholarship and the world he worked to improve. His legacy and contribution to humanity will continue to inspire others to persevere in achieving the efforts of creating a more humane and compassionate world. ●



"What struck me about Professor Locke was his sheer presence—the look of genuine loving kindness in his eyes, the genuine joy in his smile, and the welcoming warmth of his handshake. Of course, I was taken by his eloquence, his insight, and his impassioned testimony. I don't think I have ever known a person more profoundly humble or more humbly wise. But, like so many, I am most grateful for Hubert's devoted friendship. Like so many, I truly miss him. Zichrono livracha—may his memory be a blessing"

Dr. David Patterson
Hillel Feinberg Chair in Holocaust Studies
The University of Texas at Dallas



PUBLIC LECTURE EVENT: THE TEXAS LIBERATOR PROJECT

Through her work with U.S. middle and high schools, Dr. Aliza Wong felt increasingly more concerned that public school curriculums touched upon the history of the Holocaust as an afterthought, excluding the role of the United States completely in mandatory U.S. history courses. Furthermore, she noted that any more elaboration occurred in non-mandatory European history courses, contextualizing it as a solely European problem rather than a global one. She realized that the upcoming generation of Americans has frighteningly little knowledge of WWII and the atrocities that occurred during the Holocaust. She spoke about her work on the Texas Liberator Project during the public Mitchell L. and Mirium Lewis Barnett Annual Scholars' Conference Endowment Lecture.

Each year, the ASC invites distinguished individuals to discuss topics related to the Holocaust and human rights during this special lecture event. Last year, Holocaust survivor Dr. Irene Butter shared her story and emphasized the importance of teaching tolerance and promoting dialogues to prevent persecution and future atrocities. The 49th anniversary featured Dr. Aliza Wong (above), Associate Dean of the Honors College and Director of European Studies at Texas Tech University.

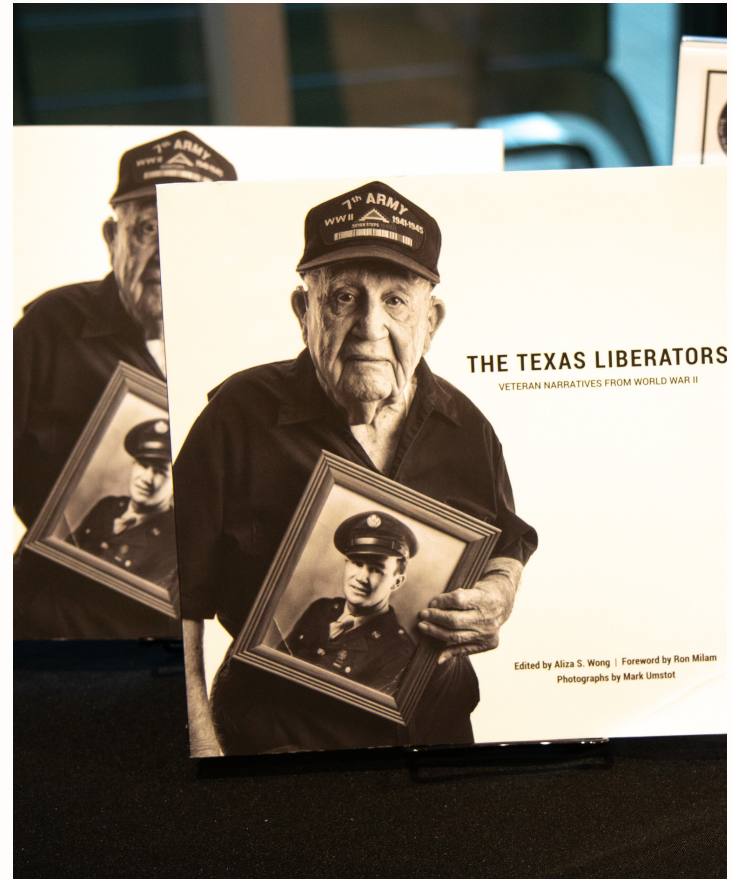
The Texas Liberator Project aims to include the little-known experiences of U.S. soldiers in the historical narrative of the Holocaust, challenging the traditional perspective that many Americans still have toward WWII veterans as the “Greatest

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Generation,” the collective memory of the American heroes who saved the world from the evils of the Third Reich. The testimonies provide audiences an opportunity to come face to face with Texas liberators so that they may empathize and see veterans as humans rather than idolized legends.

Through her creative process, Wong had to address the challenge of engaging younger audiences and accommodating differences in learning. With the help of contributors from various disciplines, Wong created a user-friendly online platform that included an interactive component to encourage engagement with the Holocaust.

Wong’s project relies upon the collaborative effort of Texas Tech University (TTU), Baylor Institute for Oral History, the Dallas Holocaust Museum Center for Education and Tolerance, the Holocaust Museum Houston, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and the support of the Texas Holocaust and Genocide Commission (THGC). The THGC donated the book, *The Texas Liberators*, which tells the story of the project and documents the nineteen collected testimonies, to public and private middle and high schools throughout Texas free of charge.



The Texas Liberators is available online for purchase through Amazon or other retailers.

To learn more about The Texas Liberator Project, visit their website at texasliberators.org

Across the U.S., The Texas Liberator Project has inspired other institutions to document the experiences of their states’ liberators. Other veterans, many who have kept silent these last seven decades, have come forward to recount their confrontation with one of the worst catastrophes in human history. ●

HONORING A LEGEND



“I remember by teaching the Holocaust and its lessons to as many people as possible.”

Dr. Zsuzsanna Ozsváth

This year, the conference presented the award to Dr. Zsuzsanna Ozsváth for pioneering the study of the Holocaust in Texas and advocating diversity, tolerance and kindness in her teaching. Last year, the Office of Diversity and Community Engagement awarded her the Inclusive Excellence and Intercultural Teaching Award at the 9th Annual Diversity Awards Ceremony. A Holocaust survivor and founder and director of the Holocaust Studies Program at UT Dallas, Dr. Ozsváth is a renowned historian and literary scholar, a pianist, translator, writer and public speaker.

The Eternal Flame Award is bestowed upon individuals whose words and actions have endeavored to preserve the memory of the Holocaust and its victims and to promote a better future for humanity. Among previous recipients are Elie Wiesel*, Franklin Littell*, Marcia Sachs Littell, Elisabeth Maxwell*, Yehuda Baur, Gideon Hausner*, Emil Fackenheim*, His Royal Highness Prince El Hassan bin Talal of Jordan and Hubert Locke.* Last year, the award went to Rev. Dr. Henry F. Knight and our own endowed professors, David Patterson and Nils Roemer.

** of blessed memory*

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Students adore Dr. Ozsváth, known to her friends as Zsuzsi, because she delivers energetic and passionate lectures and invests personally in her students' successes, providing them unlimited encouragement and support. Alongside Dr. Roemer's toast (top left), Dean of the School of Arts and Humanities Dennis Kratz (top right) and two of Dr. Ozsváth's longtime students, PhD Candidates Sarah Valente (bottom left) and Jake Wolfson (bottom right), Education Coordinator at the Texas Holocaust and

Genocide Commission, spoke about the strong bonds Dr. Ozsváth has with her students and the profound impact and inspiration she provides them to continue learning and growing as scholars.

Upon receiving the award, Dr. Ozsváth humbly remarked that she did not do anything difficult or special to earn it. She said she was lucky to do what she loved every day. After much prompting from the audience, she also shared her humorous "Beatles" story.



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You can read about Dr. Ozsváth's Beatles story in Paul Bottoni's article, "Before They Were Fab" in *UT Dallas Magazine*.

After the toast, Dr. Ozsváth's students gathered around her to congratulate her and celebrate the moment, and those who know our beloved Zsuzsi believe that there was no one more deserving of such an honor. ●



Dr. Ozsváth and her students. Top row from the left: Sarah Hashmi, Chrissy Stanford and Amal Shafek. Bottom row from the left: Christina Malina-Maxwell, Philip Barber, Cindy Seton-Rogers, Trisha Murphy, Dr. Ozsváth, Sarah Valente, Jake Wolfson, and Dan Dunham

WE LOVE YOU, ZSUZSI!