

BOSTON COLLEGE

Center for Christian-Jewish Learning

2019-2021 Report



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Report of Ruth Langer, Center Interim Director

The two years since our last report have been, for everyone, years of upheaval thanks to COVID-19. They have also been a period of increased and more overt anti-semitism, both in the US and abroad, making the work of our Center all the more urgent.

& Biblical Press, 2012), *Religious Stereotyping and Interreligious Relations* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), *Krister Among the Jews and Gentiles: Essays in Appreciation of the Life and Work of Krister Stendahl* (Paulist Press, 2018), and *Enabling Dialogue about the Land: A Resource Book for Jews and Christians* (Paulist Press, 2020).

During Dr. Svartvik's tenure as the Corcoran Chair, he has worked on two new books *De sju haven i Bibelns värld* [=The Seven Seas in the Biblical World] (Votum, 2021) and *Reconciliation and Transformation: Reconsidering Christian Theologies of the Cross* (Wipf & Stock, 2021); delivered numerous lectures including "Reading the New Testament without Presupposing Supersessionism: Four Fundamental Issues" and a series of talks on the biblical theme of creation; participated in webinars and presentations on the publication *Enabling Dialogue about the Land* as its co-editor; and written several articles. Dr. Svartvik also taught a graduate seminar "

in Twentieth Century Boston

James Bernauer, S.J., and Ruth Langer

October 23, 2019

Prof. James Bernauer, S.J., then Kraft Family Professor and Center Director, delivered the keynote address “That Meant A Lot to Us” at the launch of the exhibit “‘We are All Children of God’: Interfaith Relations in Twentieth Century Boston” cosponsored by the Boston College School of Theology and Ministry (STM), the Boston College Libraries, and Archdiocese of Boston. Prof. Bernauer spoke of Richard James Cushing, Archbishop of Boston from 1944 until 1970 who was made a Cardinal in 1958 and was a pioneering figure in interfaith relations. Cardinal Cushing’s strides in ecumenical dialogue for mid-twentieth century Catholics foreshadowed *Nostra Aetate* at the Second Vatican Council. Prof. Ruth Langer, Professor of Jewish Studies and then

**Religious Resources to Combat Racism
Fall 2020**

Together with the Boisi Center for Religion and American Public Life, the Center co-sponsored and facilitated this three-part seminar series for Boston College faculty.

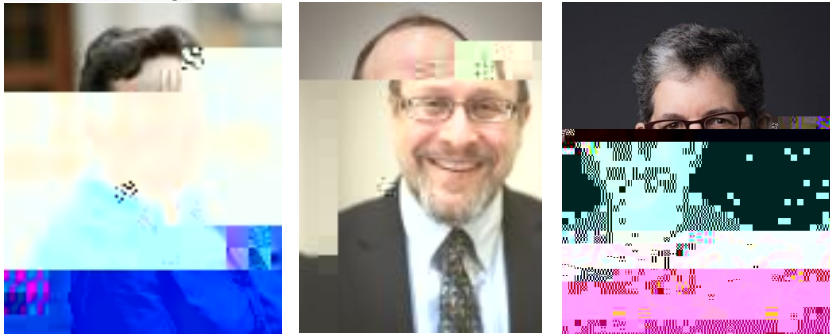
October 6, 2020 [\[Video\]](#)

“Mining the Christian Tradition for Resources to Combat Racism” with Amey Victoria Adkins-Jones (Theology Department) and Vincent Rougeau (College of the Holy Cross), convened by Mark Massa, S.J. (Boisi Center)



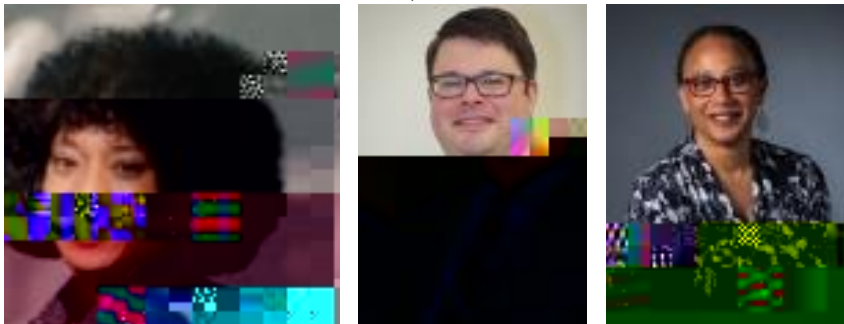
October 20, 2020 [\[Video\]](#)

“Toward Understanding Another's Reality: Narrative Empathy, Reconciliation, and Racism” with Theresa O’Keeffe (School of Theology and Ministry) and Rabbi Benjamin Samuels (Congregation Shaarei Tefillah), convened by Ruth Langer (Theology Department and Center for Christian-Jewish Learning)



October 27, 2020 [\[Video\]](#)

“Narrative, Restorative Justice and the Need for Truth in Racial Equality” with Yavilah McCoy (Dimension, Inc.) and Joshua Snyder (Theology Department), convened by Joy Moore (Pine Manor Institute for Student Success)



Eighth Annual John Paul II Lecture [\[Video\]](#)

Discerning the Way in Jewish-Christian Relations Today

Mary C. Boys

February 11, 2021

Mary C. Boys, SNJM, Skinner and McAlpin Professor of Practical Theology at Union Theological Seminary, delivered the Center's Seventh Annual John Paul II Lecture in Christian-Jewish Relations. In her lecture, she focused on ameliorating the chasm between what historians and biblical scholars are learning about religious groups in the Mediterranean world of antiquity, and how many—if not most—Christians understand the New Testament passages that arose in that context. Prof. Boys laid out a synthesis of the most salient scholarship regarding terminology, rhetoric, categories, and methods in the hopes of providing a framework for a narrative about reorienting the origin stories of Judaism and Christianity.

Enabling Dialogue about the Land [\[Video\]](#)

Ruth Langer and Jesper Svartvik, among others

February 21, 2021

Discussions About Race in the Classroom
Spring 2021
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texts from diverse voices and perspectives both to understand the religious assumptions and reasoning of their authors and to deepen their own understanding of how one's own presuppositions emerge.

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.

Hannah Arendt and the Global Refugee Crisis

2021 Corcoran Chair Conference

Exploring Pre-Supersessionist Readings of the New Testament
2021 Corcoran Chair Conference
April 11 and 18, 2021 (Virtual)

Conference Rationale: In New Testament studies today, the inherent Jewishness of the early Christian movement is taken into consideration to a much greater extent than only a couple of decades ago: both the historical Jesus and the historical Paul are now firmly situated in late Second Temple Judaism, and the post-70 C.E. writers of the New Testament—Paul probably being the only exception—form their theology and write their texts in the wake of the destruction of the Temple, when all branches of Judaism had to cope with the fact that the Sanctuary was no more. When a growing number of current scholars read New Testament texts, they do not portray Judaism as the gloomy background from which Christianity had to be removed in order to glow and grow; on the contrary, they understand that one must return to the Jewish matrix in order to appreciate the New Testament texts more fully. It is as if the renowned, yet enigmatic words of T. S. Eliot could be applied to this area of research: “We shall not cease from

