PREVENT PROTECT REBUILD

CARDOZO LAW INSTITUTE *in* Holocaust *and* Human Rights

Spring 2025 Newsletter

Dear Supporters and Partners,

With the Spring 2025 semester behind us, the work of the Cardozo Law Institute in Holocaust and Human Rights (CLIHHR) continues to be shaped by confronting global challenges and the enduring need for demanding atrocity prevention globally, accountability for harms, and the protection of vulnerable communities. This semester, CLIHHR advanced its mission with purpose and deep engagement by preparing for the next generation of human rights practitioners. From the Amazon rainforest to international courts, and from the classroom to United Nations forums, our efforts bridged legal education and real-world impact, with the aim of bringing advocacy, pedagogy and action together.



Pictured: the Fall 2024 Benjamin B. Ferencz Human Rights and Atrocity Prevention (HRAP) Team

This past Spring, students in the Benjamin B. Ferencz Human Rights and Atrocity Prevention (HRAP) Clinic applied their legal training in diverse settings. In Brazil, clinic students engaged in on-the-ground human rights fieldwork, collaborating closely with Indigenous communities and applying core fact finding skills in real-world settings. In San Diego, a student team presented the results of their year-long research to the National Workgroup on Safe Housing for American Indian and Alaska Native Survivors of Gender-Based Violence, engaging directly with attorneys and community leaders on issues of gender-based violence and Indigenous rights. Additionally, a team of students represented Cardozo at the Clara Barton International Humanitarian Law Competition, earning national recognition for their oral advocacy and legal writing skills, successfully being placed as quarterfinalists, and winning Best Application Brief. We are so proud!

At the heart of CLIHHR's work is a commitment to truth-seeking, prevention, and survivor-centered justice. This semester, we hosted a range of impactful events addressing Indigenous justice and historical reckoning, including sessions on the Cayuse Five and ongoing Indigenous struggles for recognition; commemorated the 25th anniversary of the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal, highlighting survivor-centered approaches to wartime sexual violence; explored the rising challenges to democracy and human rights from anti-democratic ideologies; honored the life and legacy of Benjamin B. Ferencz and his transformative contributions to international criminal law; and engaged in critical conversations on caste oppression, grassroots resistance, and the complexities of free speech within minority communities. These events underscore CLIHHR's ongoing dedication to confronting injustice through education, dialogue, and advocacy.

As we close out this impactful semester, we are reminded that meaningful change is fueled not only by legal skill, but by courage, empathy, and shared purpose to uphold human rights and the rule of law. Through fieldwork, research, advocacy, and storytelling, CLIHHR is honored to stand alongside our students, faculty, and global partners in the pursuit of justice and human dignity.

In solidarity,

Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum
Professor of Law
Director of CLIHHR and Benjamin B. Ferencz Human Rights and Atrocity Prevention Clinic

CLIHHR Team Spotlights



Verona Deliu

Welcome to our new Team member!

Thank you for the opportunity to be featured in the CLIHHR Newsletter. My name is Verona Deliu, and before joining Cardozo, I lived and worked in Utica, NY, where I served as a Project Manager for the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion office at my alma mater, Utica University. Education has always been a place where I feel most at home, and pursuing a master's in education had further reinforced my passion for working in academia. I was drawn to the CLIHHR Program Coordinator role because it closely connects with my personal background. My family immigrated to the U.S. from Kosovo after the war in 1999, and I joined them in 2011 after years of separation. That experience shaped my deep commitment to human rights and advocacy and being part of this team allows me to contribute to meaningful causes that resonate personally. Working with the CLIHHR team has been incredibly welcoming and inspiring, and I'm excited to support and grow within this important work.

CLIHHR Legal Fellow 24' - 25'

My time spent both in the clinic and as a member of the CLIHHR team as the Legal Fellow has been the most defining aspect of my time at Cardozo Law. I intentionally chose this school for its international program and the professors on staff based on their expertise, pedagogy, and specializations. I received mentorship beyond measure and was fortunate enough to be exposed to an entirely unexpected venture in international law that has reshaped my career path—international humanitarian law. Without my initial clinic project and my supervisor's encouragement to follow that field of law, I would be devoid of one of my now greatest passions. During my time as a clinic student, research assistant, and legal fellow, I have delved into various historical and ongoing atrocities. During my tenure with CLIHHR, I had the opportunity to co-author letters to two UN Special Rapporteurs, have created several different and vast research databases centered on slavery and slave trade crimes, and have integrated invaluable survivor-centered practices in my work due to the reiteration of one of the core reasons *why* behind human rights work matters—harm reduction. I owe my own approach to human rights and humanitarian work to the foundation I received from the CLIHHR team and am eager to continue to contribute to this field after graduation.



Marina Coriale ('25)

Student Spotlights



Ankita Joshi (‘26)

Ankita Joshi, a second-year law student from California, is making her mark through a deep commitment to human rights and public interest law. A rising captain of the Cardozo International Humanitarian Law Competition Team and a staff editor—and incoming Senior Articles Editor—on the *Cardozo International & Comparative Law Review*, Ankita balances academic excellence with hands-on advocacy. This spring semester, she externed with the Legal Aid Society’s Wrongful Convictions Unit, supporting efforts to overturn unjust convictions and promote fairer outcomes in the criminal legal system. Simultaneously, she has worked as a research assistant on an HRAP Clinic-led project addressing slavery and slave trade crimes, examining states' domestic practices surrounding these violations. Last summer, Ankita served as a Boskey Fellow with the CLIHHR team, an experience that deepened her interest in human rights advocacy and legal policy. Her policy driven approach to legal research has helped crystallize her career goals. “Law and policy are inextricably connected,” she says. “Working with CLIHHR has cemented my interest in understanding how statutes are crafted and what policymakers intended to achieve. I want to be part of that process.” This summer, Ankita will continue building her expertise in civil and human rights law at the Brennan Center for Justice. She plans to further explore how international legal standards shape domestic obligations and how stronger collaboration between the United Nations and civil society organizations can help victims navigate complex justice systems.

Student Spotlights



Krista Jones (‘26)

As a student in the CLIHHR Benjamin B. Ferencz Human Rights and Atrocity Prevention Clinic, I traveled to Brazil in March to engage with partners and conduct fact-finding for a human rights report.

For a week, we worked to support an Indigenous community fighting for their land rights and self-determination against a mining company's encroachment in the Amazon Rainforest. Not only was this trip the adventure of a lifetime, involving boat rides, nights spent in hammocks, and trekking through the jungle, but it was also academically enriching. I applied first-hand the skills I had learned in my clinic seminar. Putting my training into practice was incredibly fulfilling and truly encapsulates the well-rounded and interdisciplinary nature of the Ferencz Human Rights and Atrocity Prevention Clinic experience. I led interviews with state officials, Indigenous leaders, and the greater community to gather necessary information to raise awareness about the situation and advocate for further legal action and respect for human rights. On top of this, I was able to practice skills in trauma-centered interviewing. This opportunity has molded my future practice in the human rights field. Learning these practices and applying them in real-world interviews was a crucial component of my legal education. I am very grateful to those at Cardozo and beyond who made the trip possible.





Snapshots from Amazonas, Brazil

Clara Barton Humanitarian Law Competition

On March 21-23, **Marina Coriale** (Team Captain, ’25), **Hannah Pérez** (’25), **Alyssa Ruhlen** (’26) and **Ankita Joshi** (Alternate, ’26) represented Cardozo Law at the Clara Barton International Humanitarian Law Competition. Our team had an extraordinary and historic year, earning Cardozo’s first-ever placement as Quarterfinalists in the competition, along with the prestigious award for Best Application Brief.



Pictured left to right: **Alyssa Ruhlen, Marina Coriale**, and **Hannah Pérez**



Pictured left to right: **Hannah Pérez, Marina Coriale,** and **Alyssa Ruhlen**

The Clara Barton Competition, hosted by the American Red Cross, provides law students with a rare, simulation-based opportunity to practice International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and engage with real-world legal challenges arising during armed conflicts. Under the leadership and the dedicated mentorship of faculty coach **Brett Jones,** the Cardozo team demonstrated exceptional mastery of this complex legal field. Preparing for the competition required a profound commitment to mastering the vast body of humanitarian law, and the Cardozo team rose to the challenge with passion and rigor.

Their success was also a testament to the collaborative spirit and tight-knit bond formed through months of preparation, countless late nights, and a shared mission to advocate for the principles at the heart of IHL: protecting human dignity in times of war.

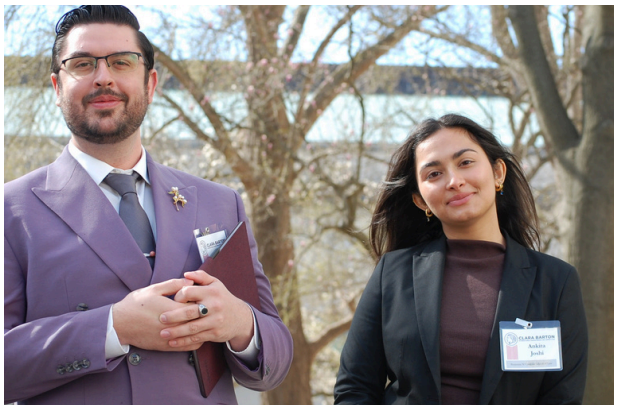
Clara Barton Humanitarian Law Competition

Beyond the competition rounds, the Clara Barton Competition offered unparalleled professional development. Students had the chance to network with leading practitioners in humanitarian law, human rights, and international criminal law—gaining career insights and establishing connections that will support their futures in international legal practice. The experience also significantly strengthened their oral advocacy and brief writing skills, providing a practical foundation rarely encountered outside of internships or clinics.



Pictured left to right: **Alyssa Ruhlen, Marina Coriale**, and **Hannah Pérez**

Ultimately, the Clara Barton Competition became not just a highlight of the academic year, but a defining moment of the team's law school experience. The 2024–2025 team's success marks an exciting chapter for Cardozo Law, and we look forward to preparing another team for next year's competition, with alternate team member Ankita Joshi returning as the 2025-2026 Team Captain. **Congratulations to our students!**



Pictured left to right: **Brett Jones** and **Ankita Joshi**



Awards received by the team



Team in session

National Indigenous Women's Resource Center Workgroup

Visiting Clinical Instructor **Brett Jones**, along with HRAP Clinic students **Aluk Fontaine Richardson** and **Faye Nugent**, traveled to San Diego on April 22–25 to present their year-long clinic project to their partners at the National Workgroup on Safe Housing for American Indian and Alaska Native Survivors of Gender-Based Violence.



Pictured left to right: **Aluk Fontaine Richardson** & **Faye Nugent**
Presenting at the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center

Aluk shared her reflections on the experience, stating: "*Seeing the ways in which the workgroup and our partners connected with the presentation and the materials was a huge reward... As an Indigenous woman, I don't often get the opportunity to spend time with other Indigenous women within the legal field, so having this time to do so imbued the trip with extra personal significance.*"

Faye also reflected on the experience, noting: "*The workgroup was an opportunity to get a glimpse at the on-the-ground realities of advocacy and social work that our project touches... Overall, we gained invaluable service-focused lawyering experience which we will carry with us through the remainder of our time at Cardozo and as future practicing attorneys.*"



The trip marked a meaningful conclusion to a year of dedicated collaboration and impactful advocacy.



Group picture alongside the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center members

Spring 2025 Events

Lenape Center & Michael Moffitt: Seeking the Cayuse Five

On March 3rd, CLIHHR partnered with the Kukin Program for Conflict Resolution to host two separate sessions with speakers **Joe Baker** (Co-founder & Executive Director of Lenape Center), **Bobbie Conner** (Director of Tamastslikt Cultural Institute), and **Michael Moffitt** (Professor of Law at University of Oregon). The first session centered on the history and ongoing justice-seeking for the Cayuse Five, and the second session extended the discussion to the Lenape people's ongoing efforts for recognition and justice in New York City. Both sessions emphasized the significance of truth-seeking and reconciliation in addressing historical wrongs.



Pictured left to right: **Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum, Joe Baker, Bobbie Conner,** and **Michael Moffit**

The Cayuse Five were Native American men executed in 1850 for the killing of missionary Marcus Whitman during rising tensions between the Cayuse tribe and white settlers. A deadly measles outbreak, brought by settlers, fueled suspicion that Whitman was harming the tribe. The men were tried under flawed conditions in a U.S. court and hanged. Their burial site remains unknown, hindering efforts by the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla to repatriate their remains and seek justice.

In the later session with Joe Baker, he expressed that the opportunity for regrowth is possible if Indigenous people are allowed to re-establish their roots. Both sessions examined the enduring impact violence and injustice have had on Indigenous people, and the urgent need for truth, justice, and healing. The panelists explored the significance of uncovering the burial site and the broader role of truth-seeking and reparations in confronting historical injustices committed against Indigenous populations.


Pictured left to right: **Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum, Joe Baker, Bobbie Conner, Michael Moffit,** and **Hadrien Coumans**

Spring 2025 Events

25th Anniversary of the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal



Pictured from left to right: **Jaribu Hill, Indai Sajor, Jocelyn Getgen-Kesetenbaum, Lori F. Damrosch, Charlotte Bunch**

On March 13, 2025, as part of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69), the organizers of the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery (WIWCT) commemorated the 25th Anniversary the Tribunal's final judgment with a powerful evening. The event honored the heartbreaking legacy of the "Comfort Women" and the feminist-led people's tribunal that, in 2000, broke new ground by centering the voices of survivors of Japan's system of wartime sexual slavery in the absence of formal state accountability and demanding some form of recognition or the atrocities that were committed by the Japanese Imperial Army. Co-hosted by CLIHHR, the Weatherhead Institute, Korean American Civic Empowerment, and the Korean American Lawyers of Greater New York, the anniversary event drew together scholars, advocates, legal experts, and community leaders to reflect on the Tribunal's impact and continuing relevance. Panelists and speakers revisited the historic significance of the Women's Tribunal, which was organized by a transnational feminist coalition and led by civil society actors as a bold response to the failure of formal international institutions to recognize and prosecute sexual violence as a serious war crime. Speakers also emphasized the unique nature of the Tribunal as an alternative model of justice—one that prioritized survivors' testimony, historical truth-telling, and collective healing over formal punishment alone. The Tribunal demonstrated that seeking justice is often deeper than traditional forms of accountability, as stated by one of the speakers, "Justice is not found in the courtroom, but in collective power." The event served as both a commemoration and a call to action—reaffirming a collective commitment to challenging the blind spots of international criminal impunity and advocating for a future grounded in justice, accountability, and peace.



Ramya Jawahar Kudekallu delivering the opening remarks



Indai Sajor, Convener of the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal



An audience member sharing personal memories about one of the comfort women

Spring 2025 Events



Prof. Dr. **Matthias Mahlmann**

Justice, Human Rights, and the New Charisma of Anti-Democratic Ideologies

On April 2nd, Professor Dr. **Matthias Mahlmann**, Chair of Philosophy and Theory of Law, Legal Sociology, and International Public Law at the University of Zurich, delivered a compelling lecture about the rising allure of anti-democratic ideologies. He explored the pressures democracies currently face externally from authoritarian regimes and internally from political movements that undermine democratic norms while claiming democratic legitimacy. The talk offered a critical reassessment of the normative foundations of democracy, emphasizing its complex and fragile nature, and its intrinsic and historical relationship with the project of human rights. He reiterated that any form of an attack on human rights is also an attack on democracy, and how colonial relativism has resulted in the selective application of democracy as a human right. Participants were invited to reflect on the urgent question: how can we meaningfully defend the democratic project, not just in principle, but in practice against the new charisma of anti-democratic forces?

Honoring the Life and Work of Benjamin B. Ferencz



Professor **Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum** sharing memories of **Benjamin B. Ferencz**

On April 4th, the Cardozo International and Comparative Law Review hosted an event "Honoring the Life and Work of **Benjamin B. Ferencz**," celebrating the extraordinary legacy of one of international criminal law's most influential pioneers and the namesake of our Human Rights and Atrocity Prevention Clinic. **Gregory Gordon**, professor and biographer, delivered the keynote, tracing Ferencz's journey from an immigrant upbringing in New York to his formative experiences at Harvard Law School and his pivotal role as a young investigator and prosecutor at the Nuremberg Trials. Ferencz's mantra, "law, not war," guided his lifelong commitment to victim-centered justice, from leading the landmark Einsatzgruppen trial to advocating for Holocaust reparations and authoring numerous publications. His innovations in restorative justice profoundly shaped transitional justice and reparations frameworks that endure today. Throughout a series of panels moderated by Professors Dmytro Voyk and Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum, distinguished scholars reflected on Ferencz's foundational contributions to linking atrocities to perpetrators, advancing the crime of aggression, and promoting survivor centered legal processes. Speakers emphasized his belief that true justice extends beyond trials, focusing instead on repairing harm to victims and fighting impunity, even against entrenched power. Stories from colleagues painted Ferencz as the "moral conscience" of international criminal law, whose relentless optimism challenged future generations to defend and strengthen the international legal order under strain.

Spring 2025 Events

Caste Across Borders: Legal Legacies, Grassroots Resistance, and Solidarity



Prof. **Anupama Rao** delivering remarks



Pictured on the left: **Shrujana Shridhar** presenting her artwork

On April 23rd, in collaboration with Columbia University as part of Dalit History Month, CLIHHR brought together scholars, advocates, and legal experts for a conversation on caste and its enduring impact on law, identity, and society. The event featured opening remarks by Professor **Anupama Rao**, **Christina Dhanuja**, and others, followed by a powerful panel with Professor **Guha Krishnamurthi** and **Shrujana Shridhar.** Panelists reflected on both legal and grassroots strategies of resistance, emphasizing the transformative potential of caste annihilation through intersectional movements and solidarity. Krishnamurthi focused on how caste has been coordinated through the law, and Shridhar highlighted her work as an advocate through her art. The intersection of both speakers highlighted how crucial narrative shaping is in changing the manifestations of caste oppression around the world, and specifically in the United States. The conversation highlighted the urgent need for anti-casteist and anti-racist frameworks not only within law and policy but rejecting these practices in everyday life, changing culture by calling out discrimination, and using storytelling as a tool of resistance. By rejecting the hierarchical caste model in every way it presents in life, culture and policy serve as a symbiotic relationship to reaffirm liberation for caste oppressed communities.



From left to right: **Jessica Roth, Anthony Sebok,** and **Joel Swanson, Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum**

The First of All Freedoms: Free Speech, Antisemitism, and Lessons for the Jewish Community from the Dreyfus Affair

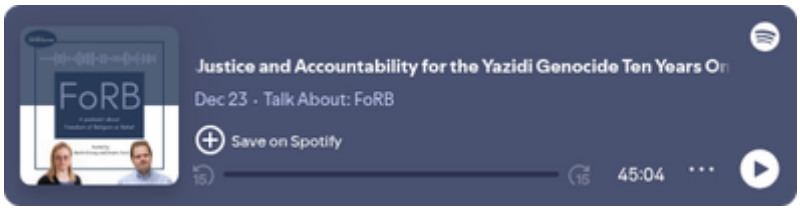
On April 23rd, CLIHHR also co-sponsored, alongside the Cardozo Burns Center for Ethics, a thought-provoking talk with Professor Joel Swanson of Sarah Lawrence College. Professor Swanson explored the heated debates over free speech and its limits within the French Jewish community during the Dreyfus Affair. At this pivotal historical moment, French Jews grappled with whether restrictions on speech were necessary to protect their community. Drawing connections between these historical debates and present-day discussions among American Jews, Professor Swanson offered valuable insights into how past precedents can inform contemporary approaches to navigating free speech and communal responsibility.

CLIHHR Out & About



Click to watch a recording of this event

On December 18, 2024, Professor **Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum** was invited to speak at the World Court of Human Rights (WCHR) Coalition meeting. During her presentation, she shared insights from her work in atrocity prevention and advocacy, particularly through the Ferencz Human Rights Clinic, as well as her broader experience as a human rights practitioner. Professor Kestenbaum highlighted the potential impact a future World Court of Human rights could have on her advocacy efforts and emphasized lessons drawn from her clinical projects around the world. She remarked, "I'm inspired by momentum still building towards establishing a world court on human rights. It shifts the focus from individual criminal accountability to state responsibility for specific harms, while also concentrating on structures for redress. This approach prioritizes the individuals and communities affected by atrocity crimes bringing them to the forefront of human rights law." She also reflected on the importance of proactive legal intervention, stating, by using law as a tool to address issues upstream, we can help prevent crimes and atrocities before they occur. We need innovative solutions and fresh ideas." Professor Kestenbaum concluded with a powerful message of perseverance: Even if it feels like an impossible dream, remember it may take time and determination. I often think of Ben Ferencz, the namesake of our clinic, whose mantra was 'Never give up!' Every effort, no matter how small, is making a difference and saving lives in the long run." You can watch the full World Court of Human Rights Coalition meeting with Professor Getgen Kestenbaum on WSA's YouTube Channel here: Watch the Meeting.



On December 23, 2024, Professor **Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum** participated in a Freedom of Religion or Belief Podcast: Episode 4. In this episode, Merilin Kiviorg and Visiting Associate Professor **Dmytro Vovk** are joined by Jocelyn to discuss the 2014 Yazidi genocide by ISIS, focusing on the political, legal, and social implications. Jocelyn emphasizes the long-standing persecution of the Yazidis as a distinct religio-ethnic community, as well as the difficulties of enforcing justice and accountability in the aftermath. Professor Getgen Kestenbaum addressed key topics related to the Yazidi community, focusing on their history, persecution, and the ongoing challenges. The Yazidis are a religious minority with a unique, caste-based social structure and distinct beliefs that have made them targets of persecution, especially by groups who see them as "infidels" or "devil worshippers." This persecution resulted in the 2014 ISIS genocide, which was part of a broader history of violence against the Yazidis. The atrocities committed by ISIS, including genocide and sexual slavery, were fueled by misconceptions about Yazidi beliefs. Professor Getgen Kestenbaum additionally emphasized the failures of Iraq and Syria's legal systems in securing justice for the Yazidis. The Iraqi legal system's narrow focus on terrorism has left Yazidis feeling overlooked, while their struggles with asylum access differ from those of Afghan women, as Yazidis must individually prove fear of persecution. Post-genocide, many Yazidis remain displaced and live in harsh conditions with no infrastructure, employment, or access to healthcare. Many homes were destroyed, and survivors struggle with trauma while seeking missing relatives. Detention camps housing suspected ISIS members and their families have become sites of further violence and intergenerational trauma. Lastly, Professor Getgen Kestenbaum discussed the intersection of genocide and slavery, stressing the need for an integrated approach to prosecuting such crimes under international law. This conversation sheds light on the significant challenges faced by the Yazidi community and underscores the ongoing need for justice and accountability on the international stage. For more on the topic, listen here.

CLIHHR Out & About

On January 25th, Professor **Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum** published an article with the United Nations titled “Holocaust Remembrance for Dignity and Human Rights.” In it, she reflects on the enduring lessons of the Holocaust, emphasizes the global responsibility to prevent atrocity crimes, challenges selective justice, and advocates for a new international treaty on crimes against humanity. Through a call for survivor-centered and inclusive accountability, the piece urges a renewed commitment to human rights and the dignity of all peoples. A link to the full article can be found here.



Professor Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum (left) in conversation with Holocaust survivor Evelyn Konrad during the event "Remembering Vienna: An Evening with Evelyn Konrad" at the Cardozo School of Law in New York City, 10 October 2024. Photo: Sari Goodfriend



UN article by Prof. **Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum** (2025)



Clip from ABC News interview

The following day, on January 26th, Professor **Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum** joined ABC News Live anchor Phil Lipof to reflect on the significance of International Holocaust Remembrance Day. In a powerful conversation, she emphasized the enduring lessons of the Holocaust, the rise of global antisemitism, and the urgent need to preserve survivor testimony. She also called on individuals to actively resist identity-based violence and discrimination in their communities. Watch the full video here.

On January 27th, Professor **Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum** and **Evelyn Konrad** attended the United Nations Holocaust Memorial Ceremony, commemorating the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. Evelyn expressed her heartfelt gratitude for the invitation, describing the event as both emotional and painful but necessary to honor the memory of the six million Jews murdered, including her own family. She recalled her beloved grandmother, Omutti, whom she last saw in 1939 before fleeing to France. The ceremony, led by United Nations Under-Secretary-General Melissa Fleming, included powerful speeches and music, with a particularly moving performance by the Chamber Music Orchestra. While some speeches touched on contemporary political matters, the most impactful moments emphasized the moral responsibility to remember the Holocaust. For Evelyn, attending the ceremony was a poignant reminder to honor her lost relatives and ensure their memory endures. In addition, Evelyn reflected on the universal need to uphold the "Never Again" moral imperative, emphasizing the importance of remembering not only the Holocaust but all forms of persecution throughout history. "Evil exists in most people," she shared, and it is essential to reject scapegoating and protect future generations from such atrocities.



From left to right: **Evelyn Konrad** and **Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum**

CLIHHR Out & About



From left to right: **Gabor Rona, Samah Sissy, Jamil Dakwar, and Adil Haque**

On January 28th, Professor **Gabor Rona**, Director of the Law and Armed Conflict Project, moderated a panel discussion hosted by the Cardozo Center for Public Service Law on the role of international law in the Israel/Palestine conflict. The panelists were **Jamil Dakwar,** an Israeli national of Palestinian heritage and lawyer at the ACLU; **Adil Haque**, a law professor and international law expert from Rutgers Law School; and **Samah Sissay**, a lawyer who advocates for Palestinian rights at the Center for Constitutional Rights—academics and human rights activists who support the application of international legal mechanisms to hold both Israelis and Palestinians accountable for human rights and law of armed conflict violations in Gaza and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. These are divisive and sensitive issues that generate significant interest within the Cardozo community, as demonstrated by the overflow of students and faculty at the event. The controversial issues that can be explored and debated in a civil manner are a testament to the commitment to academic freedom and inquiry within the Cardozo community.

On February 10th, Professor **Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum** spoke with NYU students about the ongoing issues surrounding Indigenous rights in Brazil. Professor Kestenbaum's research has shaped the United Nations' work in the country. As the director of the Human Rights and Atrocity Prevention Clinic at the Cardozo School of Law, she discussed critical issues such as land dispossession, sexual violence, and environmental challenges faced by Indigenous communities. Kestenbaum, who has extensively studied gender-based discrimination, also shared insights from her work submitted to the U.N.'s Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW Committee).



Professor **Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum** speaking to students

CLIHHR Out & About

JGLS Research Colloquium - Delhi, India

Visiting Assistant Professor of Clinical Law **Ramya Jawahar Kudekallu** had the opportunity to present a paper co-authored with Professor **Saumya Uma** at the February 2025 Research Colloquium hosted by Jindal Global Law School, India alongside other legal scholars working across diverse areas of public interest law.



From left to right: **Saumya Uma** and **Ramya J. Kudekallu,**

The paper and the presentation critically examined and explored the emerging concept of gender apartheid, a framework initially advanced by feminists and human rights defenders and is now being advocated for inclusion in the draft of the new Crimes Against Humanity Convention.



From left to right: **Ramya J. Kudekallu,** and **Saumya Uma**

The presentation touches on how the term rightly draws attention to gender-based segregation and the severe restrictions imposed on women, sexual, and gender minorities. At the same time, it offers a critical intervention from a Global South feminist perspective, raising concerns about the Eurocentric underpinnings of the term "apartheid," originally rooted in South Africa's racial segregation system under European colonial rule, and interrogated its applicability as way of imposing Western legal constructs on diverse cultural traditions as well as the lack of accountability for neocolonial uses of international law under the guise of human rights.

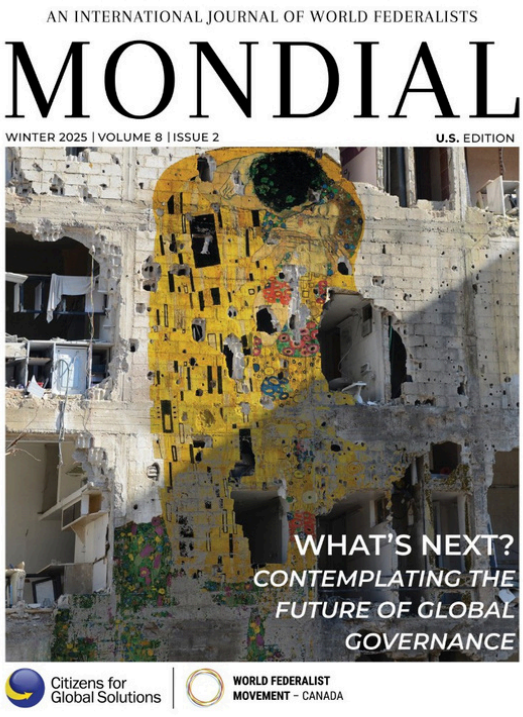
CLIHHR Out & About

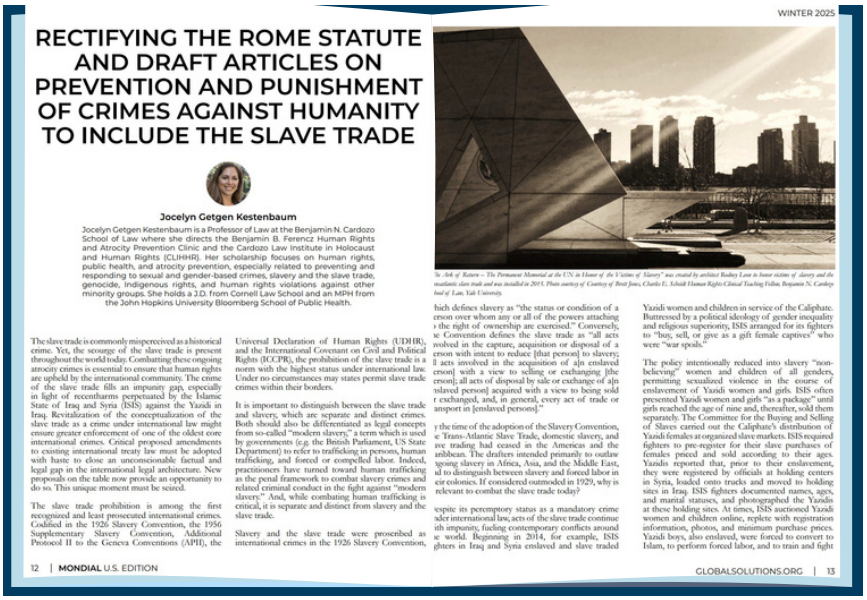
On February 17th, CLIHHR co-sponsored a workshop hosted by the University of Tartu School of Law in Estonia. Led by Professor **Dmytro Vovk**, the event brought together legal scholars from the U.S., the UK, Germany, Italy, Estonia, and Ukraine to explore the intersection of law and religion in the context of the war. Discussions focused on several key issues, including (1) religious freedom and the relationship between religion and the state in Russia and Ukraine during the conflict; (2) Russia's use of religious teachings on human rights and religious freedom to justify its aggression; and (3) international legal responses to the role of religion in Putin's attack on Ukraine. The papers presented at the workshop will be published as a special issue of the Journal of Law, Religion and State.



Dmytro Vovk presenting in collaboration with his colleagues

On February 28th, the Winter 2025 issue of Mondial was released, featuring Professor **Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum's** exploration of the critical need to include the slave trade in international treaties, particularly in efforts to amend the Rome Statute and the Draft Articles on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes Against Humanity. She states that the slave trade, which has been regarded as a historical crime, is nonetheless a contemporary atrocity that feeds into current global conflicts. Kestenbaum emphasizes how crucial it is to fill legal gaps and ensure accountability for this ongoing crime, which has been disregarded by numerous international legal framework (pp. 12–14). A link to the full issue can be found here.





Mondial (Winter 2025)

Mondial Winter 2025 - Volume 8 - Issue 2

Images from Professo**r Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum**'s article in Mondial, Winter 2025, Vol. 8, Issue 2 (pp. 12–13)

CLIHHR Out & About

On March 6th, Professor **Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum** had the honor of speaking with students at the University of Maryland via Zoom, sharing her expertise on the intersection of Health & Conflict. As a guest lecturer in Professor **Matiangai Sirleaf's** Global Public Health class, Professor Kestenbaum provided invaluable insights on this critical topic, enriching the students' understanding of the complexities at the crossroads of law, health, and conflict. Her session was an engaging and thought-provoking experience, offering a unique perspective that resonated with students and faculty alike.



University of Maryland



Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum speaking at the UN

On March 17, Professor **Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum** served as a panelist at a key side event during the 69th Commission on the Status of Women at the United Nations. During the event, she discussed the intersection of gender justice and the Crimes Against Humanity Treaty Initiative. A special thanks to the Permanent Missions of Canada and Mexico, along with the Global Justice Center, Physicians for Human Rights, Asia Justice Coalition, Amnesty International, and the Women's Peace Network for their support.

On March 27th, Professor **Gabor Rona** spoke at the International Committee of the Red Cross' annual training for UN diplomats in New York, on the challenges of implementation and enforcement of International Humanitarian Law, the law of armed conflict.

ICRC INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS



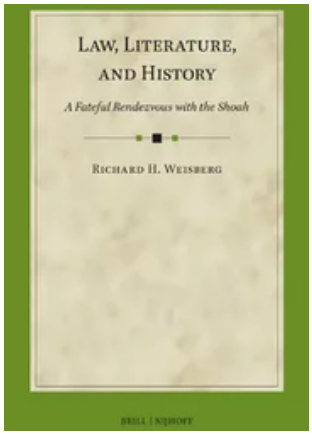
Professor **Gabor Rona**

CLIHHR Out & About



Widener University

On April 10–11, Professor **Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum** participated in a panel at the Dignity Law Summit: Education & Advocacy hosted by Delaware Law School's Dignity Law Institute. The summit brought together law professors, students, practitioners, and advocates to explore how dignity rights are taught and advanced in legal education and practice. Professor Getgen Kestenbaum shared her insights and reflections regarding the Ferencz Human Rights and Atrocity Clinic's efforts to mainstream atrocity prevention into human rights clinical education, as well as CLIHHR's Confronting Structural Violence (CSV) project to mainstream atrocity prevention into doctrinal law teaching. She connected this work to the Delaware Law community's dignity rights framework underlying their doctrinal and clinical teaching.



On April 29th, **Richard H. Weisberg**, CLIHHR Founding Director and Professor of Law Emeritus, launched his new book, A *Fateful Rendezvous with the Shoah*, at Cardozo School of Law. Part of the International Studies in Law and Literature series, the book explores how literature, legal texts, and historical events interacted in the years leading up to World War II. The book is available for purchase through Brill Publications.



Volume 19, Issue 1

On May 1st, *The Law & Ethics of Human Rights* journal released Volume 19, Issue 1, titled "Polarized Constitutionalism", co-edited by Iddo Porat and Gila Stopler. In this issue, Professor **Dmytro Vovk** and Andrea Pin contribute a thought-provoking article exploring what they term "vertical polarization"—tensions that have emerged and intensified between national governments and supranational/international entities (such as the EU and the Council of Europe). These entities are supported, respectively, by different factions of liberals/conservatives and European optimists/skeptics. While these tensions often center around political power and sovereignty, they are almost always framed and advanced as conflicts over human rights and broader European constitutional values. The topic is especially timely in light of the upcoming presidential elections in Romania, where a populist Eurosceptic candidate is highly likely to win—making the dynamics discussed in the paper even more relevant. A link to the full issue can be found here.

CLIHHR Out & About

On May 5th, at the *Conference on Advancing Child Justice in the New Crimes Against Humanity Treaty* held at Columbia University, Professor **Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum** brought a thoughtful and engaging presence as moderator of *Session III: Child Victims and Witnesses, Jurisdiction, Reparations, and Other Crimes against Children*. She also presented issues at the intersection of child rights and the slave trade, a proposed addition to the Crimes Against Humanity treaty draft.



Columbia University



Top row (left to right): **Martine Bjoernstad, Marina Coriale, Zachary McGarry, Brett Jones, Ramya J. Kudekallu,** and **Verona Deliu**
Bottom row (left to right): **Ryed Jadun, Aluk Fontaine Richardson, Faye Nugent, Cameron Sotoodeh, Samuel Hernandez,** and **Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum**

On May 16th, HRAP Clinic students, together with CLIHHR staff, visited the United Nations Headquarters for an end-of-semester tour. The visit offered students a unique opportunity to explore the heart of international diplomacy. During the tour, they learned about the history and mission of the United Nations and visited key sites including the iconic General Assembly Hall, the Security Council Chamber, and other significant locations within the UN complex.



Security Council Room

Noteworthy News

Regulating Private Military and Security Companies: What's in it for States?



Professor **Gabor Rona**

On April 7, 2025, Professor Gabor Rona co-authored an article published in EJIL: Talk!, the blog of the European Journal of International Law, titled "Regulating Private Military and Security Companies: What's in it for States?" Released in connection with ongoing intergovernmental negotiations in Geneva on the proposed international legal regulation of private military and security companies (PMSCs), the piece—co-authored with Jelena Aparac and Shaista Shameem, all former Chairs of the UN Workgroup on the use of Mercenaries—explores the legal, economic, and security-related imperatives for States to support binding regulation of PMSCs. The authors highlight the risks these entities pose to human rights, peace and security, and the rule of law, urging States to close dangerous regulatory gaps. Read the full article here.

Rona v. Trump

On April 15, Professor **Gabor Rona** and another law professor filed suit in federal court in New York against the Trump administration, challenging a February 6 executive order imposing sanctions on International Criminal Court (ICC) Prosecutor Karim Khan. The order makes it a criminal offense to provide education, advice, training, information, or other services "to, or for the benefit" of the Prosecutor. The plaintiffs argue this violates their rights under the First and Fifth Amendments and exceeds presidential authority under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), which expressly protects the exchange of informational materials. The professors—both of whom have worked closely with the ICC—are represented by the Open Society Justice Initiative and the law firm Foley Hoag LLP. The case is Rona v. Trump, S.D.N.Y., No. 1:25-cv-03114, complaint 4/15/25.

Publications

- Weisberg, R. H. (2025). Law, literature, and history: A fateful rendezvous with the Shoah. Brill/Nijhoff. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004525177
- Getgen Kestenbaum, J. (2024). Aesthetics of slavery and slave trade crimes. Temple International & Comparative Law Journal, 37(1), 105-122. http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4969512
- Getgen Kestenbaum, J. (2024). The myth of slavery abolition. UC Law SF Journal, 75, 1287-1334. https://repository.uclawsf.edu/hastings_law_journal/vol75/iss5/4
- Getgen Kestenbaum, J. (2024). All roads lead to Rome: Combating impunity for slave trade and slavery crimes. Journal of Human Trafficking, Enslavement & Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, 5(1), 177-202. https://www.uitgeverijparis.nl/nl/reader/2000000035/2000000361

Congratulations to the Class of 2025!

Congratulations to the Cardozo graduating class of 2025!
We are so proud of you and look forward to seeing you flourish. Special congratulations to our 2023-2024 Benjamin B. Ferencz Human Rights and Atrocity Prevention clinic students pictured below!



Pictured left to right: Matima Leekitwattana, Christian Zavardino, Nargiz Adigosalova, Richelle Chen, Ramya J. Kudekallu, Zachary McGarry, Brett Jones, Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum, and Marina Coriale



HRAP Clinic student - Moustafa Amin



HRAP Clinic student - Matthew Petrouskie and friends



Professors: Ramya J. Kudekallu, Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum, and Brett Jones

Support our Critical Work

As we have wrapped up another successful academic year and enjoy a restful summer, we hope that you will find a way to include a gift to CLIHHR to help our vision become a reality. To make a tax-deductible gift please click the link below: (If you decide to support our work, please ensure to select CLIHHR from the designation section drop down menu).

Make a Gift to CLIHHR

CLIHHR Team



Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum, Professor of Clinical Law and Director of CLIHHR and the Benjamin B. Ferencz Human Rights & Atrocity Prevention Clinic



Gabor Rona, Professor of Practice and Director of the Law and Armed Conflict Project



Ramya Jawahar Kudekallu, Charles E. Schedit Visiting Assistant Professor



Brett Jones, Visiting Clinical Instructor and Charles E. Scheidt Human Rights Clinical Teaching Fellow for the Benjamin B. Ferencz Human Rights and Atrocity Prevention Clinic



Verona Deliu, Program Coordinator of CLIHHR and the Benjamin B. Ferencz Human Rights & Atrocity Prevention Clinic



Richard H. Weisberg, CLIHHR Founding Director & Professor of Law Emeritus



Dymtro Vovk, Visiting Professor, CLIHHR Affiliated Faculty Member



Rebecca Ingber, Professor of Law, Co-Director of the Floersheimer Center for Constitutional Democracy, U.S. Substitute Member to the Council of Europe's Commission for Democracy Through Law, CLIHHR Affiliated Faculty Member



Marina Coriale, CLIHHR Legal Fellow, Student at Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law ('25)

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