



**THE HANNAH ARENDT CENTER FOR POLITICS & HUMANITIES
AT BARD COLLEGE**

***“THERE ARE NO DANGEROUS
THOUGHTS.
THINKING ITSELF IS DANGEROUS.”
-HANNAH ARENDT***

HANNAH
ARENDT
CENTER

Bard College

The Hannah Arendt Center for Politics and the Humanities at Bard College is an expansive home for thinking about and in the spirit of Hannah Arendt. The Arendt Center's mission is to encourage people to "think what we are doing."

Towards that end, the Arendt Center serves as an intellectual incubator for engaged humanities thinking at Bard College and beyond, thinking that elevates and deepens the public argument that is the bedrock of our democracy.

***"The most
radical
revolutionary
will become a
conservative the
day after the
revolution."
-Hannah Arendt***



"The Hannah Arendt Center at Bard pays tribute to Arendt's long personal association with Bard. She left her library to the college and chose to be buried in Bard's cemetery along with her husband Heinrich Bleucher who spent nearly two decades teaching philosophy in the college. The Arendt Center at Bard honors Arendt's conviction that truth telling and a vital public sphere, in which inquiry and debate regarding politics, history and society flourish, are essential to freedom and democracy and therefore human dignity."

-Leon Botstein, President, Bard College

Born in Hanover Germany in 1906, Arendt began her formal studies at Marburg University in 1924 and was briefly a student and lover of Martin Heidegger. Arendt continued her education at Freiburg and Heidelberg Universities completing her doctoral dissertation, *Love and Saint Augustine*, at Heidelberg in 1929 under the supervision of Karl Jaspers.

In 1941, Arendt and her husband Heinrich Bleicher fled Nazi Europe for New York City, where she became part of the intellectual circle surrounding the *Partisan Review*. Arendt taught at numerous American universities including the University of Chicago, Berkeley, and Princeton University, where she was the first woman awarded a full professorship. She came to be most closely associated with the New School for Social Research in New York City, where she served as professor of political philosophy until her death.



The 1950s saw the publication of what are commonly considered Arendt's major works: her comprehensive study of the Nazi and Stalinist regimes, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951), and her opus, *The Human Condition* (1958). In 1961 Arendt covered the trial of Nazi Officer, Adolf Eichmann, for *The New Yorker*. These articles subsequently became the 1963 book *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*.

This same year brought the publication of *On Revolution*, followed by the essay anthologies, *Men in Dark Times* and *Crisis of the Republic*. Arendt died of heart failure in 1975 after completing the first two volumes of her trilogy *The Life of the Mind*, on *Thinking* and *Willing*, and beginning work on the final volume *Judging*.

An activist and thinker whose work resists simple categorization, the stunning lucidity of Arendt's writing resonates with both scholars and the reading public.

Hannah Arendt is the leading thinker of politics and the humanities in the modern era. No other scholar so enrages and engages citizens and students from all political persuasions, all the while insisting on human dignity, providing a clear voice against totalitarianism, and defending freedom with extraordinary intelligence and courage.

Annual Fall Conference

This year we will hold our fifth annual fall conference, “Does the President Matter?”, a mere month before our national election. Keynote speakers will include Ralph Nader, Bernard Kouchner, Rick Falkvinge, John Zogby, James Zogby, and Jeff Tulis.

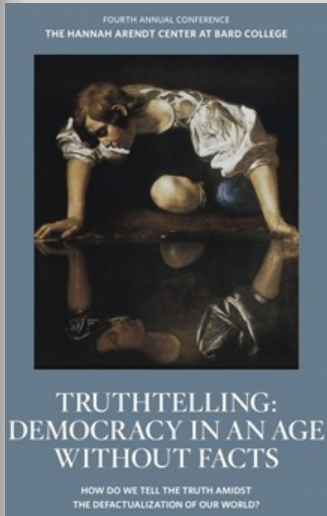
Held on the Bard campus, our annual conferences have steadily grown in size, attendance, and reputation over the past four years. Last year’s conference, entitled “Truthtelling: Democracy in an Age Without Fact” drew almost 800 attendees. The goal of the conferences is to elevate democratic discourse by bringing Arendtian thinking to core political and social questions facing our nation. Past conferences have attracted such luminaries as Ray Kurzweil, Chris Hitchens, Zadie Smith, Sam Tanenhaus, and Lewis Lapham.

Arendt Center Working Group - *Denktagebuch* Conference

The first Arendt Center working group gathered this June at the Hannah Arendt Center. This annual gathering was conceived to bring together humanities scholars from around the world to read, discuss, and think about one particular book in detail. This year’s volume was the recently published *Denktagebuch* (or ‘book of thoughts’) by Hannah Arendt. The end goal will be a published work of collected essays each year by the attending scholars which focuses on the chosen humanities text.

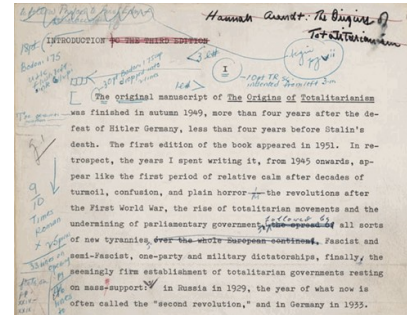
NEH Seminar - “The Political Theory of Hannah Arendt”

This annual six week humanities seminar is held at the Hannah Arendt Center. “The Political Theory of Hannah Arendt: The Problem of Evil and the Origins of Totalitarianism” is run by Dr. Kathleen Jones. Attendees, all of whom are full time school teachers, explore the problems of evil and look at a philosophical perspective on democracy and the use of violence to settle political conflicts by studying key works from Arendt.



Hannah Arendt Collection

Hannah Arendt willed her library of more than 5,000 books, typed manuscripts, ephemera, and pamphlets to Bard College upon her death. The Arendt Center is entrusted with preserving, digitizing, and making accessible the Hannah Arendt Collection to Fellows, Visiting Scholars, Bard students, and others. With the help of the Mellon Grant we have begun digitizing the collection and will continue to make Arendt's marginalia and writing available to scholars around the world in order to expand the rich contemporary dialogue on Arendt's significant contribution to public discourse.



Arendt Marginalia

Lectures

The Center frequently hosts intellectually stimulating lectures by visiting academics whose topics vary from politics to history, law, religion, literature, art, culture, humanities and beyond. Lecturers have included: Peter Beinart, John Cassidy, Deborah Lipstadt, George Kateb, Susie Linfield, and Bill T. Jones. Recent lectures include:

- "Cuba: Today and Tomorrow"
- "The Crisis of Zionism"
- "Arendt's Account of the Rise of Consumerism"
- "Aristotle and the Art of Modern Rhetoric"
- "Humanity's Law: Human Rights and International Law"
- "Poetry and God in Chateaubriand and Tocqueville"



Ray Kurzweil

Student Roundtable Discussions

The Center hosts roundtable discussions combining students with academics and other intellectuals with the goal of having an open dialogue about key political and social issues facing our youth today. Recent roundtable discussions focused on such topics as Occupy Wall Street, Hannah Arendt's call to tell the truth, and the challenges facing soon to graduate students who are living in a time of both global and national transition.

Lunchtime Talks

The Arendt Center sponsors frequent lunch-time talks which are held at the Center. Visiting scholars and academics give a brief lecture over lunch, which is followed by questions and discussion. This provides a unique opportunity for students and the public to engage one on one with these speakers in a more intimate setting.



***“For the things we
have to learn
before we can do
them, we learn by
doing them.”
-Hannah Arendt***

Undergraduate Curriculum

The Arendt Center is integrated with Bard College’s Program in Language & Thinking, and First-Year Seminar (FYSEM), the two humanities programs required of all first-year students. By exposing all Bard students to Arendt’s writing and thinking, the Arendt Center has made Arendt’s work a lingua franca on campus and serves to bridge the college’s intellectual life with its commitment to civic engagement.

Partnership with the Center for Civic Engagement

Bard has recently launched the Center for Civic Engagement, with the Arendt Center being one of its core affiliates. The Arendt Center, as the academic center of Bard’s campus-wide civic engagement initiative, partners with the CCE on numerous events and initiatives that serve to promote the foundational humanities thinking that prepares students for active citizenship. This partnership furthers Bard’s mission to reflect the link between liberal education, democracy and the public interest.

Hannah Arendt Center Student Events

We encourage students to think in the spirit of Arendt and get involved with what we do. Toward the end goal of making the Hannah Arendt Center a destination, we host numerous events such as movie screenings, lunches and afternoon teas. We recently held our first in a series of gourmet dinners (prepared by the Chairman of the HAC Board, Steven Maslow.)



Arendt Center Fellowships

The Arendt Center's Fellows program supports and mentors scholars at the crucial early stages of their academic careers and provides an interdisciplinary and politically engaged experience. Additionally, as there are no other post-doctoral fellows in residence at Bard, both faculty and students gravitate to the Arendt Center Fellows who bring new ideas, energy, and enthusiasm to the campus. The 2012-2013 academic year finds the Center with an unprecedented six fellows in residence at the Center:

- Senior Fellow - Wyatt Mason (will be teaching literature at Bard)
- Research Associate - Thomas Wild (will be teaching German at Bard)
- Associate Fellow - Jeff Jurgens (will be teaching Anthropology at Bard)
- Junior Teaching Fellow: Ian Storey (will be teaching two courses in the Bard Political Studies Program)
- Postdoctoral Fellow: Grace Hunt (will be teaching two courses in the Bard Prison Initiative Program)
- Postdoctoral Fellow: John LeJeune (will be teaching two courses in the First Year Seminar Program)



Scholars

"I have found the vigor and vitality and diversity of the students and writers and scholars who populate the Hannah Arendt Center to be notable, but I have been as impressed-and moved-by the generosity and openness of the environment. Meaningful work is being done at the Center, gifted students maturing into independent minds."

*-Wyatt Mason, Senior Fellow, Hannah Arendt Center and Contributing Writer,
New York Times Magazine*



The energy driving the Hannah Arendt Center for Politics and Humanities is the incredible engagement of Bard students. Since I came to Bard 7 years ago, I have been impressed and astonished by the intellectual hunger and public spiritedness of Bard undergraduates. Nowhere else have I experienced students so moved by ideas and so committed to making the world a better place.

-Roger Berkowitz

"Scholars, students, and teaching fellows at the Hannah Arendt Center seek meaning in their own lives and to share that meaning with others. In this sense, communication orients the activities of the Center. If such communication matters in the world in which we now live, it is also very expensive to sustain. Since the Hannah Arendt Center for Politics and Humanities exists solely for the good of the public, it surely deserves to be supported. "

-Jerome Kohn, Trustee, Hannah Arendt Bluecher Literary Trust

Students

"The Arendt Center in any given week is a space for the student body to come together in both formal and informal academic discussions to think about politics and discuss the teachings of Hannah Arendt. It is a space for all at Bard and is celebrated among the student body.

-Roy Zabłudowicz, Bard '13



Bard students attend Arendt Center events in large numbers, speak up intelligently and fearlessly at lectures and conferences, enthusiastically enter our essay contests, and become integral parts of our community. While the Arendt Center reaches a regional and national audience through our blog, publications, and conferences, the heart of the Center is our student community.

-Roger Berkowitz

"As a recent graduate majoring in Political Science and Russian, the Arendt Center has been an invaluable resource for intelligent political discussion all four years on campus.

Reading Hannah Arendt's "Between Past and Future" essay collection over a semester gave me many sleepless nights– in the best way."

-Margarita Federova, Bard '12



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Hannah Arendt Center NYC Lecture Series

The Hannah Arendt Center has recently launched a New York City lecture series toward the goal of expanding our reach beyond the Hudson Valley and into New York City. New York is an educational and cultural mecca, as well as the long time home of Arendt, making what we do at the Center a perfect fit in New York. The inaugural lecture of the series took place in March with Deborah Lipstadt speaking about her book, *The Eichmann Trial*. Our second event was an evening with long time staff writer for *The New Yorker* magazine, John Cassidy, who spoke with the Arendt Center's Director, Roger Berkowitz, about the impact of the GOP race on this year's Presidential election.



Deborah Lipstadt

The Arendt Center Praxis Committee

The Praxis Committee is a group of 20-40 year old New Yorkers affiliated with the Arendt Center. Praxis sponsors talks and events in conjunction with the Center, and seeks to continue the public discourse that the Arendt Center promotes in a casual environment of interested and inquisitive young people. Praxis holds several events monthly in New York City and invites the Center's Director and Fellows to speak at these cultural, political, and literary events.

"Around the Table" Dinners

The Arendt Center sponsors intimate dinners in New York City for supporters of the Center. These dinners revolve around discussing the writings and ideas of Arendt and others. Guest lecturers generally attend, offering attendees the rare opportunity to engage in provocative and fun discussions with these well known academics and writers.

Blog

The Arendt Center understands the ever increasing importance of the Internet as a platform for community building, engagement, and discussion. We focus heavily on generating fresh content for our blog every day drawing from a pool of guest bloggers including academics, journalists, Center fellows, and interns. The content covers a broad spectrum including; current events, politics, finance, culture, books, history, and more. We are very conscious to apply the writings and thinking of Hannah Arendt to all that we post, which serves to demonstrate the continued strength and relevance of her writings in the current age, and expose her thinking to an ever-broadening audience. Our blog continues to grow, with more than 400 unique visitors being drawn to the blog daily.

***“We are free to
change the
world and start
something new
in it.”
-Hannah Arendt***

Video Archive

The Arendt Center videotapes all of our lectures and conferences and uploads them to our website. This provides a rich and comprehensive library and an incredible resource for a world-wide audience interested in a variety of intellectual topics and ideas. Additionally, the archive provides the convenience of allowing viewers to engage from the comfort of their own home, as well as the ability to revisit something they found particularly compelling at any time.

Social Media

The Arendt Center has embraced social media as a powerful tool for both communicating and expanding our reach. Our very active Facebook page has reached 3,000 fans, while we also continue to build followers on Twitter and increase the number of visitors to our website. Social media has facilitated our ability to establish a truly global community of engaged Arendtian-minded thinkers.



Hannah Arendt Journal

The Arendt Center is launching its own imprint with the intention of publishing an annual journal. The journal, entitled “HA” will contain a collection of the best talks, essays, and works presented by the Center in the previous year. Each journal will also contain exclusive Arendt marginalia, an honorarium section in memory of important thinkers who passed away in the past year, as well as a sampling of the best Arendt “Quote” of the week posts. This is a weekly feature on our blog in which an academic chooses an Arendt quote of their choice and then relates it to current political, ethical, and cultural events. The journal will be for Hannah Arendt Center members only, making it exclusive and collectible. The first edition of the journal is in production now.

Thinking in Dark Times

Thinking in Dark Times is a collection of essays originating from a conference held at Bard College in honor of what would have been Arendt’s 100th birthday. Edited by Roger Berkowitz, the Academic Director of the Center, and Jeff Katz, the Executive Director who also oversees the Arendt Collection at Bard, the volume focuses on Arendt’s thinking in ethics and politics. It features the writings of such luminaries as Leon Botstein, Christopher Hitchens, Jerome Kohn, and Elisabeth Young-Bruehl.



The Intellectual Origins of the Global Financial Crisis

Set to be published in the fall of 2012, this volume turns an enlightened and intellectual eye to the global financial crisis. The volume is comprised of essays reflecting the discourse that emerged from the Arendt Center’s 2009 fall conference, “The Burden of Our Time” at which public intellectuals, journalists, academics, businesspeople and artists all gathered to take a broad and Arendtian look at the 2008 crumbling of the world market.

NEH Endowment Grant

The Arendt Center was thrilled to be awarded a prestigious \$425,000 challenge grant by the National Endowment of the Humanities. The grant requires the Center to match the funds on a three-to-one basis. If we can do so, it will raise an endowment of \$1.7 million dollars over the next four years. This vital funding will assist us in:

- Establishing a Distinguished Lectureship for the First-Year Seminar Program (FYSEM) at Bard.
- Solidifying the Arendt Center Junior Fellowship Program.
- Helping to fund the ever growing annual Fall Conference.
- Continuing to develop the annual Arendt Center Working Group in the Humanities.
- Expanding the NYC Arendt Center Lecture Series.



Soros Matching Grant

In addition to the NEH Endowment Grant, the Hannah Arendt Center will have all funds raised through the NEH Grant matched by a Soros Grant directed towards Bard's Center for Civic Engagement, of which the Arendt Center is a key part. Combined, this means that all gifts to the Hannah Arendt Center will actually be matched 2.7 to 1! This is a fantastic vehicle ensuring the impact of your gift will be multiplied and enhanced. You will be playing a key role in supporting and sponsoring events and publications that encourage students and the public at large to "Think what they are doing."



Additional Grant Opportunities

We continue to pursue other grant opportunities including those that would allow us to focus on Hannah Arendt and the Jewish question through a proposed joint fellow for the HAC and Smolny College in St. Petersburg, Russia.



Hannah Arendt Center Staff

- Roger Berkowitz, Academic Director of the Hannah Arendt Center
- Jeffrey Katz, Executive Director of the Hannah Arendt Center
- Bridget Hollenback, Director of Outreach and Social Media
- Sarah Paden, Operations Coordinator

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**Hannah Arendt Center
Bard College
1448 Annandale Rd.
Annandale, NY 12504
845.758.7878**

www.hannaharendtcenter.org
www.bard.edu/hannaharendtcenter