

Emergency poetry

by Will Jordan
staff writer

Last Thursday, guest speaker Andres Nader read poems composed by concentration camp prisoners during World War II.

Dr. John Champagne, Assistant Professor of English at Penn State-Behrend, introduced Mr. Nader. Andres Nader is a Ph. D. candidate in German Studies at Cornell University. Nader received his BA in German and French Literature from Bennington College and has a masters degree in German Studies from Cornell.

He is currently working on a dissertation in which he uses psychoanalytic theories of trauma to analyze German language poems composed in the concentration camps. As part of his research on this project, he traveled to Berlin, where he interviewed Holocaust survivors for the Yale University Holocaust Video Archive.

The presentation was entitled "Poetry and Trauma: Writings from the Nazi Concentration Camps." However, in his opening statement, Nader said that he wanted to change the title to "Emergency Poetry" because of the "use of poetry in extreme situations." He also said that by the end of the 1960's to the 1970's, it had been discovered that poetry could be used for therapeutic purposes.

Nader then began to read some of the poems which he had translated for the presentation. The first poem that he read was entitled "Imaginative Acts." After reading the first poem, Nader said, "Each poem has a different history." Some of the poems had to be dug up while others were told by word of mouth. "The poems create a structure about the situation in the camps," Nader said.

"The Song of the Murdered Jewish People" was the next poem that Nader read. It was the only epic that was written in the camps. It was written by a Polish man who was killed at Auschwitz. The first 15 parts are entitled "Sing." It is about the demise of the Warsaw Ghetto. In the epic, the author spoke about his wife and children being deported. A couple of excerpts from the epic are, "Tell me

Alter he finished playing two selected parts of the opera, Nader answered questions from the audience. One member asked Nader what motivated him to do this. Nader replied by saying that he found it fascinating that people were actually writing in the camps. "Poetry equals nourishment," Nader said. Another member of the audience asked if the original opera was set to music. Nader said,

"Scream from the furnaces, young and old...."

where you are my people" and "Scream from the furnaces, young and old...."

The next two poems concentrated on hunger and death. One of the most powerful ways to keep the prisoners under control was to keep them hungry. From a camp near Hamburg emerged "Song to Bread." A powerful line from this poem is, "Beyond our longing and beyond our need... we want bread." Another poem about hunger and death was entitled "Bread." Lines from this poem read: "Bread is rare, bread is our gold...." and "Hunger makes beasts of us all."

Nader then began to speak about the concentration camps. He said that the dead "never received proper burials." The next poem that he read was entitled "On the Road." This poem spoke about one of the long journeys to a prison camp.

Nader then played an opera which was entitled "The Emperor of Atlantis." Nader explained the opera saying that "people killed without the proper decorum of war." "Suffering becomes endless; Death makes a deal with the Emperor," Nader continued to explain. The deal was that if the Emperor died first, the murders would cease.

"Yes, many famous and skilled musicians were taken hostage and they were sent to one of the camps where the SS troops were not as strict."

Students found the presentation to be educational and moving. Samir Patel, 02 Computer Engineering, said "I felt that what he had to say was very informative. The poems that he read gave you a taste of the feelings of the people in the concentration camps. One thing that sticks out in my mind is when he spoke about one prisoner that was beaten. He wanted to die because of all the pain he was in. You felt sorry for him because he had to die a slow death and not a quick one." Leah Deflin, 02 Communications, enjoyed Nader's readings as well. "I loved it. The one thing that sticks out in my mind is the poem for bread. People looked forward to dying because of the starving and suffering they went through."

Another student, Andrew White, 06 English, said "I thought [Nader] was good and very insightful because it was a subject that I did not know that much about. The thing that sticks out in my mind is just the fact of what they had to go through. They had to smuggle the poems out. It put into perspective the struggle they had to go through."

Q & A with RA Roxzana Kelly

by Damion Miller
staff writer

Roxzana Kelly, 08 Psychology, also known as 'Rox' by her friends, is the resident assistant in Tigress Hall. In our interview, she lets Behrend understand the life of an R.A. from her view. This is Ms. Kelly's last semester as a resident assistant, and she began more than 3 years ago. Ms. Kelly has a lot of experience under her belt, which is why she is a great person to inform everyone about life as an R.A.

Damion Miller: What made you decide to become a Resident Assistant?

Roxzana Kelly: I've been an R.A. for 3 years. Oddly enough, 4 years ago I had no clue as to what an R.A. was. I remember Ken Miller asking me to come to the meeting and after that, it was history. After going through the interviews and gaining a stronger understanding of the job, I felt that it was something that I could benefit from as well as the residents, who I would be the "role model" for, would benefit from me. As a very open and friendly person, it was easy for me to relate to many people. As an R.A., I act as a role model, teacher, friend, disciplinarian and mediator.

Miller: As an R.A., how does it feel to have to give referrals?

Kelly: When dealing with referrals and disciplinary actions it is necessary to handle them and not ignore them. There have been several cases where I have referred many friends, and they have never given me any trouble about it. They understand that is what I have to do as an R.A. Many people do not understand the purpose of disciplinary action. Yet, I think that in order for a campus not to be in total havoc and chaos, such actions are necessary. On-campus residents need to understand that. Giving referrals is never easy, and it never feels great to do it. Believe me, it would be nice not to give any, but that is not always the case.

Miller: What is the dumbest thing someone has done in your hall?

Kelly: The dumbest thing that I can remember people in my hall doing was one night at around 1 a.m. The lobby furniture was being rearranged by piling them up one on top of the other. At first, I was extremely disgusted, then all I could do was shake my head because it was so stupid.

Miller: Is there ever an issue about race? How does it affect your role as an R.A.?

Kelly: I have never had any direct issues that deal with race. However, I do recall at one point talking with a few residents on campus, who have been under the apprehension that R.A.'s of a particular race, only refer other races. That, I told them was absolutely ridiculous and not true. After saying that, they told me that they were not speaking from experience.

Miller: What are some pointers that you can give to other R.A.'s and those who want to become an R.A.?

Kelly: First and foremost, I would like to say that after being an R.A. for so long, I've seen and learned a lot of things. I feel that present and future R.A.'s need to have fun with their job, but remember that it is a job. They still have to abide by the rules and be the role model that we are displayed as. I would also like to say that R.A.'s should take their position seriously. There are many rewards that come from being an R.A. such as a bonding friendship and building confidence and esteem and respect. You learn a lot about yourself and your abilities from being an R.A. I just hope that the present and new R.A.'s can continue to build and work together to make our community a safe and happy one to live in. I love my little Tigress Hall, I've been there for 4 years. I will miss it and all of my residents, my crew.

Miller: Based on your pointers, is that how you have gained your respect with many students although you are an R.A.?

Kelly: In some way, I have a very distinct personality and I am honest. Many people appreciate and respect that. I also understand the meaning of confidentiality. When residents come to me with issues that they need some help and advice on, they ask me to keep it to myself and that is where it stays. I have tried my best as an R.A. and as a person to be very approachable and open-minded in all cases and issues. As for if I have that respect and love, you would have to ask my residents. They can provide you with the best answer.

Miller: What is the last thing that you would like to say?

Kelly: I would like to close by saying that being an R.A. is no easy job. It has its ups and downs as everything else in this world. But believe me, I've loved it for 3 years and encourage anyone who feels that they would like to become an R.A. to do so. I would like to give a shout out to Rez/Lite (Ken Miller), The C.O.s (Ross, Linda, Cheta), Housing and Food (Ed, Al, James), and my R.A. crew, in particular: Tommie, Aisha, Anthony, Lisa, Lacy, Ryan and lastly Chris Venanski. Venanski, I miss you.

Penn State-Behrend student Lisa Fuhrman's summer plans are out of this world.

How about yours?

(Lisa's taking Astronomy 010 during Summer Session.)

Almost 70 classes are being offered at Penn State-Behrend in 3, 4, and 8-week sessions beginning May 13th or June 15th. Why not get at least one class out of the way for fall semester?

Stop by the Office of the Registrar for a complete schedule, or look it up on the web at

<http://www.psu.edu/registrar/soc/summer/bd/>



ACROSS

- 1 Chris of tennis
- 6 Cereal grasses
- 10 Sandwich shop
- 14 Taylor of "The Nanny"
- 15 Org. for seniors
- 16 Islamic republic
- 17 Fish-house menu item
- 19 Bathroom fixture
- 20 Silly billy
- 21 Birthplace of Simon Bolivar
- 23 Asian inland sea
- 26 Spread far and wide
- 29 "Pretty Woman" co-star
- 30 Container with a tap
- 31 Gather together
- 35 Overpowering effect
- 39 Luau garland
- 40 Table protector
- 41 Court divider
- 42 Name for a lion
- 43 Frying
- 44 Bat wood
- 45 Working independently
- 48 Puppeteer Lewis
- 50 Allow
- 51 In the past
- 52 Writer Caldwell
- 55 Potential plant
- 56 Creator of Bip
- 59 Fink
- 61 A Great Lake
- 62 Gogol novel
- 68 Picnic pests
- 69 Touched down
- 70 Computer messages
- 71 Lower digits
- 72 Scruff
- 73 Marsh grass

DOWN

- 1 Go wrong
- 2 Winners' letter
- 3 Call off
- 4 Used transactions
- 5 Sawbucks
- 6 Bum
- 7 Shril bark
- 8 Put up
- 9 Jack of the nursery
- 10 Put off guard
- 11 the Red
- 12 Actress Turner
- 13 Pen fluids
- 18 One who takes for granted
- 22 Excuse
- 23 Old World lizards
- 24 Scrub again
- 25 Singer Franklin
- 27 Mediterranean island
- 28 Columnist Landers
- 32 Switzerland, generally
- 33 Spirit-raising occasion?
- 34 Burned slightly
- 36 Burning
- 37 Actress Burstyn
- 38 Ushers
- 46 Inventor Whitney
- 47 Disguise

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- 57 River of Pisa
- 58 Solemn act
- 60 Burrows and Fortas
- 63 Tear
- 64 Snacked
- 65 Young boy
- 66 Hanks movie
- 67 "Cakes and ..."