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# UMD professors provide Holocaust remembrance

APRIL 3, 2016 BY HANNAH BROADBENT

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BY EMILY NESS | the Statesman

Walter Baeumler was born in Nurnberg, Germany in 1928 to devout Jewish parents. While his family was overjoyed at the time, their ethnic pride and joy was to be short-lived. Something bad was in the midst.

Around this time, the Nazi party formed and began to gain momentum. With this, a German leader named Adolf Hitler rose to power in 1933.

Hitler hoped to return Germany to the powerhouse it once was before World War I. He did this by blaming an "inferior race" for losing WWI.

Unfortunately for the Baeumlers and many others, Hitler referred to Jewish families as the "inferior race."

In 1944, at age 16, Baeumler was forced into the German army. A year later, at age 17, he escaped.

When the war ended in 1945 and he returned to the remains of the once beautiful town that he called his home, Baeumler found he was all alone.

Baeumler learned that his father was a prisoner of war in France and that his mother had been killed by a bomb. Worst of all, he learned that his beloved grandfather – the man that he looked up to all his life – was lying in an American field hospital, dying of starvation and torture cast upon him by the Nazis. Baeumler's beloved grandfather wished him a better life, and he pursued exactly

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that.

In 1955, Baeumler, his wife Leonore and their son immigrated to America. After earning his Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Nebraska, Baeumler came to the University of Minnesota Duluth in 1965.

Here, he and his friends, Walter and Goldie Eldot, established the Holocaust Commemorative Series.

The purpose of the Holocaust Commemorative Series was to remember with dignity the lives and sufferings of the victims, and to encourage change through the dissemination of truth, justice and peace.

Baeumler taught at UMD for 28 years until his death in 1993.

After his death, his efforts were extended, as the Baeumler Kaplan Holocaust Commemoration committee was formed in his honor.

On Thursday, March 31, UMD associate professor Deborah Petersen-Perlman, Department of Communication, and retired UMD associate professor Alexis Pogorelskin, Department of History, honored Baeumler's legacy through their presentation, "Resistance and Remembrance: Copenhagen, L'viv, Krakow and Warsaw."

"I have always been interested in the Holocaust," Petersen-Perlman said. "In October and November of 2015, Alexis and I had the opportunity to go to Ukraine and Poland and see where the events of the Holocaust took place. It was a moving experience," she added.

Petersen-Perlman and Pogorelskin had countless pictures and stories to share with the audience.

"To see what was left of Jewish life was painful. However, it was also striking. The buildings and the monuments were very much alive," Pogorelskin said.

The event was co-sponsored by the Baeumler Kaplan Holocaust Commemoration Committee and by the Royal D. Alworth Institute for International Studies.

Based on the full room, the event was a success.

"It is a challenge to bring history to life," Petersen-Perlman said. "We hope that these events will help."

Thursday, April 7 2016 there will be an additional commemoration event at 12:00 p.m. in the Kirby Rafters. Monday, April 11, 2016 another event will follow at 7:00 p.m. in Bohannon 90.

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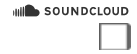
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University of Minnesota Duluth's student newspaper



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