In November 1945, the International Military Tribunal began its prosecution of Nazi war criminals in Nuremberg, Germany. Nuremberg and subsequent trials, in which dozens of party leaders, doctors, judges, and generals were convicted of war crimes, defined genocide as a crime against humanity. For the first time, the global legal community had codified morality.

But mass atrocities still occur around the world, in and out of war zones. What, then, are the lasting effects of Nuremberg? On the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the trials, more than 300 teachers, students, lawyers, academics, and others met in November at Harvard Law School to discuss this and other questions at a two-day conference, “Pursuing Human Dignity: The Legacies of Nuremberg for International Law, Human Rights, and Education.” The law school co-hosted the event with Facing History and Ourselves, a Boston-based organization that provides curricula and other resources for teachers in middle-schools through college (www.facinghistory.org).

It took nearly half a century after Nuremberg before another international criminal tribunal took place, in the former Yugoslavia. There have since been similar tribunals in Rwanda, a truth and reconciliation commission in South Africa, and now, a domestic-international hybrid court in Iraq trying Saddam Hussein. All of these have been ad hoc actions that took place only after crimes were committed. Hence it is arguable the tribunals have done little to deter future violence. “None of them is perfect,” said Ben Ferencz, J.D. ’43, chief prosecutor in the U.S.-led trial at Nuremberg against Nazi death squads. (There were 12 Nuremberg trials, with separate chief prosecutors for each and Telford Taylor, J.D. ’32, acting as overall chief prosecutor.) “But they’re newborn babes. We can’t throw them out. Their defects can be fixed.”

One “fix” could be the model of the International Criminal Court (ICC), a permanent court established in 2002 with 100 member nations (the United States has declined to participate). The ICC is the first to build cases and indict
leaders while conflicts are in progress. “This makes it difficult [to work] but raises the possibility of deterrence,” said ICC prosecutor Christine Chung. Several speakers noted, for example, that it is extremely difficult to balance Rwandan genocide survivors’ desire for retribution against murderers with their need to reconcile with their neighbors, who may have committed murder. And how far down the chain of command should courts attempt to prosecute—given time, budget, and political constraints? “Everyone expects [the court] to grow into Einstein or Gandhi,” said Chung. “The expectations are enormous.” Those hopes will be tested: the ICC is now working on cases against leaders in northern Uganda, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the Darfur region of Sudan.

After it gains more experience convicting criminals, the ICC will work on preventing crimes, said Luis Moreno Ocampo, the chief prosecutor. Many conference speakers admitted that the law can do only so much—that education is just as important in ensuring such crimes don’t happen again. But how do teachers interest adolescents in the often remote topic of human rights? Most educators spoke of the need to teach history through individual cases, to get students to ask plenty of questions, to show them there aren’t always answers, and to incorporate hands-on learning. Professor of practice in public policy Samantha Power, founding executive director of the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at the Kennedy School of Government, suggested that students role-play both bystanders and “upstanders”—those who speak out against violence.

That same weekend, the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study convened its fourth annual conference on women, gender, and society. This year’s theme was “In the War Zone: How Does Gender Mat-

At Long Last, CGIS

On a warm November evening, more than a decade after a study committee first envisioned it, the completed Center for Government and International Studies (CGIS) was finally dedicated. Housed primarily in two new glass-and-terra-cotta buildings facing each other across Cambridge Street, CGIS “started out as something vastly different in size, scope and—let it be said—cost, from what we are gathered to celebrate today,” said President Lawrence H. Summers. (The final cost of the 249,000-square-foot complex reportedly exceeded $140 million.) “It has developed into a complex of buildings designed, redesigned, and redesigned by Harry Cobb and his associates; not without advice and involvement of the residents of the city of Cambridge, not without a certain amount of dust and heat in getting it built,” he noted wryly. Summers praised principal donor Sidney R. Knafel ’52, M.B.A. ’54, for remaining “deeply committed and yet flexible” through it all, and for “providing a wonderful example of how a true philanthropist best comports him- or herself as an institution works toward achieving an important goal.”

Knafel, for whom the north building is named, spoke of his hopes for the center. “Relationships throughout the world over this past decade [have] continually eroded,” he said. “The social and political worlds are polarized as never before. Our own American society has become polarized as never before. Must we escape from this downdraft by military action in the world and a peaceful equivalent of war within the country?”

He continued, “I say no because that process—military action—just does not work. Even when opponents are seen not to understand, we must engage them and their constituencies in dialogue based on understanding. The work to be done at this center,” he said hopefully, “will provide that understanding.”

The Knafel Building of the new Center for Government and International Studies, home to the Faculty of Arts and Sciences’ government department and several centers for international and regional studies.
John Harvard’s Journal

Things weren’t so different during World War II, even when women worked in the region of conflict. Take Martha Gellhorn, a writer for Collier’s Weekly magazine, said Geraldine Brooks, a journalist and current Institute fellow. After Gellhorn married Ernest Hemingway in 1940, he offered his services to the magazine, effectively taking her job as lead correspondent. While Gellhorn sneaked onto a hospital ship and landed in Normandy during the D-Day invasion, Hemingway never went ashore, yet Collier’s put Hemingway’s dispatch—which Brooks called a “self-aggrandizing account of how he directed the landing and saved the day”—on the cover and gave it six pages inside while substantially cutting Gellhorn’s piece and relegating it to the back. The resulting one-page article “gives no sense [that Gellhorn] left Britain,” Brooks said. (The marriage, not surprisingly, did not survive the war.)

Duke literature professor Alice Kaplan declares, “This is a moment when we need to be outstanding.”

Beginning his second year at KSG’s helm, Ellwood is acting on the results of a yearlong, comprehensive review of the school’s activities by four committees that he appointed in 2004. The new initiatives and changes range from academic organization to teaching and outreach.

For openers, Ellwood last fall has put into practice the committee recommendation to organize the school’s work into five broad academic areas. (The KSG has never had academic departments, instead organizing its research around 12 “centers,” which remain in place.) “Each area chair is charged with thinking about intellectual issues, faculty, and courses,” Ellwood says. “Part of the goal is to be sure we don’t have 140 faculty members all reporting to one academic dean.” The new areas and their faculty chairs are: democratic institutions and politics (Alex Keyssar, Stirling professor of history and social policy); social policy (Jeffrey Liebman, professor of public policy); international relations, science, and security (Ashton Carter, Ford Foundation professor of science and international affairs); markets and methods (Dani Rodrik, Hariri professor of international political economy); and management and leadership (Mary Jo Bane, Bradshaw professor of public policy and management).

Regarding teaching programs, the KSG’s connection to the College has thus far largely meant noncredit seminars at the Institute of Politics. But now the school “will expect to involve its faculty more directly in undergraduate teaching,” says Ellwood. That could mean KSG professors teaching courses offered by the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, as well as undergraduates enrolling in KSG courses—as rarely happens now. Opportunities for College students may be especially promising in the environmental area, where the KSG offers some unique courses.

The school also intends to create a joint curriculum with Harvard Business School. “The B-School increasingly talks about how important the public sector is,” says Ellwood, adding that the private sector has always figured heavily in the Kennedy School’s programs. “We already have a sizable number of students doing activities with the business, law, and medical schools,” he points out. “We offer concurrent degrees with the law and business faculties—you can get an M.B.A. and M.P.P. [master’s in public policy] in less time than doing both separately. But there aren’t many courses asking you to think about business and government together. We’d like to move toward a true joint degree, with a more integrated curriculum.”

The KSG also aims to create smaller, in-depth concentrations within the M.P.P. program in a few years. This would mean a smaller common core of courses, as well as a more formal set of specializations. “There’ll be a lot of enthusiasm for this kind of thing,” Ellwood predicts. “We already have an M.P.A./ID program, specifically for people who want to do international development.” Another opportunity for new pedagogy, he adds, comes in executive education: “One of our greatest opportunities, a critical element and one I hope to expand.”

In general, says Ellwood, “We need to have a more internationalized curriculum and to take more advantage of the fact that we are the most international school at Harvard, with 43 percent of our students coming from abroad, from 80 different countries.” He mentions a trip he took to China, Japan, Taipei, and Hong Kong last summer. In each, he says, “I met or talked with someone who is a national leader, or is considered a strong possibility to become one, and each of those people either has a Kennedy School degree or has taken an executive program here.”

The overall conclusion? “We need to provide spectacular training to people who are going to make a difference,” Ellwood declares. “This is a moment when we need to be outstanding.”

Kennedy School Looks Ahead

“When you think about events like Hurricane Katrina, the earthquake in Pakistan and other parts of South Asia, climate change, global poverty, advancing democracy, and international security, it’s really striking that these are all problems that clearly require coordinated action in the public interest,” says David Ellwood, dean of the Kennedy School of Government (KSG). “It’s clear that the government and large institutions are not doing the job as well as we had hoped.”

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Where East Meets West

Although the Harvard-Yenching Institute is housed on Divinity Avenue, at the eastern boundary of the University’s Cambridge campus, it’s not far from Harvard’s scholarly center. Nestled where a maze of science laboratories meet the Divinity School, flanked by the Semitic Museum and the psychology department, and facing the windows of some of the world’s top Europeanists, it marks a crossroads in the University’s intellectual geography. This seems appropriate. Decades before globalization became a leitmotiv of higher education, the institute (www.harvard-yenching.org) was using scholarship to build a bridge to the other side of the world. Today, it’s one of the leading centers for East Asian studies in the United States—and a destination for many of the Eastern hemisphere’s most promising intellectuals.

The Institute, started in 1928 with the fortune of Charles M. Hall, an aluminum tycoon unaffiliated with Harvard, is the oldest of the University’s foreign-studies centers and perhaps the least understood. Although it houses much of the faculty in the East Asian literatures and civilizations department, it’s legally and fiscally independent of the University. Its library boasts what may be the most important collection of rare East Asian books and manuscripts in the world, but scholars say it’s the institute’s intellectual community that really sets it apart. According to executive director Peter L. Kelley ’74, the institute is “a unique institution within Harvard, not just because of its structural independence.”

Every year it brings a significant number of scholars in the humanities from Asia to Cambridge and “represents a real resource—for them, but also for Harvard,” whose own scholars and students it helps send overseas.

The institute tried from the start to develop an intellectual partnership with Yenching (now Peking) University in a way that would benefit both communities. Since then, it has expanded this collaborative model to include close to 50 institutions in seven East Asian countries. Every year these universities nominate top scholars among their graduate students and faculty members for three institute fellowship programs. Those selected as visiting fellows receive funding for a year of predoctoral research at Harvard. The institute’s doctoral scholars program, by contrast, brings promising East Asian students to Cambridge for fulltime enrollment in Harvard’s own Ph.D. program. In many ways, though, the fellowship program centers on the 30 or so humanists whom it invites each year as “visiting scholars.” These relatively young intellectuals—no older than 42—receive a year’s financial and intellectual support as they pursue scholarly projects at Harvard. Because the visiting scholars’ work needn’t pertain to East Asian studies, their expertise has led them throughout the University. (Projects in recent years have ranged from work in anthropology to research on Slavic literature.) The visiting scholars program, which began in

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