Albert Einstein postulated that space and time are inexorably and intimately bound up in each other. An event, in special relativity theory, occurs when space and time interact. The known universe therefore is the total of all events. In such an arrangement, time can never act as a passive component. Rather it is an active partner in a complex system linking energy, matter and information.

When humans enter into the equation, we introduce another force into this relationship – that of mind. Time and space, after all, are but arbitrary mental constructions and semantic enterprises. Is not time merely a psychic space where experience accretes into meaning, where the past becomes history and its lessons influence our future? Even Einstein’s physics resemble higher orders of abstraction bordering on the metaphysical.

According to the philosophers of ancient Greece, there were two types of time: Chronos (from which we derive such words as chronological), the tick-tock sequential advance of time, quantitatively measured out in events – specific things happening in a certain order in defined places. Then there is Kairos, or time moving through the moment, providing opportunity, creating circumstance and bringing change.

We, of course, become ensnared easily and willingly in the prison of Chronos – the unexamined illusion of linear, sequential and discrete time. As George Steiner wrote in *Language and Silence*, “our notion of the categories of past and future is mechanistic, as if the universe were itself a printed book and we were turning the pages.” The Nazis, for example, with their goal of a thousand-year Reich and caught up in obsessive chronicling of their own monstrosities, were champions of Chronos. Time, to the Nazis, was, as were their theories of race, largely biological. The Nazis saw time as a purely organic process where things were impelled into growth and inevitably had to decline.

The danger in this type of thinking is, as Hannah Arendt pointed out in her tract, *On Violence*, that when “we talk in non-political, biological terms, the glorifiers of violence can appeal to the undeniable fact that in the household of nature destruction and creation are but two sides of the natural process, so that collective violent action…may appear as natural a prerequisite for the collective life of mankind as the struggle for survival and violent death for continuing life in the animal kingdom.”

Ethical thought, literature and art frequently can redeem us from the alluring tug of Chronos. Philosophy, literature (like Doug Skopp’s historical novel about the atrocities of Nazi medicine, *Shadows Walking*) and art invite us to make sense of the chronological by allowing us, if only vicariously, to experience past events through the moment, to remember across someone else’s narrative. Remembrance provides us an opportunity to suspend time and place, to consider the value of events and weigh their influence upon us and everything we do.

This gallery, a place of remembrance of the Holocaust and its victims, is a meeting of space with time. A memorial is a place that urges us to remember places and times, to know more and, with luck, more wisely. This gallery also transcends space and time because it transports us visibly to the Holocaust, a cataclysm crafted by human minds, which brought lasting, catastrophic change to our civilization. This gallery challenges the limits of our knowledge and exhorts us to ponder
our existence in the shadow of a series of events so horrid that our minds resist its dimensions.

This Holocaust Memorial Gallery, named in Doug and Evelyne’s honor, also represents an attempt to wrest the Holocaust from the tedium of time and bring it into full view through a space devoted to study and remembering. This memorial is not a dead place, because along with memory comes its companion, hope. A memorial such as this is an environment with long-term implications for learning and understanding. We therefore dedicate this gallery to Doug and Evelyne, in memory of the victims of the Holocaust, in the hope that what our students, faculty and community members will experience here shall liberate our collective future from genocidal violence.

In fulfilment of the purpose of this gallery, next spring’s Days of Remembrance will again be held in this space. At such time, the campus will also be awarding monetary prizes to the winners of the next Douglas R. Skopp Creative Competition on the Theme of the Holocaust. Within the next couple of weeks, I will be announcing the second such competition, open to all SUNY Plattsburgh students in every discipline, and making publicly available both submission requirements and entry applications.