

The College of Arts and Sciences

A Revolution Witnessed Through Teenage Eyes

Roya Hakakian, a wisp of a woman whose small frame hid a spine of steel, stood on the stage at Dodds Theater April 12, and shared stories about the challenges of growing up Jewish in Iran.

A noted documentary filmmaker, poet and author of *Journey from the Land of No, A Girlhood Caught in Revolutionary Iran*, Hakakian spoke about her book to a standing-room-only crowd of students, faculty and guests. The audience included Nancy and Hank Bartels, who were responsible for bringing her to the University through the semi-annual Bartels Fellowship Lecture Series.

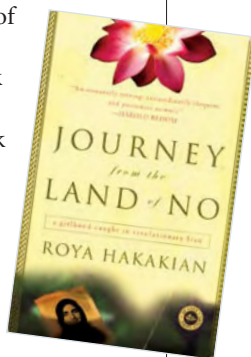
Ms. Hakakian drew smiles when she animatedly read a section from the book about Mrs. Moghadam, the principal placed in her school shortly after the Ayatollah Khomeini assumed power.

Mrs. Moghadam was a black-veiled woman who advocated for complete avoidance of men, and positively no display of hair.

"So girls," Hakakian remembered Mrs. Moghadam as saying, "If I scream, 'Man! Man! Man!' what must you do? Run if you can. And if you can't, hide. And if you can't hide, surrender, and pull the hem of your uniforms over your heads."

In her book, the author brought to the surface her nostalgia for her native land, the changes Iran saw under the Ayatollah, and the injustices that accompanied his rise to power.

Hakakian met with students throughout the day, including writers from *The Elm City Review*, the University's literary magazine. "Roya told us to keep going," said Catherine McClellan, 19, a sophomore English major. "She said that even something as small as a university literary magazine could be a platform for greater things. I think everyone there took that to heart, the motivation and the inspiration she gave us." ♦



Roya Hakakian
speaking at the
Bartels
Fellowship
Lecture



Mastering the Language of the Arab World

The sounds coming from Yasir Hamed's class in Kaplan Hall were indecipherable to most passersby. But to Hamed's students, those noises were perfectly — well, nearly — understandable.

Hamed is teaching a course in Arabic, the first time the University has offered Arabic instruction. Students have signed up in greater numbers than Hamed expected, with twenty students in one class, twenty-two in another.

Next semester, Hamed, a native of the

Sudan, will be teaching advanced Arabic. In that class will be Michelle McSally '09, a criminal justice major.

Seated in the second row of the introductory class that day, she studied a quiz Hamed had just handed out. "With everything going on in Iraq and other Arab countries, the federal government needs people who can communicate in the native language," she said. "I hope to be working in a federal agency — first in ATF, then at the FBI — after graduation, and if I have Arabic as a language, I think it will really help me."

Hamed has been helping others master Arabic since his days as a student at Alexandria University in Egypt. He moved on to teaching Arabic in a summer class at Yale, and now teaches it at Wesleyan and UNH.

"Interest peaked after 9/11," Hamed said. "My students here are working hard to master Arabic. They want to go to the region, they want to understand the Muslim culture. The Koran is written in Arabic. It is the language of the Arab world."