



RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

The Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life

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From the Director's desk...

The 1999-2000 academic year was most productive and rewarding for the Bildner Center. During this year, the Center prepared for a major change in the academic program, held wide-ranging public programs, co-sponsored a year-long international research seminar, and planned major community initiatives. We hope to share with our colleagues, friends, and supporters some of the excitement that accompanies the Center's growth in meeting its multifaceted mission.

This summer Rutgers took a major step forward by merging the Jewish Studies Program and the Department of Hebraic Studies into a single Department of Jewish Studies. This move reflects the University's confidence in the academic strength of Jewish Studies and its future development. Students continue to demonstrate their interest in Jewish Studies courses; we now enter the new academic year with 20 majors and over 40 minors. Last Spring, the Center also recognized outstanding students in Jewish Studies with a special scholarship award ceremony that was well attended by families, faculty, and donors.

Another important development this year was the research seminar devoted to the study of democracy from comparative and interdisciplinary perspectives. The weekly meetings provided a highly productive forum for exploring the nature of democracy and its future by an international group of participants. The Center's two Visiting Fellows from Israel who participated in this seminar also took part in the Center's outreach programs and taught courses for the Jewish Studies program. The Center will continue to provide visiting fellowships as a means of fulfilling its goals to support research and scholarship as well as strengthen its academic curriculum and outreach activities.

The formal dedication of the Herbert and Leonard Littman Families Holocaust Resource Center marked an important development in our outreach mission. Following the dedication ceremony at the Center, the Littman families, Rutgers University President, Dr. Francis L. Lawrence and his wife Mary Kay,

and other guests joined an audience of over 650 people for a unique public performance entitled "Voices from Theresienstadt." Another significant step in furthering the development of the Holocaust Resource Center was the formation of a new advisory committee of committed educators, Rutgers faculty, and community leaders that will help guide its activities and growth.

Building a strong faculty base is essential for guaranteeing the future of Jewish Studies. Thanks to a major gift by the Blanche and Irving Laurie Foundation, the new Department of Jewish Studies has opened a search for the Blanche and Irving Laurie Chair in Jewish history. With additional resources, the Department hopes to recruit more faculty in other areas of Judaica vital for its curriculum. I hope you will enjoy learning more about the Center's programs in the following pages.

Wishing you a Happy New Year,

Yael Zerubavel, Director
Chair, Department of Jewish Studies

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JEWISH STUDIES

Courses 2000-2001

Fall 2000 Semester

Jewish Society & Culture I:
From Antiquity to the Middle
Ages
Nancy Sinkoff

History of East European
Jewry
Nancy Sinkoff

Special Topics: Ritual,
Mysticism and the Poetics of
Jewish Life
(mini-course 7 1/2 weeks)
Michal Govrin

Special Topics:
Jewish American Women:
Contested Identities
Leslie Fishbein

German-Jewish Literature &
Culture from the Enlighten-
ment to the Present
Karina von Tippelskirch

Special Topics: Holocaust
and the Cinema
Terri Ginsberg

History of the Holocaust
Rebecca Kobrin

Israeli Politics
Myron Aronoff

Classical Jewish Philosophy
Leonard Levin

Elementary Modern Hebrew
Lily Levy, Orly Moshenberg,
Akiva Roth

Intermediate Modern Hebrew
Lily Levy, Akiva Roth

Elementary Modern Yiddish
Jeffrey Shandler

Introduction to Hebrew Style
and Literature
Orly Moshenberg

Modern Jewish Literature
Curt Leviant

Hebrew Tales & Poetry (in
Hebrew)
Curt Leviant

Holocaust Literature in
Translation
Curt Leviant

Special Topics: Yiddish
Folklore & Ethnography
Jeffrey Shandler

Graduate Seminar: Cultural
Memory
Yael Zerubavel

Spring 2001 Semester

Jewish Society and Culture
II: The Modern Experience
Rebecca Kobrin

Jewish Studies Seminar -
Jewish Memory
Yael Zerubavel

Special Topics: Introduction
to Talmud
Leonard Levin

Special Topics: Israeli
Society
Chaim Waxman

Israeli Women
Orna Sasson-Levy

American Jewish History &
Culture
Melissa Klapper

Blacks and Jews in America
Deborah White, Debra Schultz

Modern Jewish Philosophy
Leonard Levin

Arab-Israeli Conflict
Dina LeGall

History of the Holocaust
TBA

Elementary Modern Hebrew
Lily Levy, Orly Moshenberg,
Akiva Roth

Intermediate Modern Hebrew
Lily Levy, Akiva Roth

Elementary Modern Yiddish
Jeffrey Shandler

Introduction to Hebrew Style
and Literature
Orly Moshenberg

Yiddish Literature and
Culture
Jeffrey Shandler

Jewish Experience in Life
and Story
Curt Leviant

Hebrew Tales & Poetry (in
Hebrew)
Curt Leviant

Jewish Cinema & Fiction
Curt Leviant

Literature & Spirituality: The
Development of Anglo-
Jewish Poetry, 1830-1998
Daniel Harris

2000 Graduates

JEWISH STUDIES MAJORS

Tahlia Abel
Erica Gross
Mollie Mandel
Jodi Mednick
Andres Y. Mejer
Dara Papier
Laura Simon
Avi Slivko
Jill Tanzman

HEBRAIC STUDIES MAJORS

David Carus
Benjamin Gellis
Michelle Gres
Aviva Pollack

JEWISH STUDIES MINORS

Rachel Kellerman
Avi Naveh
Keren Rivlin

HEBRAIC STUDIES MINORS

Adam Baff
Naami Dickstein
Sara Freidenreich
David Granoff
Miriam Jaffe
Oren Langer
Jason Leffkowitz
Sally Lerman
Estee Lieberman
Deena Novick
Jared Schultz
Natania Schwartz

JEWISH STUDIES FACULTY

Yael Zerubavel, History
Chair, Jewish Studies
Myron Aronoff,
Political Science
Matthew Baigell, Art History
William Donahue, German
Maurice Elias, Psychology
Leslie Fishbein,
American Studies
Ziva Galili, History

Judith Gerson, Sociology
Daniel A. Harris, English
Dina LeGall, History
Curt Leviant, Hebrew Literature
Phyllis Mack, History
Morris Moskowitz,
Yiddish Literature
Alicia Ostriker, English
Barbara Reed, Journalism
Nancy Sinkoff, History
Chaim I. Waxman, Sociology

HEBREW INSTRUCTORS

Lily Levy
Orly Moshenberg
Akiva Roth

AFFILIATED FACULTY

Steven Friedell

New Courses

Israeli Society Chaim Waxman

This course will entail an in-depth analysis of contemporary Israel society based on lectures, readings, and several films. The topics covered in the course will include: the Zionist movement and the establishment of the State of Israel, immigration and social change, ethnicity, social stratification, religion, politics, gender relations, Arabs in Israel, and Israeli-Palestinian relations.

Introduction to Talmud Leonard Levin

What is Talmud? It is law, theology, legend, logic and literature all in one. A close reading and analysis of the first chapter of Tractate Berakhot ("Blessings") will reveal all these facets, and will help the student understand why, after the Bible, the Talmud has been the most formative book for Jewish religion and culture through the ages. In typical fashion, the original topic (when does one pray?) quickly leads to deeper levels of inquiry (what is prayer all about? Why do we live in a world in which prayer is necessary?). The student will gain familiarity with the personalities and general cultural-religious milieu of Talmudic Judaism.

Special Topics: Ritual, Mysticism and the Poetics of Jewish Life Michal Govrin

The course will investigate Jewish Life, defined by Halachah and customs as a highly detailed ritual language with unique poetics. The codified Jewish life encompasses almost every aspect of human existence. It spans from birth to death and from human relationships with God to the web of social behavior. In the Kabbalistic tradition, Jewish ritual is bestowed with mystical or even magical meaning and power. The course will examine a few exemplary rituals and their poetics. It will especially stress the potential link between

Study Abroad in Israel during the 1999-2000 academic year

Maureen Anacovich, RC '02
University of Haifa
Spring '00

Geoffrey Borshof, LC '01
University of Haifa
Spring '00

Sherry Daneshrad,
Newark '00
University of Haifa
Fall '99

Sharon Green, RC '02
University of Haifa
Fall '99

Boris Koyfman, RC '02
University of Haifa
Spring '00

Marshall Lesack, RC '01
Hebrew University
Spring '00

Philip Levy, College of
Engineering, '02
Hebrew University
Spring '00

SharonMarkowitz, RC '01
Ben-Gurion University
Spring '00

Stephanie Pell, RC '01
Hebrew University
Fall '99 and Spring '00

Rachel Sacharow, RC '01
University of Haifa
Spring '00

Oleg Savitsky,
University College '01
University of Haifa
Spring '00

Alana Schultz, RC '01
Hebrew University
Spring '00

Elissa Winkelstein, RC '01
Hebrew University
Spring '00

Rebecca Wohl, RC '01
Ben-Gurion University
Spring '00

aspects of Jewish ritual and the process of artistic creation.

Special Topics: American Jewish Women:Contested Lives Leslie Fishbein

This course examines various Jewish-American women's lives, primarily through autobiography, but also through biography, social history, literature, and film, to assess the interplay of religious belief, secularism, social mobility, and other acculturating influences within the American experience.

Special Topics: Yiddish Folklore & Ethnography Jeffrey Shandler

This course surveys the wide range of Yiddish folk culture—including folktales, proverbs, traditional drama, songs, klezmer music, humor, and material culture—from the seventeenth century to the present. The course also examines how folklore has been integrated into modern Yiddish literature and culture and how modern ethnographers document traditional folkways. No knowledge of Yiddish required.

Special Topics: Yiddish Literature and Culture (in translation) Jeffrey Shandler

This course examines the range of modern Yiddish literary and cultural activities among Jews living in Eastern Europe and America from the late

nineteenth century through the mid-twentieth century. Readings include prose fiction, poetry, and drama by major writers (including Sholem Aleichem, Y. L. Peretz, Sholem Asch, Yankev Glatshteyn, I.J. Singer, Isaac Bashevis Singer), as well as materials related to Yiddish theater, film, language policy, education, politics, and scholarship.

Cultural Memory (Graduate Course) Yael Zerubavel

This seminar focuses on the cultural production of the past and the politics of commemoration from a cross-cultural, comparative perspective. The course explores the relation between history and memory, the transformation of tradition, and the emergence of counter-memories. It examines the role of "sites of memory," such as memorial books, monuments, museums, calendars, memorial rituals, and pilgrimages in shaping collective memory as well as the impact of technology, media, and tourism on its commercialization and trivialization.

For questions or further information regarding the academic program, contact Arlene Goldstein at (732) 932-3571 or e-mail: arleneg@rci.rutgers.edu.

FACULTY UPDATES

Myron Aronoff's book *The Spy Novels of John le Carré: Balancing Ethics and Politics* (1999) was nominated for the Modern Language Association award for Distinguished Scholarly Editions and for the Edgar Allan Poe Award for non-fiction from the Mystery Writers of America. The paperback edition is in production with St. Martin's Press. He recently published "Political Violence and Extremism" Review essay in *Israel Studies*, Vol.4, no. 2 (Fall 1999) 237-46 and "The 'Americanization' of Israeli Politics: Political and Cultural Change," *Israel Studies*, vol.5, no.1 (2000). Aronoff gave a talk on "Post-Zionism and Other Challenges to the Dominant Zionist Discourse" for the The American Jewish Committee, New York, NY (March 2000). He presented papers at the Annual Meeting of the Middle East Studies Association, Washington, D.C. (November 1999); the conference on "Toward a Sociology of Culture & Cognition," Rutgers University (November 1999); and the Annual Meeting of the Association for Israel Studies, Tel Aviv University, Israel (June 2000). He was a member of the organizing committee and a discussant for a conference on "Zionism: a Transitory or Permanent National Framework" at the Ben-Gurion Research Center, Israel.

Matthew Baigell published *Artist and Identity in 20th Century America* (Cambridge University Press, 2000), a two-volume collection of his essays, and co-edited *Complex Identities: Jewish Consciousness and Modern Art* (Rutgers University Press, 2000) with Milly Heyd of the Hebrew University. Baigell gave the following lectures: "American Impressionism," Milburn Public Library (October 1999); "Marsden Hartley's America," Brooks Museum of Art in Memphis, TN (October 1999); "Thomas Hart Benton in the 1930s," Bruce Museum, Greenwich, CT (March 2000); and "Recent Jewish Art," Anshe Emeth Synagogue, New Brunswick (March 2000).

William Donahue published "The End of History: 'Eschatology' in Elias Canetti's *Masse und Macht*," *Fin de siècle-Fin du millénaire: Endzeitstimmungen in der deutschsprachigen Literatur*, Tübingen: Stauffenburg (2000) Helmut Koopmann and Hans-Jörg Knobloch, eds.; "Die Blendung (1935; Auto-da-Fé)," and "Masse und Macht (1960; Crowds and Power)," *Encyclopedia of German Literature*, Michael Konzett, ed. Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn (2000); "The Real 'Tora Connection' in Barbara Honigmann's *Soharas Reise*," in *Schreiben im heutigen Deutschland*, Ursula Beitter, ed. (2000); "Beyond Cultural Literacy: 'Interactive Autobiography' as Holocaust Pedagogy" in *Shedding Light on the Darkness: North American Germanists Teach the Holocaust*, Miriam Jokiniemi and Nancy A. Lauckner, eds. New York: Berghahn (2000): 211-224; and "Die Blendung: Elias Canetti's 'Viennese' Novel," *Sprachkunst: Beiträge zur Literaturwissenschaft* (Austrian Academy of Arts and Sciences) 30.2 (1999): 247-270. Donahue was a Fellow and Pew Scholar at the Erasmus Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Notre Dame during the 1999-2000 academic year. He was awarded the FAS Teaching Award in Spring 1999.

Maurice Elias recently became a member of the Professional Advisory Board of the New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education. Last Spring, he taught an honors seminar on *Growing Up Jewish in America: Historical, Psychological, and Spiritual Identity, Culture, and the Role of Childhood*. Elias presented a paper with Dr. Jeff Kress on Jewish adolescent identity development at the annual conference of the Jewish Research Network at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, NY (June 2000).

Leslie Fishbein presented a paper on "From Shtetl Tochtters to Ghetto Girls: The Transformation of Jewish Women on the Lower East Side" to the Business and Professional Women of the Jewish Federation of Greater Monmouth County (October 1999). She introduced the film *America and the Holocaust: Deceit and Indifference at the Monroe Township Public Library* (May 2000). Under the auspices of the New Jersey Council for the Humanities, Fishbein gave talks at the Paper Mill Playhouse (November 1999), the Jewish Community Center of Middlesex County (February 2000), the South River Public Library for Brandeis Women (April 2000), the Jewish Congregation of Concordia for the Jewish Family Service of Southern Middlesex County (May 2000), and the Monmouth County Library for the National Council of Jewish Women (May 2000).

Judith Gerson gave a presentation on "German Jewish Life in New York City" to a visiting delegation from Wiesbaden, Germany in New York (May 2000). Gerson co-organized a session and presented a paper on "A Sociology of Holocaust/Post-Holocaust Life" at the meeting of the American Sociological Association (August 2000).

Daniel Harris's educational program, JEWISH VOICES: 200 YEARS OF POETRY IN ENGLISH, has been greeted with enthusiasm in the Mid-Atlantic region. During the last year, he gave presentations and short courses at over 30 synagogues and cultural Jewish sites including the Katz Jewish Community Center, Cherry Hill and the Holocaust and Genocide Research Center at Brookdale Community College in New Jersey; Congregation Emanu-El in New York City; and Congregation Beth Am Israel in Penn Valley, PA. Harris's lectures on Jewish-American and Anglo-Jewish poetry, dating back to about 1800, have included texts characteristi-

cally excluded from mainstream anthologies. He has spoken on Emma Lazarus, Karl Shapiro, Isaac Rosenberg, Delmore Schwartz, Adrienne Rich, the poetry of immigration, Jewish women's poetry, Palestine and Israel, and the Shoah. He addresses problems of poetic representation, modern midrashim, Jewish poems on urban themes, poems about Jewish family relations, and the portrayal of Jews in institutions such as churches and universities. Harris has also introduced congregations to modern liturgical poetry.

Dina LeGall gave a Munir Ertegun Foundation Lecture on the "Naqshbandi Sufi Brotherhood and the Ottoman Struggle Against the Kizilbash" at Princeton University (February 2000) and presented a paper on "Naqshbandi Identity" at the Third Biennial Conference of the Society for Iranian Studies, Bethesda, MD (May 2000). She participated in a NEH Summer Institute on "Women and Gender History in Global Perspective" at Rutgers' Institute for Research on Women (July 2000), and presented two papers on women and gender in Islamic history. LeGall's book review of Arthur Buehler's *Sufi Heirs of the Prophet* was published in the *Middle East Studies Association Bulletin*, 33, no. 2 (Winter 1999). She was a visiting fellow at the Department of Near Eastern Studies, Princeton University in the fall of 1999.

Phyllis Mack presented a paper on "Motherhood and Spirituality in Early Modern England" at Holloway College and the University of London in England. She also gave a talk on "Religion and the Enlightenment" at Cornell University. She completed revisions on a forthcoming book entitled *In God's Name: Genocide and Religion in the 20th Century*, co-edited with Omer Bartov, to be published by Berghahn Books.

Alicia Ostriker's "Jephthah's Daughter: A Lament" appeared in *Bridges: A Journal for Jewish Feminists* and our *Friends*, Vol. 8, 2000. Her volume of essays, *Dancing at the Devil's Party: Essays on Poetry, Politics and the Erotic* (University of Michigan Press, 2000), includes an essay on "Allen Ginsberg: The Poet as Jew." She taught weeklong Midrash writing workshops at the Institute for Contemporary Midrash, Camp Isabella Friedman, CT and at Aleph Kallah, Corvallis, OR (Summer 1999); and a half-day workshop at the Women's Institute for Continuing Jewish Education, San Diego, CA (April 2000). Ostriker gave a lecture series on "Midrash Today" at the Anshe Emeth Memorial Temple, New Brunswick (January-February 2000).

Barbara Straus Reed published three chapters in "The Civil War and the Press," edited by David B. Sachsman, S. Kittrell Rushing, and Debra Reddin van Tuyl (Transaction Press, 1999). She spoke on narrow casting in broadcasting at the regional convention of the Society of Professional Journalists. Reed discussed civic education and democracy in the journalism curriculum at the meeting of the New Jersey Communication Association (April 2000). She was elected to the national office of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, serving on its standing committee on Professional Freedom and Responsibility. Reed served as a judge for the American Jewish Press Association's annual competition.

Nancy Sinkoff published "Benjamin Franklin in Jewish Eastern Europe: Cultural Appropriation in the Age of the Enlightenment," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 61.1 (January 2000): 133-152 and "Triestine Jewry: The Exception that Proves the Habsburg State-Building Rule," a review of Lois C. Dubin, *The Port Jews of Habsburg Trieste: Absolutist Politics and Enlightenment Culture*

on HABSBURG, *H-Net Reviews*, May 24, 2000. Sinkoff presented the following papers: "Between Hasidism and Atheistic Rationalism: Moderating the Jewish Enlightenment in Eastern Europe" at the "Utopia, Violence, Resistance: Remaking and Unmaking Humanity" seminar at the Rutgers Center for Historical Analysis (November 1999); "Of Beards, Divorce and Interest: Joseph Perl as Historian of Jewish Law," in a panel on Habsburg Jewry at the annual conference for the Association for Jewish Studies (December 1999); and "Between History and Law: The Case of Joseph Perl in Austrian Galicia," at the Second International Conference on the History of the Jewish Enlightenment, Bar-Ilan University, Israel (April 2000).

Chaim Waxman co-authored the *Historical Dictionary of Zionism* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2000). He also published "Language and Identity Among America's Jews," in David Zisenwine and David Schers, eds., *Present and Future: Jewish Culture, Identity and Language*, Tel-Aviv: Tel-Aviv University (1999); "The 'Americanization' of Israel: A Demographic, Cultural and Political Evaluation" (with Uzi Rebhun), *Israel Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (Spring 2000). Waxman presented papers at the Annual Congress of the International Institute of Sociology, Tel-Aviv University (July 1999); the Van Leer Institute, Jerusalem (July 1999); the conference on "Establishing A Research Agenda for the Jewish Community," sponsored by the Mandell L. Berman Institute - North American Jewish Data Bank, City University of New York Graduate Center (October 1999); the Jewish Community Center of Central New Jersey, Scotch Plains, NJ (March 2000); and at the Orthodox Forum in New York (April 2000). Waxman chaired a session on "The Israeli-Palestinian

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FACULTY PROFILE

Chaim Waxman



Religion, a strong sense of social welfare, and events in Israel have helped shape the life and work of Dr. Chaim I. Waxman, professor of sociology at Rutgers who is widely known for his

teaching, research and writing.

As one of the faculty members who initiated the Jewish Studies Program, which recently became a university department, Waxman has been teaching a course on the Sociology of American Jewish Religious Movements. He will be teaching a new course on Israeli Society next Spring.

Waxman's research into subjects as varied as poverty, Arab ideology, changes in American Jewry, and politics of religion in Israel has resulted in about a hundred publications. Historical Dictionary of Zionism co-authored with Dr. Raphael Medoff and Jewish Baby Boomers: A Communal Perspective are among his recent publications. Waxman said, Jewish Baby Boomers is based on the 1990 Jewish Population Survey of respondents born between 1945-65, comparing them to American baby boomers in other religious and ethnic groups and to American Jews born 1925-45. "I wanted to see how the Jewish baby boomers differ from others. What I found was that distinct Jewish patterns are decreasing and they are increasingly similar to other American baby boomers of similar socioeconomic status," he said. "The findings have significant implications for the organized American Jewish community because they indicate decreasing communal identification."

The professor said a combination of things led to his current professional specialization in the sociology of religion and ethnicity. His youthful goal was to be a criminal lawyer like Clarence Darrow and Perry Mason. A required college course introduced him to sociology.

"I've focused on the things I've studied and been involved in personally. Being Jewish is a combination of religion and ethnicity," Waxman said. "I was raised in a family where religion played a strong role." His father, Nissan Waxman, was a rabbi. Studying under Peter L. Berger whom Waxman considers one of the most prominent theoreticians in the sociology of religion, "sparked tremendous interest in me in the subject of religion."

Waxman initially focused on social welfare. He graduated from Yeshiva University, New York, in 1963 and went on to earn master's and doctoral degrees at The New School for Social Research, New York. Jobs with the New York City Department of Welfare and the Federal Office of Economic Opportunity, "left me completely frustrated with the structure of the welfare department," he said, "but, I gained insight and empathy for many of my clients. This got me into poverty and social

welfare." It led to the topic for his doctoral dissertation, which grew into his 1977 book, *The Stigma of Poverty*.

A 1960s rise in ethnic consciousness and the Six Day War in Israel helped refocus his work. At a 1967 convention of sociopolitical groups he was involved in, he found "very little, if any, empathy with Israel. I just felt abandoned by those very organizations I felt so close to. I changed my focus and became more and more interested in looking at Jews in America," and more recently, at Jews in Israel. Waxman visits Israel frequently where his three children and 13 grandchildren now live.

Waxman has published a book, which he co-edited with Dr. Uzi Rebhun of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, on Jews in Israel. The book will examine central issues of the Jewish society in Israel over the last two decades. The approach of Waxman and Rebhun to understanding Jewish life in Israel is largely interdisciplinary and they focus on the behaviors of people, rather than institutions or organizations, within various social, cultural and political realms.

The professor delights in his interactions with students. "I think just being able to hear their ideas, to express my ideas, to sometimes see their eyes light up when they see something they haven't before and they understand things in a new way. I love teaching. I just find all of that very fascinating - very rewarding."

Faculty Updates

Continued from page 5

Conflict in Historical Perspective" at the annual conference of the Association for Israel Studies, Tel-Aviv University (June 2000).

Yael Zerubavel's new articles include "Revisiting the Pioneer Past: Continuity and Change in Hebrew Settlement Narratives" *Hebrew Studies* 41: (Fall 2000); "Rachel and the Female Voice: Labor, Gender, and the Zionist Pioneer Vision," a volume in honor of Arnold Band's 70th Birthday, edited by David C. Jacobson and William Cutter. *Brown Judaic Studies Series* (forthcoming); "Female Images in a State of War: Ideology, Crisis, and the Politics of Gender in Israel," in Amir Weiner, ed. *Modernity and Population Management in the 20th Century*, Stanford University Press (in press); and a book review, "Monuments for Fallen Soldiers: The Culture of Commemoration in Israel," *Katedra* 94 (1999):182-84 (in Hebrew). Zerubavel was a Visiting Fellow and gave a series of lectures at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Sorbonne, during Spring 2000. She presented the following papers: "The Desert as a Historical Metaphor," a symposium on "Landscapes of History," Rutgers Center for Historical Analysis (October 1999); "The Binding of Isaac and the Patriotic Martyr: Contested Represen-

Faculty Updates

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tations of Heroism and Sacrifice in Israeli Culture," Princeton University (March 2000); "Utopia: Between Good and Evil," sponsored by the Rutgers Center for Historical Analysis (March 2000); "Mythical Sites, Symbolic Meaning: The Case of the Desert," an international conference at Ben-Gurion University (June 2000); "Death on the Altar: Transforming Representations of Patriotic Sacrifice in Israeli Culture" at the annual

meeting of the Association for Israel Studies (June 2000). She was co-organizer and moderator of a conference on "The Nature of Community in Judaism," co-sponsored by Rutgers and United Jewish Federation of MetroWest (October 1999) and gave several community lectures in New Jersey, New York, and Atlanta, GA. She continues to serve on the Board of Directors of the Association for Jewish Studies and the Board of the Association for Israel Studies. She also serves on the Editorial Board of the journal *Israel Studies* and the Association for Israel Studies Review.

VISITING FACULTY 2000-2001



Michal Govrin

Michal Govrin is an Israeli writer, poet and theater director. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Paris where she studied Jewish Ritual and Theater. Govrin has published six books of fiction and poetry and her critical and personal essays on the theater, the Holocaust and contemporary Jewish theology have appeared in magazines and anthologies in several languages.

Since the early 1970s, Govrin has been

considered a leading creator of experimental Jewish theater and literature through her avante-garde poetics which draw upon Talmudic, Kabbalistic and liturgical sources. She is the laureate of several literary prizes, most recently The 1999 Prime Minister Prize for Writers in Israel. Her novel, *The Name* (HaShem), received the 1997 Kugel Literary Prize and was nominated for the 2000 Koret Jewish Book Award. Govrin also teaches at The School of Visual Theater, and is the honorary head of the Theater Department at Emuna Women's College in Jerusalem. As the Aresty Visiting Fellow at the Center and a Writer-In-Residence, she will be teaching a new course on Ritual, Mysticism and the Poetics of Jewish Life during Fall 2000.

Jeffrey Shandler is a scholar of modern Jewish culture. He holds a Ph.D. in Yiddish Studies from Columbia University and was a Dorot Teaching Fellow at the Skirball Department of Hebrew and Judaic Studies at New York University as well as a post-doctoral fellow at the Annenberg School of Communication and the Center for Judaic Studies at the University of Pennsylvania. Shandler has written and lectured widely on such topics as Jewish culture, modern Yiddish literature, American responses to the Holocaust, and the role that media plays in modern Jewish life. Shandler's book, *While America Watches: Televising the Holocaust* (Oxford University Press, 1999) is a full-length study of the presentation of the Holocaust on television in all genres of broadcasting from the late 1940s

to the end of the twentieth century. Shandler was the curator of exhibitions and media programs at the National Jewish Archive of Broadcasting at the Jewish Museum in New York, the YIVO Institute, and the National Museum of American Jewish History in Philadelphia. As the Center's Smart Family Fellow, Shandler will be teaching Yiddish Language courses and courses on Yiddish culture, literature, and folklore during the upcoming academic year.

Tamar Katriel is a professor in the Departments of Education and Communication and the former Chair of the Department of Communication at the University of Haifa. She received her Ph.D. from the Department of Speech Communication at the University of Washington, Seattle. Katriel has held visiting appointments at the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Texas at Austin, Northwestern University, Arizona State University, The Getty Center for the Study of the Humanities, and the Advanced Studies Institute at the Hebrew University. Her research and teaching focus on the ethnography of communication, intercultural communication and anthropological approaches to the study of children and youth. Katriel's work includes research on Israeli speech styles and cultural symbolism, Israeli children's peer group culture, and the rhetoric of educational discourse in such domains as schools, youth movements, museums and media. Her most recent book is *Milot Maft'e'ach: Dfusei Tarbut Vetikshore Beisrael* (Patterns of Culture and Communication in Israel) (University of Haifa Press, 1999). Katriel will be conducting an ethnographic study of Jewish education in area schools while at Rutgers during the 2000-2001 academic year.

Orna Sasson-Levy is a doctoral candidate in the department of Sociology and Anthropology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where she is completing her dissertation on the constructions of gender identities within the Israeli Army. Her M.A. thesis, which offered a feminist and organizational analysis of a protest movement in Israel, won the Outstanding Thesis Award from the Israel Anthropology Association in 1995. Sasson-Levy will be teaching a course on Israeli Women at Rutgers during Spring 2001.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

From the Associate Director

Over the past year, the Center's community outreach experienced significant growth in its breadth and scope. The array of international scholars and speakers presented by the Center served to enhance the academic and public programs. Attendance at the Center's events increased dramatically as more people learned of their quality and diversity. We are particularly proud of the production "Voices from Theresienstadt," the Center's first foray into the cultural arena. The overwhelming attendance of this event highlighted the importance of the Holocaust Resource Center at Rutgers and the interest in its mission.

Several new community ventures are projected for the upcoming program year. The first annual Central New Jersey Jewish Film Festival opens on Sunday, November 5. The festival schedule of international award winning films, filmmakers, and speakers, adds a new dimension to the Center's program. Another new project on the agenda for the Center is an innovative statewide initiative for Jewish Federation Leadership. This collaborative effort will engage lay and professional leaders in statewide creative problem-solving. Among other topics planned for next year are lectures on Israeli Art, Yiddish in America, German women, and Black-Jewish relationships.

—Karen Small

Littman Families Dedicate Holocaust Resource Center

It is now the Herbert and Leonard Littman Families Holocaust Resource Center (HRC) at the Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life at Rutgers.

The HRC was rededicated in February in honor of two families who have been prominent supporters of philanthropic organizations and community activities throughout Central New Jersey. Rutgers President, Francis L. Lawrence, and Center Director, Yael Zerubavel, were among the speakers at this special celebration.

Last year, Herbert (RU '52) and Leonard Littman provided a \$350,000 endowment to name the Holocaust Center. "It was one of the value choices we wanted to make," said Leonard Littman who, with his brother Herbert, returned from military service in the 1950s to build Littman Jewelers into the largest family owned jewelry chain in the United States and the seventh largest jeweler.

Leonard and Barbara Littman of Highland Park and Herbert and Linda Littman, formerly of Watchung and now Boca Raton, Fla., have a long history of



Leonard Littman, Barbara Littman, President Francis Lawrence, Linda Littman, Herbert Littman and Yael Zerubavel dedicate the Herbert and Leonard Littman Families Holocaust Resource Center.

public service.

"We felt we were in a position to make a large contribution and put money back into the community that has been so supportive of us our entire lives. It is important that people never forget the Holocaust," he said.

The Holocaust Resource Center was established in 1997 to teach future

generations about the Holocaust by training educators and providing educational materials to teachers, students and scholars. The Center's activities enhance public awareness of the Holocaust and promote discussion of racism, genocide, discrimination and the importance of protecting human rights.



Judy Weiss (DC '52), Yael Zerubavel, David Weiss, Joan Bildner, Allen Bildner and Sima Jelin Lichtman at David Weiss's talk on his book "Reluctant Return: A Survivor's Journey to Austria"

HOLOCAUST RESOURCE CENTER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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Over 650 attend "Voices from Theresienstadt"

"Voices From Theresienstadt," a monodrama with music, launched the inauguration of the Herbert and Leonard Littman Families Holocaust Resource Center (HRC) on February 8. The play is based on the poetry of Ilse Herlinger Weber, a victim of the Holocaust. "Voices" is the story of five fictional Jewish women whose paths cross in the Theresienstadt ghetto where Weber wrote her final poetry.

Skillfully performed by the Norwegian actress, Bente Kahan, the one-woman play which she co-authored was produced by the Bildner Center in cooperation with the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy and the Mason Gross School of the Arts. The event was the Ruth Ellen Steinman Bloustein Memorial Concert.

In line with the Center's commitment to Holocaust education, the full production was given as a free public performance in the Nicholas Music Center, New Brunswick. The performance attracted over 650 people, the largest program yet sponsored by the Bildner Center. That afternoon, seventh- and eighth-graders at the Paul Robeson Community School, New Brunswick, saw a 20-minute excerpt from the play, which was followed by a discussion with Ms. Kahan. "It is important to us that students be exposed to different ways of learning about the Holocaust," said Karen Small, who coordinates the activities of the Holocaust Resource Center.

The Center's presentation grew out of a search by Rutgers Professor Hans Fisher (RU '50) for the author of a storybook he had loved during his childhood in pre-Holocaust Germany. He learned about



Bente Kahan performs for students at the Paul Robeson Community School

Weber's death at Auschwitz, met her surviving son and obtained a volume of her last poems. When the Fishers discovered Kahan's recording of "Voices From Theresienstadt" in a Jewish bookstore in Berlin they brought it to the Center's attention.

Resource Library — The Holocaust Resource Center is building a collection of reference and history books, memoirs, journals, instructional materials, and videotapes of survivors' testimonies and documentary, and other films relating to the Holocaust. Thanks to the generosity of the Laurie Foundation, the Library also houses the Jewish Heritage Video Collection, which includes 200 videotapes of Jewish interest. A computer station and CD-Roms are available for individual study or preview purposes. The Resource Center is open to educators, students, and community members.

■ WORKSHOP FOR TEACHERS —

Images of the Holocaust in TV and Film
April 7, 2000

- Hollywood's Impact on Holocaust Memory, Alan Mintz, Brandeis University
- The Holocaust in Prime Time TV, Jeffrey Shandler, New York University
- Adolescent Perspectives on the Holocaust, Mary Johnson, Facing History and Ourselves
- Utilizing Holocaust Images in the Classroom, Panel Discussion

■ FOUR WEEK MINI-COURSE — *The Holocaust: An Overview*
Taught by Israel Bartal, March 2000 — Through lectures, films and discussion, the mini-course addressed the major themes of the Holocaust including flight, destruction, resistance, and rescue.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Issues of Democracy examined at Rutgers

A year long seminar on Cultures of Democracy and Democratization: Israel, Eastern Europe and Beyond, offered in conjunction with the Center for Russian, Central and East European Studies at Rutgers, was the Center's first

major research project. The goal of the seminar was to compare the role of various collective identities in the ongoing formation and reformation of political cultures in Israel and such democratizing states as Poland, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia. Professors Myron J. Aronoff and Jan Kubik coordinated the seminar. According to Aronoff, "the international group of scholars were concerned with very similar problems and the unique interdisciplinary approach lent to the

success of the seminar." Participants focusing on the study of Israel included Professors Israel Bartal and Ilan Peleg and graduate students Ezra Kopelowitz and Gadi Taub. Other seminar participants included visiting scholars from the U.S. and Europe, Rutgers faculty, and advanced graduate students. Renowned guest scholars invited to address the seminar included Lech Welesa, Konstanty Gebert, and Professors Yaron Ezrahi, Joel Midgal, and Robert Hayden.



Yael Zerubavel, Yaron Ezrahi, Ruth and Alvin Rockoff (RU '49)

Rockoff lecture features Yaron Ezrahi

Yaron Ezrahi, Senior Fellow at the Israel Democracy Institute and Professor of Political Science at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem delivered the Inaugural Ruth and Alvin Rockoff Annual Lecture. Professor Ezrahi's talk, entitled "Democratization and its Opponents in Contemporary Israel," addressed the dilemmas of Israeli democracy: Israel's dual commitment to the Jewish people and its vision of democracy. His talk drew a large audience and was followed by an engaging discussion and a reception.

Bloustein Memorial Lecture Explores Jewish Life in Poland

Konstanty Gebert, one of Poland's leading social and political analysts, delivered The Third Annual Ruth Ellen Steinman Bloustein & Edward J. Bloustein Memorial Lecture on The Revival of Jewish Life in Poland. Gebert is the founder and editor in chief of *Midrasz*, the only Jewish monthly published in Poland. An organizer of the unofficial "Jewish Flying University" in the 1970s, he gained prominence as a dissident journalist during martial law, writing under the name of Dawid Warszawski. Gebert described the complexities of living in a small yet thriving Jewish community in Warsaw that supports a Jewish day school but has no kosher food available. During a lively exchange following the talk, members of the audience questioned Gebert on how Jews continue to live in Poland after the Holocaust.



James Hughes (Dean, Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy), Yael Zerubavel, Jan Kubik (Director, Center for Russian, Central, and East European Studies), Konstanty Gebert (editor, *Midrasz*), Myron Aronoff (Professor of Political Science)

'The Life and Times of Hank Greenberg'

It was a full house at the screening of the "The Life and Times of Hank Greenberg" on Sunday, June 4. Aviva Kempner, the writer, producer and director, introduced the film and engaged in a discussion with the audience following the screening. The event was the Inaugural Abram Matlofsky Memorial Program, funded by the Karma Foundation in memory of Sharon Karmazin's father, and presented under the auspices of the Bildner Center and the Rutgers Film Co-op/New Jersey Media Arts Center.

At a special reception prior to the

screening, Sharon Karmazin (DC '67, SCILS '69) spoke about her father. She said "he had a lot of pride in Jewish athletes and followed their careers. The Hank Greenberg film is a wonderful tribute to his memory." As America's first Jewish baseball star, Greenberg helped break down barriers of discrimination in American sports and society.

The film also served as a preview for the upcoming **Central New Jersey Jewish Film Festival**, sponsored by the Bildner Center, which will premiere the week of November 5 - 12. The festival, featuring international award winning



Craig Karmazin, Sharon Karmazin and Dina K. Elkins at the reception for the Abram Matlofsky Memorial Program funded by the Karma Foundation

films, is made possible through a generous contribution from the Karma Foundation.

Other Lectures & Programs

The Nature of Community in Judaism
October 24, 1999

One-day conference co-sponsored with the Jewish Education Association of the United Jewish Federation of MetroWest.
(See photo, pg. 12)

Creativity, Kabbalah and the Mystical Experience
October 26, 1999

Speakers: Moshe Idel, Max Cooper Professor of Jewish Thought, the Hebrew University & award-winning Israeli writer, Michal Govrin.

The public lecture was preceded by a study session with Moshe Idel on *Varieties of Kabbalah Today: Old and New*.

Jews and Addictions: The Particular Problem of Gambling
October 28, 1999

Rabbi Eric Lankin, Executive Director of the New Jersey Region of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, co-sponsored with Hillel.

Prayer, Poetry and Women's Spirituality
November 7, 1999
Readings by Shirley Kaufman, poet, Galit Hasan Rokem, poet and professor at the Hebrew University; and lecture by Chava Weissler, Philip and Muriel Berman Chair of Jewish Civilization, Lehigh University.



Shirley Kaufman (Poet) and Galit Hasan Rokem (Poet and Professor at Hebrew University) confer at the Prayer, Poetry and Women's Spirituality program

Inventing the Past: The Ultra-Orthodox Response to Zionism
November 17, 1999
Israel Bartal, The Hebrew University & Rutgers Visiting Senior Fellow.

Reluctant Return: A Survivor's Journey to an Austrian Town
November 21, 1999
David W. Weiss, author and Professor Emeritus, Hadassah Medical School

Comparing Israeli and German Responses to the Holocaust in Art
February 22, 2000
Ziva Amishai-Maisels, the Alice and Edward G. Winant Chair for Art History, The Hebrew University.

Is Life Beautiful? Can the Holocaust be Funny? Notes on Older and Newer Films
March 1, 2000

Sander L. Gilman, Henry R. Luce Distinguished Service Professor of the Liberal Arts in Human Biology, University of Chicago, co-sponsored with the Rutgers' Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures.

A Cross and A Star: Growing Up Jewish in Latin America; the Inaugural Raoul Wallenberg Annual Lecture funded by the Cooperman Family
March 30, 2000
Marjorie Agosin, author and professor Wellesley College.

The Problem of Evil in the Bible
April 4, 2000
Edward Greenstein, Tel Aviv University.
The public lecture was preceded by a study session on the Book of Job.

Jewish Culture Wars: Changing Attitudes Towards Religion and Ethnicity among American and Israeli Jews
April 12, 2000
Ezra Kopelowitz, The Syril and Norman Reitman Visiting Fellow at Rutgers.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Visiting Scholars Enhance Center's Programs

This year, the Center was privileged to benefit from the scholarship of its Visiting Fellows, Israel Bartal and Ezra Kopelowitz. Their contributions to the Jewish Studies curriculum and the Center's activities have greatly enriched the intellectual and academic life at Rutgers and the surrounding communities.

Israel Bartal, former chair of the Department of Jewish History at Hebrew University, served as a Senior Fellow at the Bildner Center this year. Professor Bartal's research in the area of the pre-Zionist Jewish community in Palestine, and the history and culture of Polish Jewry greatly enhanced this year's Jewish Studies curriculum. In the fall, he taught a course on the History of Zionism, and in the spring semester, a non-credit mini-course for high-school teachers on the Holocaust. Professor Bartal was one of a select group of scholars who participated in a year-long international research seminar focusing on the challenges facing democracy.

As part of the Center's outreach initiative, Professor Bartal presented a thought-provoking lecture at Rutgers entitled, "Inventing the Past: The Ultra-Orthodox Response to Zionism." The Center sponsored several community lectures delivered by Professor Bartal, which included talks at the Highland Park Conservative Temple, and at the Jewish Community Center of Central New Jersey.

Ezra Kopelowitz, the Norman and Syril Reitman Visiting Scholar, recently submitted his dissertation to the department of Sociology and Anthropology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Kopelowitz utilized his research in many venues including teaching a course on Israeli Politics during the spring semester. He also served as an active participant in the international research seminar on democracy. As the inaugural Norman and Syril Reitman Visiting Fellow, he delivered a talk on, "Jewish Culture Wars: Changing Attitudes Towards Religion and Ethnicity Among American and Israeli Jews," which was attended by over 120 people. Kopelowitz delivered several community lectures sponsored by the Center, including a talk in conjunction with Jewish Family Service's Russian refugee program, and a lecture at the Highland Park Conservative Temple.



Participants in the conference on *The Nature of Community in Judaism*. Seated (l to r): Ismar Schorsch (Chancellor, Jewish Theological Seminary); Robert Chazan (New York University); and Lawrence Schiffman (New York University); Standing (l to r): Wallace Green (UJA of Bergen County and North Hudson); Sylvia Barack Fishman (Brandeis University); William Neigher (United Jewish Federation of MetroWest); Yael Zerubavel.



Toby and Leon Cooperman, Marjorie Agosin, Yael Zerubavel and Karen Small at the inaugural Raoul Wallenberg Lecture endowed by the Cooperman Family Foundation

Norman (RC '32) and Syril (DC '33) Reitman with Ezra Kopelowitz, the first Norman and Syril Reitman Fellow who delivered a talk on *Jewish Culture Wars: Changing Attitudes Towards Religion and Ethnicity Among American and Israeli Jews*



DEVELOPMENT

There are many ways in which this year's major donors to the Center have become partners in our success.

We greatly appreciate those donors who decided to honor their family by contributing a significant gift to our general endowment fund and naming a special program or room at our facility. This year **Herbert & Linda Littman**, and **Leonard & Barbara Littman** provided such support to dedicate the Center's Holocaust Resource Center this spring (see article on page 8).

Many of the Center's newest donors have donated stock and received additional charitable tax advantages as a result. Others have taken advantage of the ability to designate their gift to the Center and also receive quarterly interest payments through the Rutgers University Gift Annuity Program.

Lillian Fertig and **Alexander Seaman** are two such individuals. All donors who make planned gifts receive the rights and privileges of membership in the Colonel Henry Rutgers Society.

Our thanks to new donor, **Franklin Hannoch, Jr.** As a member of the Rutgers College Class of 1951, his gift qualified him as a member of the President's Council and was also credited toward his class reunion campaign.

Please consider including the Center in your charitable giving plan this year. ***Now is the time when your gift can make a significant difference.*** We would appreciate the opportunity to give you a tour of our facility and answer any inquiries. Please contact **Naomi L. Adler, Esq., Director of Development**, at 732-932-3575 or nadler@rci.rutgers.edu.

Major gifts to the Center

July 1, 1999 through June 30, 2000

Jerome and Lorraine Aresty
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The Henry and Marilyn Taub Foundation
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Bert Wolf

Foundation and Corporate grants

We are grateful to **The Smart Foundation** for a grant to provide the necessary funds to bring to the Center an additional visiting professor as well as the multi-year commitment from **The Henry and Marilyn Taub Foundation** for the Center's curriculum enhancement fund. Thanks also to **USA Detergents, Inc.**, which honored **New Jersey State Senator Jack Sinagra** by giving a major gift to the Center's general endowment fund in his name.

Campaign Leadership

Campaign Co-chairs
Joan Bildner
Alvin Rockoff
Campaign Vice-chairs
Bruce Freeman
Herbert Klein
Sima Jelin Lichtman
Harold Perl
Norman Reitman
Adelaide Zagoren



Jerome and Lorraine Aresty

Jerome and Lorraine Aresty and Norman and Syril Reitman established endowments to fund *Visiting Scholars in Jewish Studies* as a means to augment the academic program. These scholars have also become an important element of the Center's community outreach mission as they deliver public lectures during their tenure at Rutgers.



Arline Schwartzman, recognizing her husband Henry's special commitment Rutgers, recently gave

a generous contribution to dedicate one of the Center's seminar rooms in the family's name. Such unrestricted gifts reflect a strong commitment to the Center's overall mission of promoting scholarship, research and community outreach.

STUDENT NEWS

Andres Yoav Mejer

Some students are content with one college major. Andres Yoav Mejer, who received an award from the Louis Fishman Memorial Student Support Fund, has three: History/Political Science; Jewish Studies; and Hebraic Studies.

"My interests overlapped. Israel has been my focus," said the new liberal arts graduate of Rutgers, the State University. "My goal is international law with a focus on the Middle East. Conflict resolution is what I like, or international political law." Yoav plans to move back to Israel and, "down the road, I want to get into foreign service for Israel." Further in the future, he is considering a political career.

Mejer got an early start toward his goals as a senior-year intern with Rutgers' Middle Eastern Studies Department, creating a resource page on international law and designing a



Andres Yoav Mejer with Gene and Richard Fishman

web course for high school teachers focusing on international law specializing in the Middle East. This spring, he interned for the Media and Public Affairs Department of the Consulate General of Israel, New York.

A native of Chile, Mejer, 25, has spent about seven years in Israel where his family currently lives. When he entered Rutgers in 1993, he enrolled in several Hebraic Studies courses. When he

returned in 1998, after a break in Israel, the new Jewish Studies Program was available.

"It definitely adds a lot to the education you get here. There are really amazing professors," he said. He took 23 Jewish Studies courses "just out of interest. I was quite honored to get the Fishman Award as a result. It was a very nice feeling to meet the benefactors," he added.

His academic achievements - including three semesters on the Dean's List and membership in Golden Key National Honor Society - came while working full time in front office and staff training duties for a number of hotels and at the AT&T Learning Center in Basking Ridge. He was program director for the Rutgers Israel Political Activist Committee and was also active in the American Israel Political Activist Committee, Rutgers Association for Zionism in Israel, and "Hamagshimim" (University Zionist Movement).

Academic Achievement Awards

The Leonard and Adele Blumberg Student Award

Daniel Schimel, '02

The Louis Fishman Memorial Student Support Fund

Andres Yoav Mejer, '00

The Betty and Julius Gillman Memorial Student Support Fund and The Gertrude and Jacob Henoch Memorial Student Support Fund

Ayelet Margolin, '02

The Rudolph and Mary Solomon Klein Undergraduate Scholarship

Sara Elias, '00

The Maurice Meyer III and Irma Meyer Endowed Student Support Fund and The Norma U. and David M. Levitt Student Award

Marla Kotler, '00

The Bernice and Milton I. Luxemburg Student Award

Tahlia Abel, '00

The Harold and Betty Perl Endowed Scholarship

Dara Papier, '00

Max Likin, Graduate Student

(See photo, page 15)

The Reitman Family Student Award

James Casteel, Graduate Student

The Baruch S. and Pearl W. Seidman Scholarship Fund

Sarah Finkelstein, '01

Gad S. Taub, Graduate Student

Honors Theses

Henry Rutgers Thesis

Jewish Suburbia in the West Bank
Theresa Pletchon

Jewish Studies Honors Thesis

Newly Observant Jews
Dara Papier

Tahlia Abel

Tahlia Abel took her first Jewish Studies class as a sophomore at Douglass College, and it changed her university career.

"I decided to major in Jewish Studies," said the new graduate of Rutgers, who received the Bernice and Milton I. Luxemburg Student Award from Jewish Studies. "It was very interdisciplinary. My classes were small, and my teachers knew who I was. I felt people in the class were sort of on my wavelength. I didn't feel lost in the crowd."

She found many of her professors particularly influential and helpful. One was Dr. Maurice Elias with whom she had an honors seminar on 'Growing Up Jewish in America'. "It was just an amazing class," said Abel, who has decided she wants to go into Jewish education. I learned what it means to try to influence a child positively and Jewishly at the same time."

She found Dr. Yael Zerubavel, with whom she took a course on Israeli Culture, "a remarkable teacher." Dr. Chaim I. Waxman taught her "how important it is to remember I am part of a huge community that makes up a 2,000-year-old civilization. Even as we



are influenced by so many things American, it is important to retain our Jewish identity."

That is not all. Abel has been active in Hillel throughout college, serving two years on the Hillel Leadership Council and as educational chairperson and vice president for Israel Programs. She was a manager at the Douglass Café, taught at Anshe Emeth Memorial Temple, New Brunswick, and was Senior Youth Group advisor at Sha'arai Tefillah Israel, South Orange. She volunteered at Elijah's Promise Soup Kitchen, New Brunswick, and helped coordinate weekly visits by Hillel members to the Central New Jersey Jewish Home for the Aged, Somerset.

Abel plans to spend a year working in Minneapolis while preparing for graduate school. Her first choice is Hebrew Union College, Los Angeles, where she plans to enter the Rhea Hirsch School of Education.

"My ultimate goal would be to teach on a university level - probably in the Jewish Studies Department or Women's Studies Department," she said.

Forum for Students Who Teach in Hebrew Schools

A special forum for Hebrew School teachers provided educators an opportunity to exchange ideas and concerns, and to network with each other. The participants consisted primarily of Rutgers students who were joined by several teachers from the local community. Sponsored by the Center and Hillel, the program was led by Paul A. Flexner, the Director of the Department of Human Resources Development for the Jewish Education Association of America (JESNA) and the Center's Associate Director, Karen Small. Seasoned educators Elliott Spack (Executive Director, CAJE), Bill Robinson (Anshe Emeth Memorial Temple), Irene Bolton (educational consultant for the Reform movement in New Jersey) were available to answer questions. The program was initiated by Rutgers students.



Student award recipients with Yael Zerubavel at the Jewish Studies awards ceremony held at the Center, April, 2000.

Upcoming Programs 2000-2001

The Decline of Messianism in
Contemporary Israel and its Implica-
tions on Religious Violence
Co-sponsored with the Department of
Political Science
Gideon Aran
September 14; 4:30 p.m.

The Language of Silence: West
German Literature and the Holocaust
The Ruth Ellen Steinman & Edward J.
Bloustein Memorial Lecture
Ernestine Schlant Bradley
September 20; 5:00 p.m.

Frauen: German Women Recall the
Third Reich
Co-sponsored with the German
Department
Allison Owings
October 5; 4:30 p.m.

Jewish Renewal in Israeli Art - a
View from Within
Michal Govrin
The Aresty Visiting Fellow
October 26; 7:30 p.m.

Central NJ Jewish Film Festival
Nov. 5 — "Yana's Friends"; "After the
End of the World"
Nov. 7 — TBA
Nov. 9 — "Yana's Friends"
Nov. 12 — TBA

The 'Jewish Mark Twain': Sholem
Aleichem and Yiddish in America
Jeffrey Shandler
The Smart Visiting Fellow
November 29; 7:30 p.m.

Ethnicity Transnationalized:
Contemporary German Jews
Michael Bodemann
March 21; 7:30 p.m.

The Ruth and Alvin Rockoff
Annual Lecture
Speaker: Pnina Lahav
March 11; 7:00 p.m.

THE ALLEN AND JOAN BILDNER Center for the Study of Jewish Life

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