

Jewish Studies at Rutgers

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

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Art in the Public Space: Remembering 9/11 and the Holocaust

One week after the tenth anniversary of 9/11 and the unveiling of the National September 11 Memorial at the World Trade Center site in New York, the Bildner Center hosted a lively conversation between the internationally renowned architect **Daniel Libeskind** and Professor **James E. Young**, an authority on public memorials, about the interplay between space and memory.

More than 400 guests attended “**Memory, Monuments and Museums: Remembering 9/11 and the Holocaust**” at Traves Hall on September 18. Center friends and donors mingled at a pre-lecture reception and enjoyed the opportunity to meet the speakers. **Barbara and Leonard Littman**, who endowed the Bildner Center’s Holocaust Resource Center, sponsored the evening.

“Symbolic structures allow us to remember, connect with one another, and attempt to



Daniel Libeskind, James E. Young, Yael Zerubavel, Leonard Littman, and Barbara Littman

understand and heal,” remarked Barbara Littman, who first approached the Bildner Center with the idea of inviting Libeskind to Rutgers.

► See **LIBESKIND** on page 11

Master’s Candidate in Jewish Studies Follows Unconventional Career Path



Jason Gosnell has taken a somewhat circuitous route to the master’s in Jewish studies program at Rutgers.

There was a stint as an attorney with one of New Jersey’s largest firms. A clerkship with the chief justice of the Israeli Supreme Court. A gig harvesting koi on a kibbutz. And basic training with the Israel Defense Forces.

He also played with the Tel Aviv Pioneers, helping to introduce American-style football to the Jewish state and twice being named all-

Israel Football League defensive end.

Now the Toms River native is back on these shores with his wife, Victoria. Gosnell is practicing law and well into his second semester of graduate school. He’s on target to earn a master’s degree by 2013 and a Ph.D. several years down the road, all with an eye to launching a career as an academic.

A 1999 Rutgers graduate with a dual major in history and political science and a minor in Hebraic studies, Gosnell says the uniting theme of his career trajectory has been a love for the exchange of ideas and a passion for intellectual pursuit.

► See **GOSNELL** on page 5

From the Director's Desk



A new and exciting series, “Art in the Public Space,” opened this year’s programs with the phenomenal appearance of the celebrated architect Daniel Libeskind, who discussed the challenges of designing memorial sites. Engaging in conversation with Professor

James E. Young, whose scholarly work on Holocaust memorials has won wide acclaim, Libeskind shared with the audience the philosophical, historical, and artistic ideas that inspired two of his most famous memorials, the Jewish Museum in Berlin and the National September 11 Memorial at the World Trade Center site in New York.

Collaboration is one of the keys to the success of the Bildner Center in reaching out to diverse groups and audiences. The Libeskind program, like the annual Rutgers Jewish Film Festival, developed out of a stimulating conversation with a community member that inspired us to create it and impacted many people in our community. Similarly, we worked together with faculty from other academic departments and centers across the university to develop a program on anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and the role of the media. This collaborative effort was highly rewarding and crucial to attracting a remarkable audience of students, faculty, and community members.

This year’s highlights included public programs on the Hebrew Bible, American Jewish history, and Israeli culture and literature, as well as an extensive course in Holocaust education for public and private school teachers. This important course takes place at the Bildner Center outside the public eye, but it directly affects the education of hundreds of students in New Jersey. At the other end of the spectrum, the highly visible Rutgers Jewish Film Festival attracts thousands of viewers, including Rutgers students and faculty, who take advantage of this unique opportunity to see a wide range of films and listen to guest speakers.

Rutgers’ international connections are expanding, and the Bildner Center contributes to this exciting development. Visiting scholars from Israel and Hungary joined the Center this year, adding to the Department of Jewish Studies faculty’s strong connection with Israeli and European universities and enhancing the Jewish studies course offerings.

Discover the new face of *The Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life* through our website, BildnerCenter.rutgers.edu. There you can find information about our forthcoming lectures and the Rutgers Jewish Film Festival, take a look at our photo gallery, and read our newsletter. You can also find a recording of Robert Alter’s lecture on reading the Hebrew Bible and our free online study program, which will add a new course, “The Inquisition and the Jews,” in the fall.

We look forward to the new year and to our extensive program of lectures, events, and workshops, and hope that they benefit a growing number of participants across generational, geographic, and communal boundaries.

—Yael Zerubavel, Bildner Center director

From the Chair's Desk



Undergraduate teaching doesn’t consist entirely of professors lecturing students in classrooms. Increasingly, faculty enrich their instruction by bringing in guest speakers to meet with students and, conversely, by taking students beyond their classrooms. Thanks to

the Taub Curriculum Enhancement Fund, students in courses offered by the Department of Jewish Studies at Rutgers have met a wide array of scholars and other experts, engaged in conversation with contemporary artists, writers, and performers, and visited sites of cultural and historical interest.

In recent semesters, our students have been introduced to filmmakers, writers, and visual artists whose works they are studying in class. These guests include the cartoonist Eli Valley, who visited “The Jewish Graphic Novel,” a course taught by Eddy Portnoy; the artist Yishay Garbasz, who discussed photographs she created that retrace her mother’s experiences as a Holocaust survivor, in Anna Manchin’s fall course “Holocaust Media”; and the documentary filmmaker Lynne Sachs, who presented excerpts of a film in progress to students in “American Jews and the Media,” a class that I taught. The opportunity to meet these artists expands students’ understanding of the processes involved in realizing a finished work and of how artists’ education and life experience inform their creativity.

Guest scholars and writers visiting Jewish studies classes to share their expertise with students include the folklorist Janet Theophano of the University of Pennsylvania, who spoke about the symbolic connections between food and memory to students in Yael Zerubavel’s spring seminar, “Jewish Memory.” The Polish Jewish author Anna Frajlich met with students in Nancy Sinkoff’s fall-semester course, “Rabbis, Rebels, and Rationalists: The Jews of Eastern Europe,” to discuss themes of emigration, exile, linguistic dislocation, and family in her autobiography and poetry.

Field trips enrich courses in other ways, by providing students with opportunities to examine historical sites and public cultural institutions. Students in Hilit Surowitz-Israel’s spring mini-course “Sephardic Jewish History and Culture” toured Shearith Israel, New York City’s historic Spanish and Portuguese synagogue; Gary Rendsburg took students in his spring course “Dead Sea Scrolls” to the exhibition *Dead Sea Scrolls: Life and Faith in Biblical Times* at Discovery Times Square. Curriculum enhancement also plays a vital role in language teaching. Students in Hebrew-language classes subscribe to Israeli newspapers and see the latest Israeli films; Yiddish language and literature students have attended Yiddish theater performances and met the contemporary Yiddish poet Yermiyahu Ahron Taub.

Together with student travel grants and internships, these undertakings enable the department to expand students’ opportunities for pursuing their interests in Jewish studies—which begin at Rutgers—beyond the university. The classroom serves as a portal, through which students’ discoveries of new possibilities for learning about Jewish life extend outward to a wide array of people and places.

—Jeffrey Shandler, acting department chair

Ziva Galili Explores the Russian Roots of Israeli Society

Professor Ziva Galili, on the faculty of Rutgers' Department of History since 1981, recently returned from a sabbatical in Israel. She teaches two courses cross-listed with the Department of Jewish Studies, "Jews and Revolution in Modern Russia" and "Kibbutz in History, Literature and Film."

Galili previously served as chair of the history department (1994–1997 and 2003–2006), vice dean of the Graduate School–New Brunswick (1998–2002), and acting dean of the School of Arts and Sciences (2006–2008). Rutgers granted her the prestigious Daniel Gorenstein Memorial Award in 2008 for her outstanding contributions to the university.

Galili was reared at Kibbutz Afikim, which was founded in 1924 by members of a Zionist-socialist youth movement from the Soviet Union. Kibbutz life was steeped in Russian culture and the lore of the Russian Revolution. Informed by that experience, Galili pursued Russian studies at Jerusalem's Hebrew University.

Though initially interested in Russian and Soviet Jewish settlement in Palestine, she found the enticement of Russia's tortured history irresistible. "My earlier interests seemed parochial when contrasted with that greater historical pathos," says Galili of what launched a thirty-year academic detour.

When she began her doctoral studies at Columbia University in the 1970s, the reigning paradigm in Russian history was the Cold War and political rivalries. Galili was drawn instead to the emerging theory of social history, and she focused her doctoral work on the social interactions and political strategies of the Mensheviks, the more moderate alternative to Lenin's Bolshevik Party.

In this she faced several practical limitations. As an Israeli, she could not enter the USSR. As a scholar of Menshevism, she could not access the Soviet archives. Further, it was unimaginable that Menshevik records, last seen in 1922, would ever reappear. Instead, she relied on memoirs and press reports to approximate what had happened at the time.

Coincidentally, Galili's later monograph on Menshevik history was published in 1989, just months before Glasnost. Soon after, she was invited to Moscow to collaborate on a scholarly edition of documents from the Menshevik archives. "It was a dream come true," she recalls.

The experience, which Galili calls her "return to Moscow," became personal when she decided to take up the task of recovering her parents' Russian roots. By

extension, she went on to recover the Russian roots of Israeli society, placing her on the road back to where her academic story began and continues today.

Galili's research over the past decade revealed that in the 1920s, several conditions made the Zionist message resonate with

Soviet Jews, among them the failure of both governmental and Jewish institutions to cope with poverty in the Pale of Settlement. Concomitantly, a new Soviet policy began to encourage the revival of national cultures.

Young Zionist activists espoused merging this Jewish renaissance with either socialism or "laborism," enabling members to unite their double identities. Socialist groups flourished, because both their rhetoric and their structure closely resembled Soviet patterns. Galili has called this phenomenon "Soviet Zionism."

Likewise, leaders of the Jewish settlement in Palestine saw Soviet Jewish ideological commitment and advocacy of physical labor as a great resource for the building of a new Jewish society. British officials even afforded Soviet Jews special immigration allowances as refugees of Communist oppression.

For a time, Soviet leaders themselves recognized the benefits of the Zionist movements and, in particular, encouraged their successful models of collective farming. Never uniform, however, Soviet tolerance gave way to tighter restrictions with the rise of Joseph Stalin. Zionism was soon viewed as a threat to a national Communist identity, changing the course of history for Soviet Jewry.

At present, Galili is pursuing two projects. The first, a documentary history of Zionist organizations in the Soviet Union from 1917 to 1932, will bring to light materials confiscated from Zionist activists at the time of their arrests and hidden for decades in Soviet security service archives.

The second explores the complex interactions between individuality and collectivism in the lives of Galili's own parents, who came to Kibbutz Afikim from the Soviet Union in the 1920s. As such, Galili's work is also a history of Kibbutz Afikim, the pre-state kibbutz movement, and the prominent role of kibbutz "emissaries" in effecting aliyah.

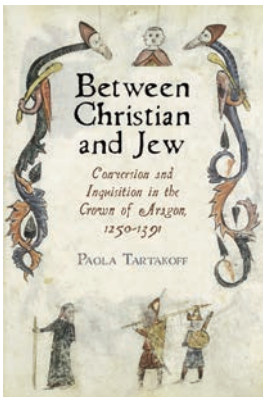
"Ultimately, my parents and their peers brought their Soviet culture with them, making an indelible mark on their new country," observes Galili.



"Ultimately, my parents and their peers brought their Soviet culture with them, making an indelible mark on their new country."

Between Christian and Jew

Paola Tartakoff's new book, *Between Christian and Jew: Conversion and Inquisition in the Crown of Aragon, 1250–1391* (The Middle Ages Series, University of Pennsylvania Press), pivots around the inquisitorial trial of three Jews who were accused in 1341 of persuading Jewish apostates to return to Judaism and die as martyrs.



Drawing together the accounts of Jews, converts, and inquisitors, this cultural history offers a broad study of interfaith relations in medieval Iberia. In so doing, it lays bare the intensity of mutual hostility between Christians and Jews during a period that is often celebrated as a time of relative interfaith harmony.

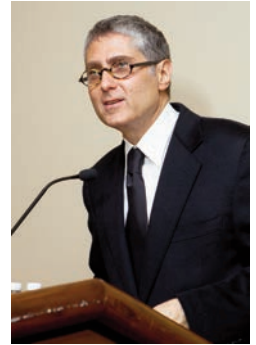
Between Christian and

Jew presents the first thorough account of a trial of Jews by the papal inquisition, under whose jurisdiction Jews did not normally fall. It also breaks new ground by closely analyzing Jewish conversion to Christianity in Spain prior to the mass forced conversions of 1391. Tartakoff's research reveals that the majority of Jewish converts of the period turned to baptism to escape personal difficulties, such as poverty, conflict with other Jews, or unhappy marriages. Converts often met with a chilly reception from their new Christian brethren, however, making it difficult for them to integrate into Christian society.

In addition to exploring expressions of Christian antagonism toward Jews and Judaism, Tartakoff explores expressions of Jewish antagonism toward Christians and Christianity, focusing on the aims and techniques of Jews who sought to re-Judaize apostates as well as Jewish responses to inquisitorial prosecution.

FACULTY HONORS AND AWARDS

Jeffrey Shandler has been elected as a fellow of the **American Academy for Jewish Research**, the oldest organization of Judaic scholars in North America. Fellows are nominated and elected by their peers and thus constitute the most distinguished and most senior scholars teaching Judaic studies at American universities. In addition, Shandler began a two-year term as **president of the Association for Jewish Studies (AJS)** in December 2011. The AJS is the largest learned society and professional organization representing scholars of Jewish studies worldwide. As a constituent organization of the American Council of Learned Societies, the AJS represents the field in the larger arena of the academic study of the humanities and social sciences in North America.



Judith Gerson has received the Rutgers School of Arts and Sciences Award for Distinguished Contributions to Undergraduate Education. An associate professor of sociology and women's and gender studies, Gerson has been a longtime affiliated faculty member of the Department of Jewish Studies. Her broad-based scholarship includes work in Holocaust studies and German Jewish history.

FACULTY SEMINARS 2011–2012

The Henry Schwartzman Endowed Faculty Seminar

Robert Alter, professor emeritus of Hebrew and comparative literature at the University of California–Berkeley, presented “Reading Biblical Narrative” to a diverse group of faculty members and graduate students from across multiple disciplines at Rutgers. Alter explored the major characteristics of biblical narrative prose, including a discussion of what makes these texts so distinct within the contours of ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean literature. He revisited and expanded on many of the themes raised in his pathfinding book *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, with attention to new findings and interpretations. The seminar was cosponsored by the Department of Comparative Literature.

Additional faculty seminars:

Martha Helfer, Rutgers University: “Questioning Origins: Friedrich von Schiller Rewrites Exodus.” Respondent: Barbara Hahn, Rutgers University.

Anna B. Manchin, Aresty Visiting Scholar, Bildner Center: “The Making of a True Gentleman: Jewish Citizenship and Bourgeois Culture in Interwar Hungarian Cinema.”

Jonathan D. Sarna, Brandeis University: “The State of American Jewish Studies.” Moderator: Jeffrey Shandler, Rutgers University.

JEWISH STUDIES FACULTY 2012–2013

Core Faculty

Nancy Sinkoff,
department chair
Jonathan Gribetz
Gary A. Rendsburg*
Jeffrey Shandler
Paola Tartakoff**
Azzan Yadin-Israel
Yael Zerubavel,
Bildner Center director

*graduate director

**undergraduate director

Associated Faculty

Maurice J. Elias
Leslie Fishbein
Ziva Galili
Judith Gerson
David Greenberg
Douglas Greenberg
Paul Hanebrink
Martha Helfer
Michael G. Levine
Phyllis Mack
Barbara Reed
Emma Wasserman

Visiting Scholar

Sasha Senderovich

Instructor

Hilit Surowitz-Israel

Part-time Lecturers

Dana Fishkin
Mark Kligman
Zachary Mann

Language Instructors

Orly Moshenberg,
*Hebrew-language
coordinator*
Edna Bryn-Noiman &
Tamara Ruben,
Hebrew instructors
Edward Portnoy,
Yiddish instructor

ARESTY VISITING SCHOLAR

Sasha Senderovich, the Bildner Center's Aresty Visiting Scholar, comes to Rutgers in spring 2013 after spending two years as a Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow at the Center for the Humanities at Tufts University. Senderovich earned his Ph.D. in Slavic languages and literatures and Jewish studies in 2010 from Harvard University; his dissertation was entitled "The Red Promised Land: Narratives of Jewish Mobility in Early Soviet Culture."

He has published "In Search of Leadership: David Bergelson among the Refugees" in *David Bergelson: From Modernism to Socialist Realism*, edited by Joseph Sherman and Gennady Estraiikh (Legenda, 2007), and "The Hershele Maze: Isaac Babel and His Ghost Reader," in *Arguing the Modern Jewish Canon: Essays in Literature and Culture in Honor of Ruth Wisse*, edited by Justin Cammy et al. (Harvard University Press, 2008).

Most recently, Senderovich wrote the critical introduction for the forthcoming translation of the Yiddish writer Moshe Kulbak's 1920s book *The Zelmanyaners: A Family Saga* (New Yiddish Library Series), translated by Hillel Halkin (Yale University Press, 2013). At Rutgers, Senderovich will teach "The Russian Jewish Experience in Literature and Film."

► GOSNELL from page 1

"Many times as a lawyer, I found that although clients needed answers right away, I wanted to research issues for weeks or months, which was not what the job demanded, or even tolerated," he says of his decision to re-enter the world of academia. "I always wanted time to find a fuller answer, and that's what academics do."

After graduating from Rutgers School of Law in Newark in 2002, Gosnell clerked for James Havey, then presiding judge of the New Jersey Appellate Division, working in all phases of the legal world from constitutional to commercial law. A two-year position followed with the New Brunswick firm of Hoagland, Longo, Moran, Dunst & Doukas, LLP, and then a side trip: the Israeli clerkship and the opportunity to see how law is practiced some 6,000 miles away.

But there was always that intellectual imperative, and the desire to explore Judaism in greater depth.

"The M.A. program takes the development of Jewish studies at Rutgers to the next level. Our internationally renowned faculty and reputation for excellence enhance Rutgers' standing in the field of Jewish studies!"

—Gary A. Rendsburg, graduate director

Gosnell's return to New Jersey coincided with the launch of the new master's program in the Department of Jewish Studies. The M.A. curriculum offers an interdisciplinary approach to the study of the Jewish experience from ancient times to the present.

"I see this program as the gateway back into academia for me," says Gosnell, who in his first semester back at Rutgers had a paper accepted at a prestigious graduate-student conference, titled "Jewish Spaces, Jewish Places," at Carleton University in Ottawa.

Adapted from Rutgers Today (1/3/12), "Rutgers Master's in Jewish Studies Student Treads Unconventional Career Path," by Fredda Sacharow.

For more information, visit jewishstudies.rutgers.edu/graduate.

New Summer Program for Teachers

Twenty-five middle and high school teachers enrolled in the Bildner Center's one-week course "Introduction to the Holocaust" held last June. Offered for the first time in this format at Rutgers through the Littman Holocaust Resource Center, this intensive course is one of the few opportunities available for educators to study Holocaust history in an intensive and comprehensive manner. These teachers came to Rutgers during their summer vacation to help ensure that they would be better teachers when they face the daunting task of transmitting this difficult history to their students during the school year. A diverse group from inner city and suburban schools, both public and private, the teachers shared resources and explored teaching strategies. Most live in New Jersey, but one of the

participants, the Jewish studies coordinator of a Yeshiva high school in Dallas, traveled across the country to attend the program. Teachers sat together through daily lectures delivered by Jessica Anderson Hughes, a lecturer in Rutgers' history department. They viewed films on the Warsaw Ghetto uprising as well as survivor testimonies, navigated new online resources in a Rutgers computer lab, shared their personal stories over lunch, and developed a peer network that will last long after the course ended.

—Karen Small, associate director

Read more about this group of teachers and the course at BildnerCenter.rutgers.edu/holocaust-education.

Rutgers Jewish Film Festival

The twelfth annual **Rutgers Jewish Film Festival**, the Bildner Center's largest public program, continued to do what it has long done best: screen critically acclaimed international films for a diverse community of New Jersey filmgoers at a cinema close to home. The festival took place from October 27 through November 8, 2011, with the generous support of the **Karma Foundation** and a loyal cadre of festival patrons.

A slate of thirteen films and one television series offered a kaleidoscopic snapshot of Jewish life through both a modern and a historical lens. Screenings included five New Jersey premieres, one U.S. premiere (*Dressing America: Tales from the Garment Center*), and the festival's first-ever features from Poland (*Little Rose*) and Chile (*My Life with Carlos*).

The festival opened with the award-winning Israeli film *Gei Oni* ("Valley of Fortitude"), a beautifully rendered saga of love and survival based on the best-selling novel by Shulamit Lapid. Set in the late nineteenth century, the film follows Fania and her baby daughter as they escape the pogroms of Russia and begin life anew in a struggling settlement in the Galilee. Close to 800 people attended the two screenings of the film.

Director **Dan Wolman** shared behind-the-scenes anecdotes about the making of *Gei Oni* and his collaboration with Lapid. He also met with two Rutgers Hebrew-language classes to discuss Israeli film and culture, an opportunity that brought the film festival to the university campus and added a new dimension to the students' academic experience.

Srugim, billed as Israel's version of the TV series *Friends*, has received rave reviews from the Israeli media and has an enormous popular following among both secular and religious Israelis. The festival screened six episodes of the sitcom, giving audiences a bird's-eye view of the social scene among thirty-something modern Orthodox singles living and working in Jerusalem.

Among other festival highlights was the powerful documentary *Eichmann's End: Love, Betrayal, and Death*, sponsored by **David and Sylvia Steiner**. Through interwoven testimonials, the film recounts the events leading up to Eichmann's capture in Argentina by the Mossad. In a suspenseful twist, it is the daughter of a Holocaust survivor who ultimately identifies the war criminal in hiding after briefly dating his son.



Sharon Karmazin and Karen Small

One of only a handful of Israeli films ever to feature a family with a special-needs child, *The Flood* is a touching drama about an autistic young man who returns home shortly before his brother's bar mitzvah. After the evening screening, **Peter Bell**, vice president of Autism Speaks, answered questions from the visibly moved audience, which included many professionals working with special-needs populations.

Over the past twelve years, the festival has screened cutting-edge films that explore the multi-textured Jewish experience. Often these films resonate on a deeply personal level with audiences. But it is by providing opportunities to share those intimate responses in post-screening discussions—with scholars, filmmakers, and fellow filmgoers—that the Rutgers Jewish Film Festival has truly distinguished itself.

THE HERBERT AND LEONARD LITTMAN FAMILIES HOLOCAUST RESOURCE CENTER

Master Teacher Institute in Holocaust Education

The Master Teacher Institute in Holocaust Education (MTI) continues to draw a large and diverse group of middle and high school teachers from across New Jersey, furthering its mission to develop a base of expert teachers in Holocaust studies who then serve as resource providers in their schools, districts, and communities. There is no fee to participate, and educators earn professional development credits.

The program offers advanced training by scholars and other professionals who are leaders in the field of Holocaust studies. Each session features a scholarly presentation followed by a pedagogical workshop using primary documents related to the theme of the session.

One of the major strengths of the MTI is the ability to utilize Rutgers resources. **Jeffrey Shandler**, a professor of Jewish studies, serves as the faculty adviser; **Karen Small**, Bildner Center associate director, coordinates the project; and Rutgers faculty members in Jewish studies, history, and sociology contribute as guest speakers.

The MTI's fall 2011 course, "**Before the Holocaust: Historical Background**," offered an overview of the complex precipitating factors that led to the Holocaust. Twenty-nine middle and high school teachers from New Jersey public schools participated in this course. **Colleen Tambuscio**, educational consultant for the fall semester, presented the pedagogical component at each session.

Paola Tartakoff, a professor of Jewish studies and history at Rutgers, kicked off the term with a lecture on Jewish-Christian relations through the ages. She examined the diverse religious and cultural dynamics at play in the relationship between Jews and Europe's majority Christian population. **Nancy Sinkoff**, chair of Rutgers' Department of Jewish Studies, presented a talk on Jewish life in pre-World War II Europe. **Paul Hanebrink**, a Rutgers professor of history, dealt with the swift political rise of Nazism and Nazi Germany in the prewar years.

Professors **Sally Charnow** (Hofstra University) and **Eric D. Weitz** (University of Minnesota) rounded out the curriculum with sessions on European political history and the rise of modern nationalism during the nineteenth century, as well as the ideological origins of fascism, which took root in early twentieth-century Spain, Italy, and Germany.

The start of the spring 2012 course, "Children and the Holocaust" coincided with the United Nations General Assembly's International Holocaust Remembrance Day, which also focused this year on the subject of children and the Holocaust. This timely topic drew a group of twenty-eight teachers.



Christina Chavarría, coordinator of the Regional Education Corps Program at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), opened the term with a presentation on the challenges of teaching the Holocaust to children and young adults.

Dr. **Patricia Heberer**, a historian at the USHMM's Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies, spoke about the experiences of Aryan children during the Nazi era. A session on Holocaust literature for young adult readers was copresented by Shandler and **Perri Geller-Clark**, MTI educational consultant for the spring semester.

Hidden children in Belgium was the subject of a session led by **Suzanne Vromen**, a professor emerita of sociology from Bard College. Vromen's talk was based on her recent book, *Hidden Children of the Holocaust: Belgian Nuns and Their Daring Rescue of Young Jews from the Nazis*.

Alan Sadovnik, a Board of Governors Distinguished Service Professor in sociology and education at Rutgers–Newark, spoke about his mother's experience in the Kindertransport and the remarkable discovery of a diary she had kept as a child. He discussed the difficulties involved in coming to terms with his parents' legacy and how it shaped his life.

In June, a one-week intensive course, "Introduction to Holocaust History," was added to the MTI offerings to provide greater flexibility for teachers to study this topic. (Read more in Karen Small's letter on page 6.)



Claims Conference ועידת התביעות
The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany

This educator training project has been supported by a grant from the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany.

Additional support provided by:

The Marjorie and Egon Berg Holocaust Education Fund
Steven and Christine Boehm

Ulysses S. Grant and the Jews

In 1862, as the Civil War raged through the United States, Union general Ulysses S. Grant issued his sweeping General Orders No. 11, expelling “Jews as a class” from the war zone encompassing Kentucky, Mississippi, and Tennessee. The order remains the most blatant official anti-Jewish decree in American history.

The **Toby and Herbert Stolzer Endowed Program**, “**That Obnoxious Order: Ulysses S. Grant and the Jews**,” explored how Grant’s infamous misstep shaped his future relationship with American Jews and impacted the Jewish community itself. Held at Traves Hall in February, the public program was well attended by a diverse, multigenerational audience interested in the Civil War and this pivotal incident in the American Jewish experience.

The award-winning scholar and author **Jonathan D. Sarna**, Joseph H. and Belle R. Braun Professor of American Jewish History at Brandeis University and chief historian of the National Museum of American Jewish



History, shared insights from his provocative new book, *When General Grant Expelled the Jews*. Sarna expertly navigated the audience through his reevaluation of the event and his well-researched rescue of Grant’s reputation.

Enacted in the context of wartime exigencies, Grant’s “obnoxious order” cited trade violations, essentially accusing the Jews of black market smuggling. Its issue resulted in a fury of backlash from the Jewish community, which took its grievance to the press and then to Washington. Although it was revoked two weeks later by President Lincoln, the short-lived order had long-lasting ramifications for Grant and for the Jews.

For American Jewry, Grant’s order undermined its sense of security, galvanizing a community otherwise divided by Confederate and Union sympathies. Never before had American Jews been forced to balance so publicly their dual loyalties to country and heritage, nor had a Jewish issue ever played such a prominent role in a presidential campaign as it did in 1868, when Grant was the Republican nominee.

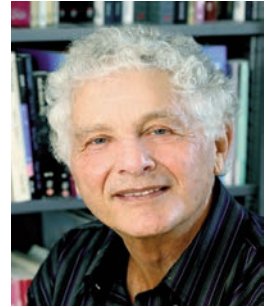
Although he succeeded in exonerating himself, Grant never fully transcended his anti-Semitic reputation. Yet he won the election and, according to Sarna, went on to do more than any of his predecessors for Jews in this country. He made prominent Jewish appointments to his administration, forged friendships with Jewish peers, and demonstrated humanitarian support for oppressed Jews abroad.

Grant was an enigmatic figure, a powerful general credited with saving the Union, despite the lasting blight of his “obnoxious order.” But as Sarna demonstrated, President Grant ultimately changed the course of Jewish life in America for the better.

The Pleasures and Perils of Translating the Bible

Professor **Robert Alter**, whose book *The Art of Biblical Narrative* revolutionized Bible study, enthralled an audience of nearly 400 with his presentation “**The Pleasures and Perils of Translating the Bible**.”

Community members, clergy, faculty, and students attended his public lecture, sponsored by the Bildner Center, which took place at the Rutgers Student Center on March 26.



In addition to his public presentation, Alter’s visit was meaningful on many levels that reflect the Bildner Center’s overall mission. He engaged in a scholarly exchange with Rutgers faculty from a wide array of departments and participated in one-on-one sessions with Jewish studies professors to discuss their current research.

Students also benefited from his presence on campus. Jewish studies majors in “Jewish Memory,” a seminar taught by **Yael Zerubavel**, discussed the strong impact of his lecture on their own research. One student emailed Alter, inquiring about a particularly difficult text, and was thrilled when he received Alter’s reply, offering insights into the challenging passage.

“The enthusiastic response to Professor Alter’s brilliant analysis of the biblical text underscored our success in presenting interdisciplinary scholarship,” observed Zerubavel.

Alter, professor emeritus of Hebrew and comparative literature at the University of California–Berkeley, has penned more than twenty books, including award-winning translations of the Five Books of Moses. His subjects range from the eighteenth-century European novel to contemporary American fiction and modern Hebrew literature.

In recognition of his distinguished scholarly career, Robert Alter has been named the 2013 Haskins Prize Lecturer by the American Council of Learned Societies. He has been a senior fellow of the National Endowment for the Humanities, a fellow at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Jerusalem, and a Guggenheim Fellow twice.

From the beginning of his career, Alter has succeeded in interweaving his loves of literary criticism and Hebrew language. While pursuing his doctorate at Harvard, he engaged with the preeminent literary critics of the day, who espoused a new critical approach. Their close reading of a text as a self-contained entity later influenced Alter when he turned his attention to the Bible.

➤ See **ALTER** on page 10

Going Viral: Anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and New Technologies

An unusual public program focusing on anti-Semitism and Islamophobia drew nearly 400 people to Trayes Hall in the Douglass Campus Center on October 17. The event—**“Going Viral: Anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and New Technologies”**—reflected what the organizers said was an urgent need to inject reason, tolerance, and thoughtfulness into an increasingly rancorous conversation taking place on college campuses, in the media, and in the political arena.

“The goal was to raise the discourse to a much higher level than it had been heretofore,” said **Nancy Sinkoff**, chair of the Department of Jewish Studies. “As academicians and scholars who are deeply invested in tolerance, we want to make sure we project that onto the community.”

The event featured two nationally renowned speakers, **Jack G. Shaheen** and **Kenneth Stern**. **Clement Price**, a Board of Governors Distinguished Service Professor and the founding director of the Institute on Ethnicity, Culture and the Modern Experience at Rutgers–Newark, moderated the program.

Shaheen, a professor emeritus at Southern Illinois University, told the audience he has studied how Arabs have been portrayed in popular culture since the mid-1970s. “At that time, all things Arab were considered vile, despicable,” he said. But he said it was after the 9/11 attacks that Islamophobia really emerged, and it was aided and abetted by popular culture. “Not only were all Muslims (considered) guilty, but American Arabs and American Muslims were tossed into the mix,” he said.

Stern, the American Jewish Committee’s specialist on anti-Semitism and hate groups, said there’s a need to study and better understand how hate develops in a person. “We know much too little about how hate works,” he said. “Hatred really is a normative part of human experience. As long as there have been human beings, we have had the capacity to divide and define the other; vilify that group, and sometimes that can lead to genocide.” Stern said anti-Semitism is typically expressed as a conspiracy theory. “It’s a conspiracy theory that charges Jews with harming non-Jews,” he said.

The event developed from a collaborative effort between School of Arts and Sciences faculty specializing in Jewish studies and their colleagues in Middle Eastern studies who focus more on the Arab and Islamic world.

Peter Golden, a professor emeritus of history and an expert on Middle Eastern and Central Asian history, said that anti-Semitism and Islamophobia are “two ugly twins.” “They are not two discrete things,” said Golden, former director of the Middle Eastern Studies Program. “They are related, and



they can be discussed in a rational way with a notion of gaining some understanding of the historical roots.”

Yael Zerubavel, director of the Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life, said faculty need to set an example. “We should act as role models, demonstrating that these issues can be discussed and can be discussed in a dispassionate way,” said Zerubavel, a professor of history and Jewish studies.



The program was sponsored by the **Bildner Center**; the **Center for Middle Eastern Studies**; the **Department of Jewish Studies**; the **Middle Eastern Studies Program**; the **Institute on Ethnicity, Culture, and the Modern Experience**; and the **Department of Journalism and Media Studies**.

Rutgers has a history of promoting dialogue on such issues. But like other schools, Rutgers has also had to deal with some tensions among students with differing views of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The event added depth to students’ understanding of the current controversies, said **Charles Haberl**, director of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies. Offensive images of Arabs in contemporary popular culture are eerily similar to anti-Semitic propaganda in Nazi Germany, Haberl said. “It’s the same caricatures from the 1930s, but applied to a different group,” he said.

Adapted from Rutgers Today (10/21/11), “Hundreds Attend Program on Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia,” by John Chadwick.

*The event received funding through the Bildner Center’s **Raoul Wallenberg Annual Program Fund**, supported by **Leon and Toby Cooperman**. The program was also funded in part by **Rutgers Centers for Global Advancement and International Affairs (GAIA Centers)** and the **School of Arts and Sciences**. The program was presented in conjunction with the GAIA Centers’ 2011–2013 biennial theme, **Technologies without Borders: Technologies across Borders**.*

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS 2011–2012

Memory, Nostalgia, and Dissent in Contemporary Israel

The Bildner Center paid tribute to the memory of **Alvin Rockoff** on April 22, prior to the **Ruth and Alvin Rockoff Annual Program** on Israel. Alvin was remembered as a man devoted to family, the Jewish community, and Rutgers University. Remarks about his mentorship of and support for the establishment of the Bildner Center were particularly poignant. Rutgers president **Richard L. McCormick** and Professor **Yael Zerubavel** recalled Alvin's dedication to the university. Three generations of the Rockoff family attended the program, which concluded with a video presentation about Alvin prepared by the Bildner Center.

The panel presentations followed:

Revolution and Nostalgia: The Image of the Shtetl in Israeli Society
Israel Bartal, Hebrew University of Jerusalem and a visiting scholar at the Bildner Center

Antiquity in Popular Israeli Culture: Nostalgia, Parody, and Politics
Yael Zerubavel, Rutgers University

The Many Natives of Jerusalem: Nationalism, Archaeology, and Fundamentalism in Contested Land

Michael Feige, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

Egyptian Intellectuals' Critique of Nazism at the Outbreak of World War II

Israel Gershoni, Tel Aviv University

Glory and Agony: Isaac's Sacrifice and National Narrative

Supported in part by the Sagner Family Foundation

Yael Feldman, New York University

The Bible through Literary Eyes

Offered in conjunction with Rutgers Reunion Weekend

Gary A. Rendsburg, Rutgers University

► **ALTER** from page 8

At that time, biblical scholarship focused on source criticism, which identified unique historical sources for different textual components. Alter's own method, however, drew on his literary background. He examined the recurring techniques that shape the Bible and unite its disparate texts into a coherent whole. His approach was groundbreaking.

It also indirectly inspired his career as a translator. Asked by an editor to produce a critical edition of the book of Genesis, Alter decided to first translate it himself when all existing translations left him wanting.

Likening himself to a detective, Alter replicates the nuances of language—word repetition, poetic cadences, and expressive syntactic patterns, for example—that appear throughout the Bible. These, he asserted, are essential to grasping its meaning and emotional impact.

But there are perils, too, in large part because the linguistic structures of biblical Hebrew and modern English differ significantly. "I must accept the fact that, as a translator, I am only going to approximate the greatness of the original," conceded Alter.



In Memoriam: Alvin J. Rockoff

With great sadness, we mourn the passing of **Alvin J. Rockoff** (RC '49), a longtime community and business leader. Alvin was a key figure leading to the establishment of the Bildner Center and a new academic program in Jewish studies, precursor to the department. He served as co-chair of the Bildner Center's Leadership Committee after its founding in 1996. Alvin and his wife, Ruth, endowed the Bildner Center's Ruth and Alvin Rockoff Annual Program in 1999 to further learning in the field of Israel studies.

Born in New Brunswick, Alvin maintained a lifelong dedication and service to the city and to Rutgers. One of only four individuals in Rutgers' history to chair all three governing bodies (Board of Governors, Board of Trustees, and Board of Overseers), he was named Trustee Emeritus in 1994 and Overseer Emeritus in 2004. Alvin was honored by Rutgers with membership in the Hall of Distinguished Alumni, with the Alumni Federation's Meritorious Service Award, and as a Loyal Son of Rutgers, and in 1994 he was presented with an honorary degree as a doctor of humane letters. In 2005, in recognition of his long association with the university and the New Brunswick Development Corporation, Rockoff Hall was named in his honor.

Donor Support Appreciated

Leadership Gifts:

The Marion and Norman Tanzman Charitable Foundation, and its president, **Jeffries Schein** (RC '62), and trustee **Roy Tanzman** (RC '73), for its generous support of Jewish studies.

The Karma Foundation, led by **Sharon Karmazin** (DC '67) and **Dina Elkins**, for its commitment to Jewish culture through a grant to the **Rutgers Jewish Film Festival**.

Gene Hoffman for a gift to promote **Jewish Studies Online**, free online courses taught by Jewish studies faculty.

Robert M. Steinberg (RC '67) for his ongoing support of Jewish studies at Rutgers.

Barbara and Leonard Littman for funding the public program "**Memory, Monuments and Museums: Remembering 9/11 and the Holocaust.**"

Steven and Christine Boehm for funding Holocaust education at Rutgers.

The Henry and Marilyn Taub Foundation for its continued support of the Department of Jewish Studies **Curriculum Enhancement Fund**.

Additional Significant Gifts:

Barry and Deborah Adler
Sidney and Helene Amster
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Moshe Margolin
Betty and Arthur Roswell
Toby and Herbert Stolzer
Lee and Judith Wasserman
Mark and Marlie Wasserman
Donna and Steven Weiss

We are grateful for the generosity of all our supporters.

► **LIBESKIND** from page 1

The program was the first of a new series, "**Art in the Public Space**," developed by the Bildner Center. The series explores the myriad ways in which the breadth of the Jewish cultural and historical experience is presented through artistic interpretation in a public context.

Libeskind is an award-winning designer and architect whose work



Daniel Libeskind and James E. Young

includes the Berlin Jewish Museum and the master plan for the 9/11 Memorial at Ground Zero, among many others. Young, a professor of English and Judaic studies at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, served as a jury member of the World Trade Center Site Memorial Competition. His study of memorials has won him international acclaim.

The speakers discussed the challenges of creating public memorials to commemorate the Holocaust and the World Trade Center attacks, illustrated by the displayed images of Libeskind's projects. Two major undertakings, the 9/11 Memorial and the Berlin Jewish Museum, have the potential to shape global perception of traumatic historical events, reconciling the unimaginable loss of human life with the need to look forward.

Of this tall order, Libeskind observed, "We all talk about how the world changed after 9/11, but the world changed after the destruction of Jews in Europe."

Young discussed how Libeskind's

deconstructionist architecture for the museum in Berlin evokes the "terrible breach" of humanity during the Holocaust. This vision also lends itself to the Ground Zero memorial. Young recalled being startled by the question from a journalist when the design for the latter was first unveiled: "Isn't this another Holocaust memorial?"

The Polish-born son of Holocaust survivors, Libeskind remembers well his first impressions of the New York City skyline. His steel and concrete designs have a "human heart," reflecting the magnitude of the tragedies they commemorate and their power to shape memory.

Libeskind told audiences that his master plan for the 9/11 Memorial aimed to create a sacred space that shut out the distracting noise of Manhattan, enabling visitors to share a quiet, meditative moment for reflection on the magnitude of the tragedy. "I thought it was important to create a sense of intimacy in New York City," he said.

Jewish Studies Graduates 2012

Majors

Amanda Cove
Dara Grzesh
Joseph Tadrick
Samuel Weiner

Minors

Robyn Barkow
Timothy Breza
Jennifer Consomer
Tara Finowitz
Heather Glasberg
Noah Glyn
Stacey Hecht
Jessica Kreitman
Dina Meller
Kelsey Morris
Miriam Natovich
Stephen Solomon
Jaime Strumeier



Jewish-Catholic Student Dialogue

Established in 2008, the **iFaith** program promotes understanding by encouraging Jewish and Catholic students to share and to learn about each other's religious customs and practices. The October gathering focused on the themes of memory and ritual. Students gained insights through shared stories of their family holiday celebrations. In November, forty students gathered at Hillel for an interfaith Shabbat dinner. Rabbi **Mordecai Schwartz**, an adjunct instructor of Talmud and Rabbis at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, spoke after dinner about sacred time.

Biblical History Inspires Jewish Studies Major

Growing up in Cherry Hill, **Josh Jeffreys** always thought he wanted to be a rabbi. As a student at American University, he pursued a major in Jewish studies and a double minor in history and Israel studies in order to build a solid academic foundation for his future career. He also explored his interest in politics, interning with AIPAC (American Israel Public Affairs Committee) and BBYO (formerly the B'nai B'rith Youth Organization).

During his junior year, Josh transferred to Rutgers so he could be closer to home. He was also eager to be a part of the Jewish studies program here. "Though I initially got lost on the large campus, I really found myself in the department's dynamic classes," he recalls.

Before transferring, Josh had focused on the modern Jewish experience, taking courses on the Holocaust, Jewish life in America, and Israeli culture. But it was in a Jewish studies class at Rutgers that his historical interests were unexpectedly transported thousands of years back in time.

Professor **Sara Milstein's** course "Women in the Bible" sparked a new fascination with biblical history. "I wrote a paper on documentary hypothesis in the Bible that inspired me to shift gears completely," says Josh. While taking Professor **Azzan Yadin-Israel's** course "Jewish Mysticism and Kabbalah," he found himself equally fascinated with rabbinic history.

Intrigued, too, by the way studies of biblical and rabbinic literature overlap, Josh realized that his career path was heading in a new direction: "All of a sudden, I wanted to teach and to write, to be a professor—not a rabbi."



"He has been blessed with a voracious curiosity," observes Yadin-Israel, who proposed the idea of an independent study under his supervision. The experience allowed Josh to sample selections from rabbinic sources as well as the Dead Sea Scrolls. "There was hardly a topic in our collaboration about which he does not want to know more," adds Yadin-Israel.

After completing the independent study, Josh began to research his honors thesis, also under Yadin-Israel's guidance. His ambitious topic explores the Mishnah's use of irony in its representation of key biblical figures, including Moses and King David. In addition to a study of the history and psychology of irony, the project requires intense engagement with both the Mishnah and a vast body of scholarly literature.

This past summer, Josh attended the Jerusalem Ulpan at the Hebrew University with a grant from the **Deborah S. and Herbert B. Wasserman Research Fund**. He is currently completing his honors thesis and will graduate at the conclusion of this semester. His next step is to pursue a master's degree in scriptural studies.

"The Jewish studies faculty have unmatched enthusiasm for their subjects, and this has enabled me to hone my own interests," says Josh. "They are one of the greatest strengths of my experience at Rutgers."

ALUMNI NEWS



Rebecca Leibowitz ('04) is the senior program manager at the Foundation for Jewish Camp, working to ensure a strong future for Jewish overnight camp through leadership development programming. She also sits on the board for Advancing Jewish Professionals, the New York City chapter of the Jewish Communal Service Association. Rebecca has a master's degree in social work.



Sarah Portilla ('03), associate director for new initiatives at Rutgers Hillel, was recently honored with the Leo Brody Jewish Communal Service

Award, an annual prize for outstanding professional achievement early in the recipient's career. She was one of fifteen young Hillel professionals selected nationally for the prestigious Harrison LAPID leadership development program. Sarah has a master's degree in social work from the University of Pennsylvania's School of Social Policy and Practice.



Jillian Schlanger ('08) is an administrator for the Union for Reform Judaism Eisner Camp. She provides support for the directors and staff, and she acts as a liaison

between current and prospective families and the camp. She has also earned a master's degree in human rights at Columbia University, focusing on the relationship among women, religion, and human rights.

ALUMNI: Please keep us informed of your activities at csjl@rci.rutgers.edu.

A Celebration of Outstanding Students

Faculty, friends, and family were on hand to celebrate a distinguished group of Rutgers students who were recognized in May for their academic achievements in Jewish studies. Awards were also given for study abroad, for special research projects, and, for the very first time, for graduate study in the new master's program of the Department of Jewish Studies.

Dr. **Richard L. Edwards**, interim executive vice president for academic affairs, who also served during the summer as interim president of the university, addressed the group. His remarks stressed the importance of the Bildner Center and the Jewish studies department, not only for the university but also beyond, highlighting our faculty's significance as national leaders in the field.

The group also enjoyed remarks by alumna **Amy Weiss**. Seven years after graduating Rutgers, Amy shared her perspective on how the rigorous academic training and guidance she received in the Jewish studies department were instrumental in shaping her desire to become a professor, honing her research interests, and thoroughly preparing her for her current work as a Ph.D. candidate in both history and Hebrew and Judaic studies at New York University.



Richard L. Edwards

STUDENT AWARD RECIPIENTS

Benjamin Applebaum, '12
Herbert and Jacqueline Klein Award
for Study in Israel

Julie Cannon (Graduate Student)
Herbert and Jacqueline Klein Award
for Study in Israel

Amanda Cove, '12
Harold and Betty Perl Award

Bryce Diamond, '13
Barry and Deborah Venezia Adler
International Study Award

Shira Galler, '13
Louis Fishman Memorial Award

Jason Gosnell (Graduate Student)
Baruch S. and Pearl W.
Seidman Award

Samuel Hollander, '13
Sandra and Stephen M.
Greenberg Award

Josh Jeffreys, '13
Deborah S. and Herbert B.
Wasserman Research Award

Hannah Johnson, '13
Gertrude and Jacob Henoch
Memorial Award

Jessica Katz, '13
Herbert and Jacqueline Klein Award
for Study in Israel

Ariel Lubow, '14
Bernice and Milton I.
Luxemburg Award

Samuel Weiner, '12
Maurice Meyer III and
Irma Meyer Award

For student profiles, visit jewishstudies.rutgers.edu/undergraduate/studentawards.

FACULTY UPDATES

Ziva Galili (See faculty profile on page 3.)

Judith Gerson has received the Rutgers School of Arts and Sciences Award for Distinguished Contributions to Undergraduate Education. (See page 4.) She presented the colloquium “Diasporic Identities and Mobilities: German Jewish Refugees at Home” for faculty and doctoral students in the Department of Gender Studies at Utrecht University in the Netherlands. She published “Family Matters: German Jewish Masculinities among Nazi Era Refugees,” a chapter in *Jewish Masculinities: German Jews, Gender, and History*, edited by Benjamin Maria Baader, Sharon Gillerman, and Paul Lerner (Indiana University Press).

Jonathan Gribetz published two articles this year: “An Arabic-Zionist Talmud: Shimon Moyal’s At-Talmud,” *Jewish Social Studies*, and “Debating Palestine before the International Community, 1924: A Methodological Inquiry into the Charge of Bias,” *Israel Studies*. He presented a paper, “Religious Apologetics as a Source for the Study of the Jewish-Arab Encounter,” at the annual conference of the Association for Jewish Studies in Washington, D.C. He was also invited to present a paper on Jewish-Arab mutual perceptions in late Ottoman Palestine at Yale University’s Jewish History Colloquium. At Rutgers, he spoke about the binding of Isaac/Isma’il in Jewish, Christian, and Muslim exegesis and the challenges of interfaith dialogue at the Shalom/Salaam Jewish-Muslim-Arab student group’s annual dinner.

Martha Helfer was promoted to full professor. She published the book *The Word Unheard: Legacies of Anti-Semitism in German Literature and Culture* (Northwestern University Press), and she also coedited the volume *Nexus: Essays in German Jewish Studies*, with William C. Donahue (Camden House). She was invited to give the following talks: “The Language of Anti-Semitism: The Case of Gotthold Ephraim Lessing” and “Eckbert’s Secret,”

both at Wake Forest University; “Questioning Origins: Friedrich von Schiller Rewrites Exodus,” a faculty seminar at Rutgers University; and the keynote address, “Germany under the Sign of the Jew,” at the University of Pennsylvania’s Graduate Student Conference 2012: “Minority Reports: Representing Social Identity in (New) Media.”

Michael G. Levine coedited, with Bella Brodzki, the *Comparative Literature Studies* special issue “Trials of Trauma: Comparative and Global Perspectives” (Penn State University Press), also coauthoring with Brodzki the editors’ introduction to this issue. He published the following articles: “Poetry’s Demands and Abrahamic Sacrifice: Celan’s Poems for Eric,” *MLN Comparative Literature* (Johns Hopkins University Press); and “Beyond Victim and Perpetrator: New Subject Positions in Recent German-Jewish Films,” in *Nexus: Essays in German Jewish Studies*, edited by William C. Donahue and Martha Helfer (Camden House). He gave the following talks: “Between Grief and Grievance: Memories of Jews in France and the Klaus Barbie Trial,” Penn State University; and “The Dates from Which and to Which We Write: Benjamin’s Kafka Essay,” American Comparative Literature Association conference, Brown University.

Gary A. Rendsburg continued to serve as an associate editor of the *Encyclopaedia of the Hebrew Language and Linguistics*. He delivered a paper entitled “The Nature of Qumran Hebrew as Reflected in Peshet Habakkuk” at the Sixth International Symposium on the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Ben Sira, in Leuven, Belgium. He gave a talk, “The Davidic Psalms and the Temple,” at the symposium on Jesus and the Temple, sponsored by the Foundation on Judaism and Christian Origins, in Boca Raton, Florida. He also gave public talks and academic presentations at Renaissance Weekend, Jackson Hole, Wyoming; Duke University; Penn State University; the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in San Francisco; and the annual meeting of the North Atlantic Conference on Afroasiatic Linguistics, held at Rutgers University. He

published “Hazon Gabriel: A Grammatical Sketch,” in *Hazon Gabriel: New Readings of the Gabriel Revelation*, edited by Matthias Henze (Society of Biblical Literature), while one of his earlier articles, “The Genesis of the Bible,” appeared in Chinese translation as “Shèng Jīng de Chuàng Shì Jì,” *Biblical Literature Studies 5* (People’s Literature Publishing House). He will continue as a visiting scholar at the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies, Yarnton Manor, through fall 2012.

Jeffrey Shandler was elected as a fellow of the American Academy for Jewish Research, and he also began his term as president of the Association for Jewish Studies. (See page 4.) He was co-convenor of “Beyond Boundaries: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Studying American Jews,” the Biennial Scholars Conference of the American Jewish Historical Society, held at the Center for Jewish History, New York. He gave the following presentations: “The Meaning of Yiddish, Past and Present,” University of Wisconsin–Madison; “Watching *The Goldbergs*,” SUNY New Paltz; “Keepers of Accounts: The Practice of Inventory in Modern Jewish Life,” Yale Modern Jewish History Colloquium; “Display and Play: Inventive Inventories in Modern Jewish Culture,” 43rd annual Association for Jewish Studies conference; “Living Room Witnesses: The Holocaust on American Television,” Museum of Jewish Heritage, New York, and at Trinity College; “Queer Yiddishkeit,” Barnard College; and “Anne Frank, from Diary to Book,” York University. He moderated the panel discussion “America as Haven,” National Museum of American Jewish History, Philadelphia, and served on two other panels: “Memorialization” at the symposium “The Future of Memory: Voices of Social Change?,” Shoah Foundation Institute, University of Southern California; and on “Dissolving Localities: A Conversation with Emmanuel Witzthum,” Magnes Collection of Jewish Art and Life, University of California, Berkeley. His publications include “‘Serious’ Talk” (symposium on *A Serious Man*), *Association for Jewish Studies Review*; and “The Holocaust for Beginners: Yankev Glatshyeyn’s *Emil un Karl* and Other Wartime Works for Young American Yiddish Readers,” *MELUS*.

Nancy Sinkoff gave the following lectures: “Arch Rivals in ‘The Archers’ Voice’: Revisiting the Origins of the Hebrew-Yiddish Language War among East European *Maskilim*,” University of Arizona Center for Judaic Studies; and “Jewish Politics in Postwar America and the Rise of Neoconservatives,” Frankel Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies, University of Michigan, where she was a winter term fellow in the group “Jews and Political Life.” She was also a panelist at the symposium “New York City and the Jews, The Promised City? 1924 to the Present.” She organized and chaired the panel “Early Modern and Modern Self-Fashionings: A Prague Bibliophile, Western Sephardim, Polish Immigrants to Palestine, and the Dybbuk’s Creators,” and was on a panel entitled “Modern Jewish Politics in the College Classroom,” both at the Association for Jewish Studies annual conference. She published “Fiction’s Archive: Authenticity, Ethnography, and Philosemitism in John Hersey’s *The Wall*,” *Jewish Social Studies: History, Culture, Society*; and a review essay in *American Jewish History* on two books, *Running Commentary: The Contentious Magazine That Transformed the Jewish Left into the Neoconservative Right*, by Benjamin Balint, and *Norman Podhoretz and Commentary Magazine: The Rise and Fall of the Neocons*, by Nathan Abrams. She was a respondent to a questionnaire published by *AJS Perspectives*: “What Is the Most and Least Successful Course You Have Taught?” She continued to serve as the academic coordinator of the Graduate Fellows Program at the Center for Jewish History through December 2011.

Paola Tartakoff completed her first book, *Between Christian and Jew: Conversion and Inquisition in the Crown of Aragon, 1250–1391*, published as part of the Middle Ages Series of the University of Pennsylvania Press. (See page 4.) Her essay “The Toledot Yeshu and the Jewish-Christian Controversy in the Medieval Crown of Aragon” appeared in *Toledot Yeshu (“The Life Story of Jesus”) Revisited* (Mohr Siebeck). She gave the presentation “Jewish-Christian Relations through the Ages” during the fall course of the Master Teacher Institute in Holocaust Education

at Rutgers. She presented a paper, “Anti-Christian Polemics and the Art of Re-Judaizing Apostates in Medieval Spain,” at the annual Association for Jewish Studies conference. She is embarking on new research on the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492.

Azzan Yadin-Israel taught the department’s first graduate seminar, “The Akedah: The Binding of Isaac and Its Reverberations.” He published “The Creaturely Limits of Knowledge: Martin Heidegger’s Theological Critique of Immanuel Kant” (coauthored with Samuel Moyn), in *The Weimar Moment: Political Theology, Liberalism, and the Law*, edited by Leonard V. Kaplan and Rudy Koshar (Lexington Books); “Rabbi Aqiva and the Site of Revelation,” in *Revelation, Literature, and Community in Late Antiquity*, edited by Moulie Vidas and Philippa Townsend (Mohr Siebeck); and a review in *AJS Perspectives* of the latest album by Hadag Nahash. He presented a lecture, “Rabbinic Power” (in Hebrew), at an international conference on Aggadah held in Jerusalem (July 2011), and he was invited to give the following talks: “Textual Foreknowledge: Rabbinic, Pauline, and Pagan” (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign); “Moses in Akiva’s Classroom (a Response to Daniel Boyarin and Shelomo Naeh)” (Yale University); “Hadag Nahash: Hip Hop and Social Critique” (UCLA); “Kabbalah and Deuteriosis” (Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley); and “Divine Law and Minority Opinion” at a conference on Jewish and Muslim jurisprudence at the University of California, Berkeley Law School. He completed his tenure as acting chair of the Department of Classics and continued to serve both as coeditor of the book series *Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism* and on the editorial board of the *Journal of Ancient Judaism*. He was invited to join the advisory board of the Enoch Seminar.

Yael Zerubavel gave invited presentations including the following: a keynote address, “Heritage, National Memory, and Identity Politics in Israel,” at the annual meeting of the International Society for Cultural History, devoted to “History—Memory—Myth: Re-presenting the Past,” in Oslo, Norway; a paper, “National Memory and the

Recreation of Jewish Antiquity in Modern Israeli Culture,” at the international conference “Celebrating the Nation: Symbols, Myths and Lieux de Mèmoire in National Discourses,” at the University of the Basque Country, Vitoria, Spain; the Einhorn Endowed Lecture at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, entitled “The Bible, the Lure of Antiquity, and Israeli Popular Culture” (and she also presented a seminar for the Jewish studies faculty there); a paper, “Numerical Commemoration: The Mnemonic Value of Numbers in Contemporary Israel,” at the workshop “The Social Life of Jewish Numbers” at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; and a paper, “The ‘Island,’ the Desert, and the Fence: Memory and Space Metaphors in the Perception of Conflict in Israeli Culture,” at the workshop “History and Memory: Global and Local Dimensions” at Stanford University (and co-organized with the Van Leer Institute for Research, Jerusalem). Additional academic presentations included a paper, “Putting Numbers into Space: Memories, Identities, and the Art of Forgetting,” at the annual meeting of the Association for Israel Studies in Haifa; a panel, “Hollywood Zion,” for the American Jewish History Society, Center for Jewish History, New York; and a panel, “Memory, Nostalgia, and Dissent in Contemporary Israel,” for which she presented the paper “Antiquity in Popular Israeli Culture: Humor, Nostalgia, and Politics,” at Rutgers. She published, in Hebrew, “Back to the Bible: Hiking in the Land as a Mnemonic Practice in Contemporary Israeli Tourist Discourse,” in *History and Memory: Essays in Honor of Anita Shapira*, edited by Meir Hazan and Uri Cohen (The Zalman Shazar Center for Jewish History). She served on Rutgers University’s Advisory Council on Jewish Student Life, and on the NJ-Israel Commission of the State of New Jersey. She also continued to serve on the advisory boards of academic journals and presses: *Israel Studies*, *Israel Studies Review*, *Journal of Israeli History*, *AJS Perspectives*, and *Postscripts: The Journal of Sacred Texts and Contemporary Worlds*; and the Rutgers University Press series *Jewish Cultures of the World*, and the Academic Studies Press series *Israel: Society, Culture, and History*.

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PUBLIC PROGRAMS 2012-2013

Body, Ritual, Text: Reconciling Judaism and Feminism in Contemporary Israeli Art*

The Ruth and Alvin Rockoff Program

Paula Birnbaum, University of San Francisco
September 23

The Music Libel Against the Jews

In conjunction with the Henry Schwartzman Faculty Seminar

Ruth HaCohen, Hebrew University
October 16

Rutgers Jewish Film Festival

October 30–November 11

The Zohar: Masterpiece of Kabbalah

Supported by the Sagner Family Foundation

Daniel Matt, translator of the *Zohar*
November 19

Israeli Authors Forum:

A conversation with **Ronit Matalon*** (in Hebrew)
December 4

Cosponsor: Rutgers Institute for Women and Art

The Anne Frank Phenomenon

Jeffrey Shandler, Rutgers University
February 4

Art and Memory: Moving Images

The Abram Matlofsky Memorial Program

Shimon Attie, internationally renowned artist
March 6

Cosponsor: Mason Gross School of the Arts

An Unprecedented Relationship: Evangelicals, Jews, Israel, and the Messianic Times

The Toby and Herbert Stolzer Program

Yaakov Ariel, University of North Carolina
April 9

Muslims and Jews in France:

The Genealogy of a Conflict

The Raoul Wallenberg Program

funded by Leon and Toby Cooperman

Maud Mandel, Brown University
April 18

A Dream Denied: The Decline of Newark in the 20th Century

The Ruth Ellen Steinman and

Edward J. Bloustein Memorial Program

Kenneth Jackson, Columbia University
April 25

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