

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...

Ten years ago I joined Rutgers' faculty with the mission to found a new academic center and spearhead the development of Jewish studies at Rutgers. The vision and generous gift of Allen and Joan Bildner provided the impetus for this process. Encouragement and guidance by Rutgers' administration and faculty and by leading alumni and community members helped to move this process along. The mission was complex and challenging, and we all knew it might take a few years before we began to see the fruits of our hard work.

Today, the **Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life** is a highly visible and active institution, located in a renovated building at the heart of the New Brunswick campus. The Center sponsors a wide array of academic seminars and cultural events, educational programs and communal initiatives, for faculty and students, the general public, and targeted groups.

Rutgers is the only university in the state of New Jersey that offers a **B.A. degree in Jewish studies**, and one of only a few universities where Jewish studies is a separate department. As the founding director of the Center and founding chair of the Department of Jewish Studies, I find it highly rewarding to see these two entities now firmly established and working together to promote Jewish studies at Rutgers.

*Yael Zerubavel's column continues on page 11*

## Jewish Studies Milestones

**AUGUST 2005**  
Master Teacher  
Institute in  
Holocaust Education

**2006**  
Bildner Center  
Celebrates  
Tenth Anniversary

**OCTOBER 2004**  
Laurie Chair  
in Jewish  
History

**SPRING 2001**  
Think Tank  
with Jewish  
Federations

**NOVEMBER 2000**  
First Rutgers  
N.J. Jewish  
Film Festival

**AUGUST 2000**  
Department  
of Jewish  
Studies

**FEBRUARY 2000**  
Herbert & Leonard  
Littman Families  
Holocaust  
Resource Center

**MAY 1999**  
Building  
Dedication  
12 College Avenue

**SPRING 1998**  
Establishment  
of B.A. in  
Jewish Studies

**SEPTEMBER 1996**  
Opening of  
Bildner  
Center

# JEWISH STUDIES FACULTY

## From the Chair of the Department of Jewish Studies

As with most academic departments, the Department of Jewish Studies at Rutgers University constantly reevaluates its curriculum in order to ensure that it meets our understanding of what a Jewish studies major should consist of. With this goal in mind, last year the Jewish studies faculty reconsidered its major requirements and proposed a new system. The Faculty of Arts and Sciences approved the proposal, so that starting in spring 2006 a new set of requirements has been in place.

The new major has shifted from a content-based system, in which students were required to take courses in a specific area such as Jewish history or Israel studies, to a discipline-based one. Jewish studies majors now must take three courses with specific disciplinary distinctions: a course with a social science approach, another in which classical Jewish texts are read, and a third in which modern Jewish literature is studied. All majors will continue to take our two-semester survey course “Jewish Society and Culture,” a Jewish studies majors seminar, and one year of a Jewish language (Hebrew or Yiddish). Students then must choose four additional courses offered by the department to complete the major requirements.

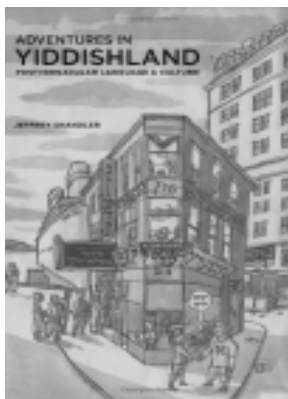
The newly designed major is a response to two trends that have emerged: one emanating from the field in general, and one reflective of our students’ habits and interests. The former refers to the greater influence of the social sciences on the field of Jewish studies. A field that once sat squarely in the world of the humanities has become quintessentially interdisciplinary, with sociology, anthropology, political science, and other approaches finding a comfortable place alongside the more traditional methodologies of history and philology.

In addition, we have noticed that our students have become less and less familiar with Jewish literature. Although today’s students read more and more (witness the sheer quantity of books sold by Amazon, Borders, Barnes & Noble, and other booksellers), the average Jewish studies major is less likely to have firsthand experience with Jewish texts, either classical or modern. The literature courses will infuse our majors with knowledge of a wealth of texts, whether classical ones such as the Bible and the Talmud or modern ones such as the works of Bialik and Malamud. The goal is to get our students to read more, to remind them at every turn that the people they are studying are indeed “the people of the book.”

Never a group to remain static, the Jewish studies faculty will continue to examine the department major at every turn. Our goal is to ensure that our students receive the best education possible, with the Jewish studies major serving as a model of a liberal arts education at Rutgers University.

—Professor Gary A. Rendsburg

## Faculty Books



Professor Jeffrey Shandler has published two books, both dealing with modern Yiddish culture. *Adventures in Yiddishland: Postvernacular Language and Culture* examines the transformation of Yiddish over the past six decades, tracing its shift from the language of daily life for millions of Jews to what he terms a *postvernacular* language of diverse and expanding symbolic value.

Shandler’s study examines the broad spectrum of people who engage with Yiddish—from Hasidim to avant-garde performers, Jews as well as non-Jews, fluent speakers as well as those who know little or no Yiddish—in communities around the world. *Adventures in Yiddishland* takes a wide-ranging look at Yiddish culture, including language learning, literary translation, performance, and material culture.

Shandler has also translated into English the Yiddish novel *Emil and Karl* by Yankev Glatshteyn, originally published in New York in 1940. One of the first books written for young adult readers that deal with the Holocaust era, *Emil and Karl* is the story of two boys—one Jewish, the other not—and the hardships they face in Vienna under Nazi rule on the eve of World War II. According to Shandler, Glatshteyn wanted to engage his readers, who attended secular Yiddish schools, with the moral challenges that people in Europe then faced under Nazism. *Emil and Karl* remains a powerful book for readers young and old, and Shandler’s afterword explains the context in which this remarkable book was originally written.

## JEWISH STUDIES FACULTY

### Core Faculty

Gary A. Rendsburg, Chair  
Jeffrey Shandler  
Nancy Sinkoff  
Azzan Yadin  
Yael Zerubavel

### Associated Faculty

Myron J. Aronoff  
Maurice Elias  
Leslie Fishbein  
Ziva Galili  
Judith Gerson  
David Greenberg  
Paul Hanebrink  
Martha Helfer

Phyllis Mack  
Barbara Reed

### Visiting Scholars

Cornelia Wilhelm,  
Aresty Visiting Fellow  
Yaacov Yadgar, The  
Schusterman Visiting  
Scholar in Israel Studies

### Language Instructors

Orly Moshenberg, Hebrew  
Language Coordinator  
Edna Bryn-Noiman  
Pearl Gluck  
Lily Levy

## Inaugural Henry Schwartzman Faculty Seminar Features Dan Bar-On

Providing an annual forum for visiting scholars to present new research in Jewish studies, the Bildner Center has established the **Henry Schwartzman Faculty Seminar**, endowed by **Arline Schwartzman** in memory of her late husband. The seminar was inaugurated in September 2005 with guest scholar Professor **Dan Bar-On** from Ben-Gurion University (BGU) of the Negev in Israel.

Dr. Bar-On's pioneering study of the moral and psychological after-effects of the Holocaust on children of Nazi perpetrators was followed by research on the families of Holocaust survivors. These studies were published in *Legacy of Silence: Encounters with Children of the Third Reich* (Harvard University Press, 1989) and *Fear and Hope: Three Generations of the Holocaust* (Harvard University Press, 1995). Dr. Bar-On is also co-director of the Peace Research Institute in the Middle East at BGU, for which he has received several awards honoring the institute's efforts in peace building between Palestinians and Israelis.

The seminar program included two lectures for Rutgers faculty. The first addressed Dr. Bar-On's work on the legacy



Dan Bar-On, Arline Schwartzman, and Yael Zerubavel

of silence in Nazi perpetrators and Holocaust survivors' families, and the second focused on his current work on the writing of a joint Israeli-Palestinian history textbook. Dr. Bar-On also lectured to students in the course "Israeli Culture" and met with Department of Jewish Studies faculty to discuss current research.

Off to an auspicious beginning, the Henry Schwartzman seminar will continue to benefit faculty and students, enriching the intellectual life on campus, promoting scholarly exchange, and fostering new ideas for teaching and research.

## Jewish Studies Faculty Participate in Rutgers Exchange Program with Russia's Kazan State University

In fall 2004, Rutgers began a three-year faculty exchange and collaboration program with Kazan State University, funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of State titled "**Building Democracy in Multi-Ethnic Societies.**" The program is designed to explore historical and contemporary theories and practices of federalism in Russia and internationally, foster the study of ethnicity and gender, and develop curricula in these areas that meet the needs of students at Kazan State University.

The Center for Democratic Education at Kazan State University serves as a clearinghouse for the program. **Ziva Galili**, acting executive dean of the Rutgers-New Brunswick School of Arts and Sciences, and **Joanna Regulska**, chair of the women's and gender studies department and director of international studies, are co-directors of the program. Ten faculty and advanced graduate students from Rutgers in political science, sociology, Jewish studies, history, and women's studies joined fourteen Russian faculty as participants. In spring 2006, **Nancy Sinkoff**, a professor of Jewish studies and history, and **Mike Aronoff**, a professor of Jewish studies, political science, and anthropology, traveled to Kazan State University to share their knowledge and experience with its faculty and students.

After her return, Nancy Sinkoff described her visit:

*My visit to Kazan State University (KSU) included giving public lectures, teaching, discussing curricula with faculty, observing lessons, meeting with students, as well as participating in cultural events in Kazan. I also met functionaries in the local Jewish community, including the school principal and the head of the Jewish studies program, who is also a civic leader in Kazan. The Jewish school is a natural source for future university students who will be interested in Jewish studies.*

*My visit to KSU was productive and fruitful on several fronts. Interaction with faculty and students at KSU introduced new pedagogical techniques to the teaching of history and Jewish studies. The presentation of syllabi, course packets, and primary sources during the lectures allowed for an engaged exchange between the professor and the students. Individual consultations with faculty led to a creative dialogue about curricular and research materials that were new to the KSU faculty. Delivery of books, anthologies, compact discs, and syllabi to the Center for Democratic Education has initiated the process of building an in-house library and resource center to support the teaching of Jewish studies at KSU.*

# JEWISH STUDIES FACULTY

## FACULTY SEMINARS 2005–2006

**Emily Budick**, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem: “**Symptomology and American Jewish Fiction: The Case of Cynthia Ozick’s ‘Envy; or, Yiddish in America.’**”

*Co-sponsored with Rutgers Department of American Studies*

**Gad Freudenthal**, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris: “**Medieval Jewish Science: What Are We Talking About?**”

**Oleg Budnitskii**, The International Center for Russian & East European Jewish Studies, Moscow: “**Russian Jews between the Red and the White: 1917-1920.**” *Co-sponsored with the Department of History and the Center for Comparative European Studies*

**Warren Hoffman**, Norman and Syril Reitman Visiting Fellow, Bildner Center: “**Yiddish Literature, Queer Theory**”

**Menahem Blondheim**, Hebrew University; **Akiba Cohen**, Tel Aviv University; **Michele Rosenthal**, University of Haifa: A panel entitled “**The Talmud and the Telephone: Talking in the Land of Israel.**”

*Co-sponsored with Rutgers Departments of Journalism & Media Studies and American Studies*

**Brian Horowitz**, Tulane University: “**Jewish Philanthropy, Culture and Identity: The Society for the Promotion of Enlightenment**”

**Amnon Raz-Krakortzkin**, Ben-Gurion University: “**What Is the ‘History’ in the Phrase ‘the Jewish Return to History’?**”

**Haim Gertner**, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem: “**Holy Gravestones: The Beginning of Archaeological Excavations in the Old Jewish Cemeteries in Eastern Europe (The case of Krakow and Lvov)**”

**Daniel Hillel**, University of Massachusetts: “**The Natural History of the Bible: An Environmental Exploration of the Hebrew Scriptures**”

**Gary A. Rendsburg**, Rutgers University: “**Variations in the Poetry of the Song of Songs**”

## ANNOUNCING THE VISITING SCHOLARS FOR 2006–2007

### The Aresty Visiting Fellow

**Cornelia Wilhelm** is a member of the faculty of arts and history at the Ludwig-Maximilians-University in Munich. Her areas of expertise include the history of Jews in America and Germany and the history of German-American relations. At Rutgers, Wilhelm will teach “The German Jewish Experience” and “New York Jewry: History, Culture and Identity.” She will also serve as a faculty adviser for the Master Teacher Institute in Holocaust Education.

### The Schusterman Visiting Scholar in Israel Studies

**Yaacov Yadgar** is a senior lecturer in the Department of Political Studies at Bar-Ilan University. Yadgar’s main research interests include nationalism and ethnicity; culture and collective identity; Jewish identity in Israel; and media and politics. While at Rutgers, Yadgar will teach “Israeli Media,” “History of Zionism,” “Israeli Politics,” and “Israeli Culture” and will participate in the Bildner Center’s public outreach program.

## VISITING SCHOLARS Fall 2005–Spring 2006

**Hanna Yablonka**, the **Aresty Visiting Fellow** for 2005–2006, is a professor in the Department of Jewish History at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev and also head of the Rabb Center for Holocaust and Redemption Studies. A leading scholar in Holocaust studies, Yablonka was awarded Yad Vashem’s Buchman Memorial Prize for her book *The State of Israel vs. Adolf Eichmann* (Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi and Yedioth Aharonot, 2001). Random House published an English translation of this book in 2004. Her book *Survivors of the Holocaust: Israel after the War* was translated into English and published by New York University Press in 1999. Yablonka is currently completing a study on Mizrahi Jews and the Holocaust. While at Rutgers, she was a part of the teaching team of the Master Teacher Institute in Holocaust Education, serving as a historical consultant and playing an integral role as a respondent to guest scholars and leading discussions with the teachers. She also taught the course “The Holocaust and Israel” and delivered a talk, “The Eichmann Trial: The ‘Jewish’ Nuremberg,” at a symposium presented by the Bildner Center.

**Warren Hoffman**, the **Norman and Syril Reitman Visiting Fellow** for fall 2005, earned his Ph.D. in American literature from the University of California at Santa Cruz, writing the doctoral thesis *Gay-Valt: Queer Performance and Identity in Twentieth-Century Jewish American Literature, Theater, and Film*. He is currently the book review editor of *Judaism*. While at Rutgers, Hoffman taught the course “Queer Jewish Culture in America.” Of his teaching experience at Rutgers, Hoffman remarked, “Having worked on this material for several years, finally getting to teach it to others was a real thrill. I had the most amazing group of students who consistently impressed me with their ideas, level of

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## FACULTY PROFILE

### Judith Gerson



**J**udith Gerson, associate professor of sociology and women's and gender studies, spent the last academic year as a fellow at the Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. There she pursued her research on German-Jewish refugees who fled Nazi Germany in the 1930s and 1940s, arriving in the United States before the end of the war.

A focus on this group, Gerson explains, will begin to fill a gap in the study of the Holocaust and in current research on immigration to the United States. As she notes, "There has been considerable research on Holocaust survivors, and more recently some research about displaced persons who arrived after the war. But we know far less about those who fled before the deportations began in October 1941."

Similarly, the 1930s and 1940s represent a void for scholars who maintain that the first big immigration wave ended in 1924, the second one did not begin until the 1960s, and immigration in the intervening years is considered inconsequential. Gerson's study defies this framework and offers new sociological and historical insights into this immigrant group, as Holocaust refugees who began their lives anew in this country.

The German Jews she studies are reluctant to define themselves as Holocaust survivors. Instead, they prefer the term "immigrants" (or, as some recall, "newcomers" or "greenhorns"), or they simply refer to themselves as "Americans." Gerson's study, entitled *By Thanksgiving, We Were Americans: Hidden Legacies of the Holocaust among German-Jewish Refugees*, explores how the Holocaust and the resettlement shaped the lives of German-Jewish immigrants in America. As her title suggests, many refugees were eager to become Americans and, from outward appearances, assimilated quickly. Yet their commitment to becoming Americans did not diminish their anxieties or their efforts to secure the survival of remaining kin in Europe.

The notion that these German-Jewish refugees identified more readily as immigrants than as survivors, and insisted they were Americans rather than acknowledge they were former Germans, suggests the underlying analytic framework of this study. "My project grapples with questions of identity and, in particular, the ever-popular stereotype that German Jews were more German than Jewish," Gerson notes. "To gain a better understanding of this issue, I look for evidence of how people locate their identities in their daily practices and in various spheres of their lives." Examining everyday life in Germany and the United States provides little support for the stereotype, despite its imagined salience. Large numbers of refugees were Orthodox Jews, and they understood that they could be both citizens of a state and observant Jews. Gerson's approach to this study of identity offers a link to her earlier work on gender theory, which recognizes the need for a more complex and inclusive analysis of people's identities, given their multiple group affiliations.

In this study, Gerson draws on a wide range of sources: immigrant letters, diaries, and memoirs; archival records of the U.S. and Nazi governments; intelligence reports from the Office of Strategic Services (a precursor to the Central Intelligence Agency); and documents from refugee organizations in Germany and the United States. In addition, she has been conducting extensive interviews with German-Jewish immigrants in New York City, because so many settled there.

A graduate in sociology from Syracuse University, Gerson earned her doctorate in sociology from Cornell University. She has been on the Rutgers faculty for more than 25 years and on the faculty of the Jewish studies program since its inception in 1998. "From the beginning, Judy took part in building the program," recalled Yael Zerubavel, who established it. "She is a member of Jewish studies as an affiliated faculty, and some of the courses she offers have a Jewish studies component, addressing Jewish diasporas and immigration issues."

Gerson is also part of an informal group of professors at Rutgers who are studying various aspects of the Holocaust from multidisciplinary perspectives. This fall she will co-teach a graduate seminar at Rutgers on trauma, identity, and memory, which will include a special focus on the Holocaust.

*continued from page 4*

preparedness, and theoretical sophistication. Their work in my class has allowed me to continue to refine my own work as I continue to get my manuscript ready for publication." Hoffman

also had the opportunity to present his latest research to the Jewish studies faculty and graduate students when he presented the seminar "Yiddish Literature, Queer Theory." Hoffman added that "the fellowship provided me with a community of scholars to share my work with and grow as an academic."

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH

## From the Associate Director

The Bildner Center entered a new phase in its relationship with the community this year with the opening of the Master Teacher Institute in Holocaust Education (MTI). The cooperative nature of the MTI, which features a productive partnership of the Bildner Center, Rutgers faculty, and public school educators, has developed as a supportive model of community-based education and advances the study of the Holocaust in the state of New Jersey. The high-level forum promotes innovative teaching methods and networking among teachers from thirteen counties in New Jersey. It is a privilege to work with such devoted educators.

The Center has become an educational and cultural hub for the New Jersey community. The Rutgers New Jersey Jewish Film Festival drew over 4,000 people last year, and once again I heard people say, "It was the best festival yet." It took more than two

years of planning to prepare for the visit to the Rutgers campus by composer Osvaldo Golijov; see page 9 to learn why it was worth the effort. It is gratifying that these educational and cultural opportunities bring the community together to share in the richness of Jewish life.

As we recognize the milestones of the Bildner Center's first ten years, we celebrate projects that have developed from the seed of an idea or a committee discussion into full-fledged programs such as the Jewish Film Festival and the MTI. We look forward to celebrating this year with special forums devoted to research areas of the Jewish studies faculty and engaging with current issues such as genocide and the changing face of Israeli society and culture. Each program offers a unique perspective and the chance to join the ongoing dialogue that carries us forward.

—Karen Small

## The Herbert and Leonard Littman Families Holocaust Resource Center

### Symposium on the Nuremberg Trials

A symposium on the sixtieth anniversary of the first international effort to bring Nazi war criminals to justice opened the Bildner Center's spring semester of public programming in February. "The Face of Justice: 60th Anniversary of the Nuremberg Trials," the Raoul Wallenberg Annual Program supported by the Leon and Toby Cooperman Fund, attracted an audience of about 400 people. Co-sponsored by the Rutgers Schools of Law in Camden and Newark and Rutgers' Department of History, the program focused on the trials, which set precedents in international justice and in efforts to seek legal redress for horrific crimes committed during World War II against millions of victims.

The symposium approached the topic from both historical and legal perspectives. Raul Hilberg, professor emeritus at the University of Vermont and widely considered the first historiographer of the Holocaust, discussed how the trials helped shape historians' understanding of the Holocaust. He spoke about the very deep divisions of opinion within the United States and internationally about establishing the precedent of holding such trials and the thorny legal issues involved in developing the framework for the criminal proceedings. Hilberg also described his personal experiences as a witness of the trial proceedings and his firsthand knowledge of the documents used as evidence.

Hanna Yablonka, the Bildner Center's Aresty Visiting Fellow and renowned scholar of the post-Holocaust era in Israel, explored the 1961 trial of Adolph Eichmann, which David Ben-Gurion called the "Jewish Nuremberg." She provided a comparative analysis of the Nuremberg Trials and the

Eichmann Trial, noting that although both trials stemmed from World War II, they ultimately bore little resemblance historically, judicially, or epistemologically: Whereas the Nuremberg Trials related to the broader context of the Second World War, and the Jewish story was addressed as only one among many manifestations of the German atrocities during the war, the Eichmann Trial focused on the Holocaust, almost completely ignoring the larger context of World War II. As a result, the two trials presented different conceptual approaches and led to different consequences: while the Nuremberg Trials left a short-term impact on public discourse, the Eichmann Trial brought the Holocaust into the center of worldwide attention and ongoing interest.

Harry Reicher, who teaches at the University of Pennsylvania Law School and is a member of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council, spoke about the legacy of the Nuremberg Trials from a legal perspective. These trials were revolutionary both procedurally and substantively, bringing about a huge transformation in international law, particularly international criminal law and international human rights law. The innovations of the Nuremberg Trials have significant reverberations to the present day, and one can look to the international tribunals established for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia as the most direct descendants of the Nuremberg model.



Harry Reicher, Raul Hilberg, Yael Zerubavel, Hanna Yablonka

# Master Teacher Institute in Holocaust Education Completes First Year

The Master Teacher Institute in Holocaust Education (MTI), an innovative two-year, statewide study program, began at Rutgers in August 2005 under the auspices of the **Herbert and Leonard Littman Families Holocaust Resource Center**. Thirty teachers are enrolled in the institute, from thirteen counties in New Jersey.

The MTI seminars present such themes as genocide, oppression, and racism within a broader context and address complex methodological issues involved in teaching about the Holocaust. The training and education that the participants receive allow them to grapple with profound questions and concerns about the nature of human behavior and the roles of the perpetrator, the victim, and the bystander. The MTI faculty members stress that effective Holocaust teaching empowers students to challenge prejudice and discrimination. The program creates a supportive network for the teachers, who are able to draw on one another's experience and expertise in developing their teaching and classroom management.

The formal opening of the program on September 14, 2005, brought together the many partners who have supported this initiative. In attendance were the thirty MTI participants; school administrators and principals; district and county superintendents; **Paul Winkler**, executive director of the New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education, and representatives of other state Holocaust Resource Centers; members of Rutgers' administration and faculty; and the Bildner Center's Leadership and Holocaust Advisory Committees. A keynote address on "**The Holocaust in Historical Context**," delivered by Professor **David Engel** of New York University, challenged and inspired participants.

The institute's sessions were led by **Jeffrey Shandler** of the Rutgers' Department of Jewish Studies, **Hanna Yablonka**, the Bildner Center's Aresty Visiting Fellow for the year, and **Karen Small**. Leading scholars from across the country presented a broad range of topics, including "**Jewish Life in Germany before WWII**," "**Art and Ideology in the Third Reich**," and "**Jewish Life and Death in Nazi Ghettos**."

The first year ended with a guided trip to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. The MTI fellows toured the museum's permanent and special exhibits and benefited from the group discussions with the museum



**Jeffrey Shandler, Karen Small, and Michael Berenbaum, University of Judaism**

educators. Additional presentations on that trip focused on the role of Holocaust museums.

In the second year of the MTI (2006–2007), the participants will work closely with Rutgers faculty and staff to create educational programs and enhanced curricula for their schools and districts based on their learning experiences. The goal of the projects is to positively impact the schools by creating an environment of tolerance and understanding of differences.

With the MTI, the newest initiative of the Littman Holocaust Resource Center, the Bildner Center has greatly advanced its Holocaust educational programming, moving from one-day workshops and lecture series to a two-year commitment to comprehensive Holocaust study of the highest caliber. Through the institute, the Center is also developing important long-term relationships with a large group of New Jersey educators, who will continue

to serve as resources for their schools and communities.

The program is offered free of charge to participating teachers, who have made a commitment to attend the two-year program with their school's support. The pilot phase of the Master Teacher Institute is subsidized by the **Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany–Rabbi Israel Miller Fund for Shoah Research, Documentation and Education**.

## Karen Small Receives Honey and Maurice Axelrod Award

**Karen Small**, the Bildner Center's associate director, has been selected to receive the **Honey and Maurice Axelrod Award**, which is given to educators who have demonstrated outstanding efforts in teaching the Holocaust and genocide in their classrooms, as well as to others who are continuing efforts to reduce bias, bigotry, and prejudice in their communities. The award is presented by the New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education and the Anti-Defamation League of New Jersey.



# COMMUNITY OUTREACH



Films featured at the 2005 Festival: *Watermarks* (above) and *Sister Rose's Passion* (below)

## Sixth Rutgers New Jersey Jewish Film Festival

In its sixth year, the annual **Rutgers New Jersey Jewish Film Festival**, sponsored by the Bildner Center, featured directors and special guest appearances.

More than 4,000 tickets were sold for the festival's diverse documentary and dramatic films from Israel, the United States, the Netherlands, Poland, France, and Germany. Six films had their New Jersey premieres at the festival, to overflowing crowds. Responding to great interest in weekend screenings, the festival added a Saturday night show to its schedule. *Ushpizin*, the first feature filmed in Israel's ultra-Orthodox community, sold out well in advance of

the festival, and two additional screenings also were sold out.

*Watermarks*, the story of the champion women swimmers of Hakoah Vienna, opened the festival. The legendary Jewish sports club was founded in response to the notorious "Aryan Paragraph" that forbade Austrian sports clubs from accepting Jewish athletes. Appearances by **Greta Stanton**, the team's diver and professor emerita of social work at Rutgers University, made the screenings of this engaging documentary particularly meaningful to the audience. She spoke about the importance of the sports club to young Jews in Vienna and shared her experience making the film.

### Film Festival Hosts Public School Students

As part of its outreach to the community, the festival offered a special morning screening of the documentary *Paper Clips* to approximately 300 seventh- and eighth-graders from the Crossroads South Middle School of South Brunswick. *Paper Clips* focuses on the



## Fall 2005 Festival Films

### Watermarks

Israel, 2004

Director: Yaron Zilberman

### Ushpizin

Israel, 2004

Director: Gidi Dar

### Rosenstrasse

Germany/Netherlands, 2003

Director: Margarethe von Trotta

### Unzere Kinder (Our Children)

Poland, 1948

Director: Joseph Seiden

### My 100 Children

Israel, 2003

Directors: Amalia Margolin and Oshra Schwartz

### Paper Clips

USA, 2004

Directors: Joe Fab and Elliot Berlin

### Sister Rose's Passion

USA, 2004

Director: Oren Jacoby

### Alles Auf Zucker (Go for Zucker)

Germany, 2004

Director: Dani Levy

### Another Road Home

USA/Israel, 2004

Director: Danae Elon

### Syrian Bride

France/Israel/Germany, 2004

Director: Eran Riklis

children of a small rural community in Tennessee who take on a school project related to the Holocaust that opens their eyes to the diversity of the world. **Mary Johnson**, a senior educator at Facing History and Ourselves, led a discussion with the students following the screening.

The Rutgers New Jersey Jewish Film Festival is made possible through the generous support of the **Karma Foundation**. The Regal Entertainment Group is also a sponsor of the festival.



## Composer Osvaldo Golijov Visits Campus

The Bildner Center continued its vibrant cultural programming in March 2006 with a special evening of music and dialogue with acclaimed composer **Osvaldo Golijov**. Hailed by the *New York Times* as “redrawing the map” in classical music and named “composer of the year” for 2006 by *Musical America*, Golijov spent a day on campus meeting with music faculty and coaching student musicians at Mason Gross School of the Arts before his illuminating public presentation at Nicholas Music Center.

During his talk, Golijov described his musical vision and the various influences on his work. Originally from Argentina, the composer lived in Jerusalem for several years. He referred to the strong influence of Jewish life in those places and of synagogue liturgy on his music. He also shared insights into his creative process. The evening culminated with performances by student musicians of



Osvaldo Golijov with student musicians

Sharon Karmazin, Osvaldo Golijov, Dina Karmazin Elkins, and Dave Green



selections from Golijov’s repertoire, including “Levante” for piano, “Lúa Descolorida” for soprano and piano, and the third movement of the Clarinet Quintet, “Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind.” After the performances, audience members had the opportunity to converse with the composer and the student musicians.

Golijov’s works were featured in a monthlong festival, “The Passion of Osvaldo Golijov,” at Lincoln Center in January 2006. His recordings include *Yiddishbuk*, a Grammy-nominated CD of chamber music, and *The Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind*. He has received numerous commissions from major ensembles and institutions in the United States and Europe and has collaborated with a wide range of artists and orchestras.

Golijov’s visit to Rutgers was made possible by support from the **Karma Foundation**, which has endowed the annual **Abram Matlofsky Memorial Program** at the Bildner Center. It was also co-sponsored by the **Rutgers Department of Music, Mason Gross School of the Arts**.

## Highlights 2005-2006

### Performing the Black-Jewish Alliance: Paul Robeson and His ‘Hassidic Chant’

Jonathan Karp, Binghamton University  
Co-sponsored by the Paul Robeson Cultural Center

### Teaching in Times of Turmoil: Strategies of Survival, Humanistic Education and Cultural Repair

Susan Handelman, Bar-Ilan University  
The Toby and Herbert Stolzer Endowed Lecture

### Violence and the Sacred: Religion and Politics

Moshe Halbertal, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Shalom Hartman Institute, Jerusalem  
*The Ruth Ellen Steinman Bloustein and Edward J. Bloustein Memorial Lecture*  
Co-sponsored with the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy

### Jewish and Buddhist Lenses on Ritual Practice

Jane Marie Law, Cornell University  
Funded in part by the Sagner Family Foundation and presented in conjunction with the Dalai Lama’s visit to Rutgers

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH

## Israeli Authors Speak to Community and Classes

### The Ruth and Alvin Rockoff Annual Lecture

The renowned Israeli novelist **Meir Shalev** captivated audiences at Rutgers in November 2005 with stories of his family's experiences as socialist pioneers in Palestine in the early 1900s, as well as about his writing. The featured speaker for the **Ruth and Alvin Rockoff Annual Lecture**, Shalev presented "**My Russian Grandmother and Her American Vacuum Cleaner**" in English to a packed house.

### Israeli Authors Forum

Shalev gave a separate talk in Hebrew as part of the Center's ongoing **Israeli Authors Forum**. The forum draws large crowds of Hebrew speakers from the Metropolitan area. Shalev spoke about his major literary works and read passages from *Alone in the Desert, But a Few Days*, and *The Blue Mountain*.

The Israeli Authors Forum also featured **Amir Gutfreund**, the award-winning author of *The World, A Little Later*, *The Shoreline Mansions*, and *Our Holocaust*. The latter is a novel about children of Holocaust survivors whose search for knowledge about their relatives' and neighbors' experiences during the Holocaust leads to adventures that are both funny and alarming. Gutfreund addressed a large group of Hebrew speakers about his work in March 2006.

### Visits to Classes

The Center arranged for both Shalev and Gutfreund to address Jewish studies classes during their visits to Rutgers. Shalev spoke with advanced Hebrew literature students, who had read his work during the course of the semester. Gutfreund spoke to a joint session of Department of Jewish Studies classes "The Holocaust and Israel" and "Introduction to Modern Hebrew Literature." The Bildner Center enriches Jewish studies classes by bringing authors to talk with students providing a special forum to discuss various aspects of the authors' works.



Israeli author Meir Shalev with advanced Hebrew literature students



Alvin and Ruth Rockoff with Meir Shalev

### STUDENT RESPONSES TO AUTHORS' TALKS

Meeting Meir Shalev in person was enlightening on many levels. . . . Conversing with an accomplished author in such an informal and personal manner sheds a new light onto the world of writing in particular and creative expression in general. What made the meeting with Meir Shalev such a success was his amazingly personable nature. . . . He remembered everyone's names, spoke directly to each one of us, while sharing his personal stories. In response to our questions, he did not give quick simple answers, but elaborated and shared with us the "ins and outs" of his world as a prominent Israeli personality.

—Tali Fishel, first-year student

Amir Gutfreund had a wonderful childhood. Growing up in Haifa, Israel in the '70s, he played soccer, went to the beach and enjoyed the sunshine.

But he said his innocence was surrounded by vapors, which were as invisible as they were flammable.

"You don't see them or feel them," Gutfreund said. . . "but in a flash, they ignited everywhere."

The vapors were the realities of the Holocaust, which infused every aspect of Gutfreund's young life, even if he was initially unaware of them – and their discovery is the subject of his critically acclaimed first novel *Our Holocaust*.

—Arielle Gomberg, third-year student  
Excerpted from an article published  
in the Rutgers *Daily Targum*

## Online Study Brings 3,000 Years of Jewish History into Your Home

The Bildner Center is pleased to announce **Jewish Studies Online**, a new, interactive learning program in which Rutgers Department of Jewish Studies faculty present noncredit mini-courses via the Internet. These courses are open to the public and offered free of charge to all enrollees. Participants can learn at their leisure—from home, the office or anyplace with Internet access. The courses include video streams, slide shows, charts, maps, links to websites, and a discussion board.

The program appeals to learners of all ages, from high school students to retirees. Some may wish to participate in these courses to expand their horizons about Jewish history and culture. Prospective college students can use the courses to get a taste of what they can expect at

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.

Our first online course is titled **“The Bible and History”** and is taught by Professor **Gary A. Rendsburg**, the Blanche and Irving Laurie Chair in Jewish History and chair of the Department of Jewish Studies. In this course, Dr. Rendsburg examines the Bible as a source of historical information about the Ancient Near East, in relation to a wealth of archaeological data, as well as from a literary perspective.

“The Bible is first and foremost a literary presentation of ancient Israel’s understanding of itself and its relationship to God,” says Dr. Rendsburg, “but within its prose and poetry is a historical account that time and again has been confirmed by the discoveries emanating from archaeological research. In this course, I try to bring the two sources together to present a balanced view of the Bible and ancient history.”

The Bildner Center expresses its gratitude to **Adele and Gene Hoffman** of Short Hills, New Jersey, whose interest in online teaching and generosity helped to get this exciting new initiative off the ground.

## From the Director’s Desk...

*continued from page 1*

The Bildner Center’s ambitious programming encompasses numerous spheres of activity. Special panels and seminars presenting cutting-edge and innovative research are open to all Rutgers faculty and graduate students. The Center also offers extracurricular programs for students and supports student-driven programs that fall within its academic mission. Hundreds of undergraduate students register for the department’s diverse course offerings. An important feature of our work is collaborative efforts with other academic centers and organizations to promote intercultural understanding and reduce prejudice within the university and beyond.

The Center’s role as a major educational resource for the community enhances Rutgers’ overall mission as a public university. Its annual outreach program of endowed lectures, seminars, and panels covers a broad spectrum of topics such as Modern Orthodoxy, the American Jewish community, Black-Jewish relations, Israel and the conflict in the Middle East, Jewish culture, Kabbalah, and Hebrew and Yiddish literature. Audiences at Center events often number in the hundreds and include both the university

community and the general public, some of whom travel from a considerable distance. The most widely attended program is the Rutgers New Jersey Jewish Film Festival, now in its seventh year.

Among the Center’s most important educational initiatives are the Herbert and Leonard Littman Families Holocaust Resource Center’s workshops for public and private school teachers, culminating in a current two-year Master Teacher Institute in Holocaust Education. A special award given to Karen Small, the Center’s associate director who has developed this initiative, demonstrates the public recognition of the Center’s significant contribution in the area of Holocaust education.

The Bildner Center’s international ties are fostered by Jewish studies’ own faculty and by the visiting scholars that the Center brings to Rutgers from the United States, Europe, and Israel. These include both internationally known senior scholars and young Ph.D.’s at the beginning of their academic careers.

In reflecting upon these first ten years, I am gratified to see the Center’s accomplishments within this relatively short period, and look forward to continuing the mission of strengthening Jewish studies at Rutgers and further cultivating the legacy of learning it has created.

—Yael Zerubavel



# DEVELOPMENT

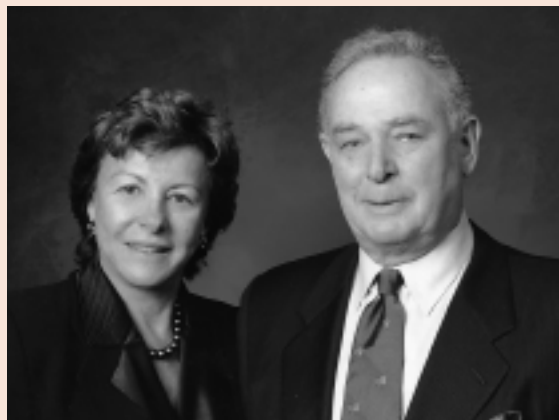
## David and Sylvia Steiner Endow Program at Jewish Film Festival

**David and Sylvia Steiner** have endowed a film program at the annual **Rutgers New Jersey Jewish Film Festival**. Their generous gift will provide the funding for both a film and a speaker at the festival each year. The Steiner program will enhance and broaden the festival's offerings, as well as help to ensure the future of the festival.

The Bildner Center seeks additional major gifts that will enable us to build the Jewish Film Festival Endowment Fund to secure the future of this annual cultural event. To learn more about sponsorship opportunities, please contact **Karen Small**.

## Perth Amboy YM-YWHA Allocates Funds to Bildner Center

The board of directors of the **Perth Amboy YM-YWHA**, which closed in 2003, has allocated funds to the Department of Jewish Studies at Rutgers University to perpetuate the legacy of this important community resource. The mission of the YM-YWHA of Perth Amboy, which was established in 1910, was to serve the spiritual, cultural, educational, and physical welfare of the Jewish community of Perth Amboy, as well as to foster and develop the highest ideals of American citizenship. We express our gratitude to Y president **Irwin Ziner**, **Barry Adler**, and the members of the board of the Y for their recognition of the important mission of Jewish studies at Rutgers in educating new generations of students and the broader community, carrying forth the spirit and values of the Perth Amboy YM-YWHA.



## Tenth Anniversary Honoring Bildners

The Bildner Center kicks off its tenth anniversary celebration with a gala dinner honoring Joan and Allen Bildner on September 17, 2006. Governor Jon S. Corzine is the honorary chair and Leon and Toby Cooperman are the co-chairs of this event.

## Major Grants to the Center

### ■ THE AMERICAN-ISRAELI COOPERATIVE ENTERPRISE (AICE)

The American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise (AICE) awarded the Bildner Center a grant to bring a visiting scholar from Israel for the 2006–2007 academic year. **Yaacov Yadgar** of Bar-Ilan University will serve as the Schusterman Visiting Scholar in Israel Studies. (See page 4.) This visiting professorship enables the Department of Jewish Studies to enhance its curriculum by adding four courses on Israel, which will be cross-listed by other departments.

### ■ POSEN FOUNDATION GRANT

A Posen Foundation grant has been awarded to the Department of Jewish Studies at Rutgers University to fund new courses on secular Jewish history and culture. Administered by the **Center for Cultural Judaism**, the grants are awarded to universities to cultivate the study of the cultural dimension of Jewish history and thought, particularly in the modern era.

## CAMPAIGN LEADERSHIP

### Campaign Co-chairs

Joan Bildner

Alvin Rockoff

### Campaign Vice-chairs

Bruce Freeman

Arline Schwartzman

Herbert Klein

Philip Shein

Sima Jelin Lichtman

Roy Tanzman

Norman Reitman

Adelaide Zagoren

# STUDENT NEWS

## STUDENT PROFILES

### Efraim Yudewitz

“Jewish culture is very important to me both professionally and personally,” remarked **Efraim Yudewitz**, a Jewish studies major who graduated in May 2006 as the recipient of the **Maurice Meyer III and Irma Meyer Student Award** in Jewish studies.

At Rutgers, Efraim says, he learned about areas of study that he had never known about, and he was challenged by his professors to think in new ways. For example, Professor **Azzan Yadin** broadened his understanding of early rabbinic texts by adding the historical context to the religious perspective. Although a Hebrew speaker, he decided to take a Yiddish course, which opened his mind not only to a new language but also to the world of Yiddish culture. He also learned about Jewish literature and art and was particularly moved by knowledge gained in the course “Performing the Jew on Stage.”

Efraim’s commitment to Jewish studies went beyond his remarkable academic achievement, as he undertook two internships. During the first semester of his senior year, Efraim worked at the Museum of Jewish Heritage as a participant in the Lipper Internship Program, educating public high school students throughout New Jersey about the Holocaust and Jewish culture and conducting tours of the museum.

This experience inspired him to write a paper about post-Holocaust Jewish theology, under the supervision of Dr. **Gary Rendsburg**. Focusing on three major thinkers—Emil Fackenheim, Richard Rubenstein, and Elie Wiesel—Efraim became intrigued by the theological conflicts that emerged out of the Holocaust. “The experience of doing serious research and working closely with Professor Rendsburg was my greatest experience as a student,” said Efraim, “and allowed me to create a close relationship with a teacher for whom I have tremendous respect, both as a professor and as an individual.”

During the second semester of his senior year, Efraim undertook an internship with the Foundation for Jewish Camping, serving as the assistant to the director of marketing and public relations. “As someone who had a very positive experience with Jewish summer camping as a boy, it was great to give back to that movement and to help out in improving the Jewish summer camp experience,” noted Efraim.

Eager to work for the Jewish community, Efraim has accepted a position in the student life department at the Gann Jewish Academy in Boston. He will work as part of a team to create and implement all extracurricular activities in the school. He is particularly excited about this opportunity because Gann places a strong emphasis on learning outside the classroom, encouraging students to participate in as many clubs and groups as possible.



### Emmy Stup

**Emmy Stup**, a Jewish studies and history major, and the recipient of a **Baruch S. and Pearl W. Seidman Scholarship** in Jewish studies, participated in an innovative internship program at the Simon Wiesenthal New York Tolerance Center. Emmy helped develop the curriculum for Jewish groups touring the new center and exploring issues of prejudice, diversity, and tolerance through its interactive workshops, exhibits, and videos.

“Watching the reactions of different groups to the museum, and listening to the different conversations and issues that students brought up, gave me a great deal of insight into their diverse backgrounds and education,” Emmy remarked. “Working there also really opened my eyes to what goes on in the world outside the metropolitan area. Anti-Semitism and hatred are so prevalent, and, as Jews, I believe we have a responsibility to combat this.”

Several of her Jewish studies classes have given her the opportunity to research issues pertaining to women in Judaism, such as the traditions and laws relating to married women covering their hair and issues surrounding egalitarianism in Jewish practice. During the 2006 spring semester, she participated in the Jewish studies major seminar with Professor **Yael Zerubavel**, where she began research on *Ba’alei Teshuvah* and *Kiruv* (outreach) organizations. She is also currently working on a research paper examining prejudice and racism in the context of the Holocaust, as well as in relation to the AIDS epidemic in the United States during the 1980s.

Emmy has also taken advantage of the cultural offerings of the Bildner Center. Attending the Rutgers New Jersey Jewish Film Festival and watching the film *Hiding and Seeking* during her sophomore year, she says, made a tremendous impression on her. In this documentary, the director takes his sons on a journey to find the Polish family who saved their grandfather during the Holocaust. Emmy said the film helped her see the Holocaust and its impact on survivors in a new way and brought to life her studies with Professor **Jeffrey Shandler** in the course “Remembering the Shtetl.” “I had never before been able to grasp the quote from the Talmud, ‘If you save one life, it’s as though you’ve saved the entire world,’” said Emmy, “but it was demonstrated so beautifully through this film.”

Emmy would like to learn more about European Jewish culture and history and plans to attend CET’s Jewish Studies Program in Prague, the Czech Republic, during the fall semester of her senior year. Affiliated with Charles University in Prague, the program immerses students in the Jewish community there, offers courses on the Jewish and general history of Prague and central Europe, and includes traveling seminars to Poland and Hungary led by educational guides.



# STUDENT NEWS

## Student Awards

### Joshua Beil '06

The Leonard and Adele Blumberg  
Student Award

The Sandra and Stephen M. Greenberg  
Student Award Fund

### Deborah Toplansky '07

The Louis Fishman Memorial  
Student Support Fund

### Adina Kagedan '07

The Betty and Julius Gillman  
Memorial Student Support Fund

### Sara Lewis '08

The Gertrude and Jacob Henoch  
Memorial Student Support Fund

### Joshua Reback '08

### Efrat Tuvy '07

### Ron Zahavi '08

The Herbert and Jacqueline Klein  
Fund for Study in Israel

### Michael McLeod '07

The Rudolph and Mary Solomon Klein  
Undergraduate Scholarship

### Sara Katz '08

The Norma U. and David M. Levitt  
Student Award

The Bernice and Milton I. Luxemburg  
Student Award Fund

### Efraim Yudewitz '06

The Maurice Meyer III and Irma Meyer  
Endowed Student Support Fund

### Aliza Silk '06

### Adina Zilberman '07

The Harold and Betty Perl  
Endowed Scholarship

### Richard Shusteris '07

The Reitman Family Student Award  
The Ruth Feller Rosenberg Endowed  
Student Award Fund

### David Corman '06

### Yael Kornfeld '07

### Emmy Stup '07

The Baruch S. and Pearl W. Seidman  
Scholarship Fund

## Student Awards Ceremony

*Following is an excerpt from the speech delivered by Yael Kornfeld, a recipient of the **Baruch S. and Pearl W. Seidman Scholarship**, on May 2 at the Jewish studies student awards ceremony held at the Douglass College Center:*

This past fall I had the opportunity to do an independent study as an intern at the Eldridge Street Synagogue, the oldest Eastern European synagogue in New York. I gave tours of the building, teaching others the story of the Jewish immigrants on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. . . . My work at the Eldridge Street Synagogue intrigued me and led me to register for Dr. **Jeffrey Shandler's** course in "Modern Yiddish Literature and Culture." This course has given me more insight into the world I was exploring in my internship. In addition to Yiddish literature and culture, I have also been taking Yiddish classes with **Pearl Gluck** this entire year. Studying Yiddish is more than just learning a language: it is learning about an entire culture and a way of life. . . . I give thanks to Dr. Shandler and Pearl, both of whom encouraged my interest in Yiddish and even sparked my interest to combine my studies with my summer plans. This upcoming July and August, I am planning on attending the Vilnius Yiddish program in Lithuania. . . . This Yiddish program entails a month of intense Yiddish-language classes every morning, with cultural programs in the afternoons. This is a program that would have been unimaginable even 15 years ago, and I am thrilled to be a participant this upcoming summer.



Student award winners with Yael Zerubavel and Gary Rendsburg



**Right: (Back Row) Norman Reitman, Ruth Marcus Patt, Yael Zerubavel, Alvin Rockoff; (Front Row) Gary Rendsburg, Jacqueline Klein, and Bruce Freeman**



**Left: Leonard and Adele Blumberg with Joshua Beil (center)**

**Right: Norma Levitt with award recipient Sara Katz**



**Left: Deborah Toplansky with Prof. Jeffrey Shandler**

## Courses 2006-2007

Elementary Modern Hebrew  
Intermediate Modern Hebrew  
Contemporary Hebrew Literature and Media (*in Hebrew*)  
Advanced Modern Hebrew  
Love and Desire in Hebrew Prose and Poetry (*in Hebrew*)  
Introduction to Modern Hebrew Literature (*in Hebrew*)  
Elementary Modern Yiddish  
Jewish Society and Culture I: From Antiquity to the Middle Ages  
Jewish Society and Culture II: The Modern Experience  
Jewish Studies Seminar  
Community and Crisis  
Jewish Power, Jewish Politics  
American Jewish History  
The American Jewish Experience in Literature  
Modern Jewish Literature  
Classical Jewish Philosophy  
Modern Jewish Philosophy  
The Hebrew Bible  
Readings in Biblical Hebrew Poetry  
Dead Sea Scrolls  
History of Jewish Women  
History of the Holocaust  
Israeli Women  
Introduction to the Modern Middle East  
History of Zionism  
Seminar in Middle Eastern Studies  
Modern Middle Eastern Literature in Translation  
Arab Israeli Conflict  
Israeli Politics  
Israeli Culture  
Special Topics: Israeli Media\*  
Special Topics: The Jewish Calendar\*  
Special Topics: The Jewish Encounter with Secularism\*  
Special Topics: Jewish Medical Ethics\*  
Special Topics: New York Jewry: History, Culture and Identity\*  
Special Topics: The German Jewish Experience\*

\* new courses

# ALUMNI

## Alumni News



**Noa Gelnik, DC '02:** After graduating from Rutgers, Noa attended the summer Yiddish Language and Cultural Program in Vilnius, Lithuania. Returning to the United States, she joined the staff of the Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty in New York, helping social workers to aid the local community. She later worked for the New York branch of Keren Or, the Center for Multi-handicapped Blind Children in Israel, where she assisted in grant writing, event planning, and donor relations. This past October, Noa moved to Israel and took a position at the *Letzte Nayes*, an Israeli Yiddish newspaper. Currently, she is working for Kenes International, an international medical conference organizer.



**Erik Kessler, LC '02:** After graduating, Erik earned a master's degree in social work in community organization and a certificate in Jewish communal service from the Wurzweiler School of Social Work at Yeshiva University. He then took positions at the UJA-Federation in New York and the Jewish Community Center in Manhattan. He later worked as an endowment associate for the Jewish Federation of Greater Middlesex County. He was recently appointed the director of development for Rutgers Hillel. Erik served as the student president of Rutgers Hillel as an undergraduate and is looking forward to helping the organization achieve its fund-raising goals. Erik lives in Highland Park with his wife, **Dana Chait** (RC '04).



**Stephanie Schwartz, DC '04:** Following her graduation, Stephanie served as the Hochberg Israel Fellow at the Hillel International Center in Washington, D.C. In that position, she worked with students and Hillel staff on hundreds of campuses. She later joined the Mid-Atlantic Regional Office of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), where she has been working with the Greater Washington and Baltimore communities. In this position, she is responsible for political grassroots mobilization, community education, and development. Last April, Stephanie became engaged to a fellow Rutgers graduate, **Noam Kutler** (RC '04), and they are planning a May wedding in Philadelphia.

**Alumni:** Please keep us informed of your activities at [csjl@rci.rutgers.edu](mailto:csjl@rci.rutgers.edu)

### Center Co-sponsors Programs with Rutgers Hillel

- Panel on Homosexuality: Jewish Perspectives
- Israeli Culture Festival
- Indian-Jewish Cultural Festival
- Douglass College Middle East Coexistence Project (lecture series)
- Lecture by Rodger Kamenetz, author of *The Jew in the Lotus*, and screening of the film based on his book (offered in conjunction with the Dalai Lama visit)

## Jewish Studies Graduates 2006

### MAJORS

Samuel Aronoff  
Elana Avram  
Joshua Beil  
Eliot Blum  
Jessie Boda  
Kyan Bowman  
David Corman  
Hagar Daniel  
Elizabeth Davis  
Elizabeth Foreman  
Dana Levy  
Miri Rosen  
Aliza Silk  
Adina Suberi  
Melanie Winer  
Efraim Yudewitz

### MINORS

Larry Abuliak  
Naor Chazan  
David Cinamon  
Shira Davis  
Benjamin Druce  
Shaina Felsenstein  
Deborah Flynn  
Shoshana Glazer  
Elizabeth Hassid  
Andrea Horowitz  
Jennifer Kalowitz  
Alexandra Leff  
Ari London  
Ilene Manners  
David Pincus  
Ariela Robinson  
Jeremy Rosen  
Alin Vaks  
Taryn Wechsler  
Shira Zabłudovsky

# FACULTY UPDATES

## RETIRING FACULTY

**Chaim I. Waxman**, professor of sociology and Jewish studies, has retired after thirty-one years at Rutgers University. Waxman brought a unique dimension to the field of Jewish studies, making keen observations about Jewish life both in Israel and in the United States. His classes were popular among Rutgers students, and fellow professors deeply valued his collegiality. He now lives in Jerusalem, where he is a senior fellow at the Jewish People Policy Planning Institute. Waxman continues to maintain contact with the Bildner Center and the Department of Jewish Studies, and he continues to advise students from his Jerusalem location.



## Myron (Mike) Aronoff

*(Political Science and Anthropology)*

Aronoff has researched various aspects of Israeli society, culture, and politics and worked in the field of political anthropology—especially the relationship between culture and politics. He has compared democratization in Israel with other divided societies like India and the Netherlands. He has elucidated the contested nature of Israeli collective identity. His recent research has focused on the conflicting accounts of the demise of the Oslo peace process between Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

### RECENT PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY

Aronoff organized and participated in conferences of the following associations: Association for Israel Studies, American Political Science Association, and the International Studies Association. He gave the opening plenary address on “Competing Models of Nationalism” at an international conference on “Imperial and National Models of Governance” at Kazan State University (KSU), Russia (May 2006). He also gave a series of public lectures and faculty seminars at KSU. He is completing the manuscript *Anthropology and Political Science: Culture, Politics, Identity, and Democratization*.

## Maurice Elias

*(Psychology)*

Elias's primary research interests related to Jewish studies are the development of Jewish identity and the internalization of

Jewish education. He favors the use of an Action-Research approach, which involves learning in the context of carrying out experimental interventions. His work in psychology is focused on creating school environments in which all students can feel engaged and the achievement gap between students of varied SES and ethnicities can be closed.

### RECENT PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY

In June 2006, Elias was keynote speaker for CAJE's Early Childhood Conference, focusing on how emotional intelligence skills are developmental precursors for prayer experiences. He continued his role as international adviser to the Education Ministry and Binat HaLev (“wisdom of the heart”) Forum in Israel around violence prevention and the social-emotional climate in Israeli schools. (See his related article in the July *Jerusalem Report*.) As associate editor for the *Journal of Jewish Education*, he is currently working on a special issue on the training of rabbis.

## Leslie Fishbein

*(American Studies)*

Fishbein's research interests include Jewish-American literature, the representation of Jewish-American women in the public sphere, and the complex cultural relationship between American Blacks and Jews.

### RECENT PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY

As a result of an International Partnership grant awarded by the American Studies Association, Fishbein

created a partnership between the Rutgers American Studies Department and its counterpart at Hebrew University. During the spring 2006 semester she co-taught a seminar on Blacks and Jews. She is currently at work on a book on the self-representation of American prostitutes and madams to be entitled *Memoirs of the Sex Trade: A Cultural History of Prostitution*.

## Ziva Galili

*(History)*

Galili has a primary interest in Russian politics and society in the early 20th century. She is currently studying Russian Jewish immigration to Palestine at the beginning of the century.

### RECENT PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY

Galili published *Exiled to Palestine: The Emigration of Zionist Convicts from Soviet Russia, 1924-1937*, with Boris Morozov (Routledge, 2006) and “Openings for Zionist Activity in Soviet Russia in the 1920s,” a Hebrew language article in *Iyunim bi-tkumat Yisrael* (Winter 2004). Her contribution to the Sawyer Seminar at the University of Michigan appeared in print as “Archives and Historical Writing: The Case of the Menshevik Party, 1917,” in *Archives, Documentation and Institutions of Social Memory: Essays from the Sawyer Seminar*, edited by Francis X. Blouin, Jr. and William G. Rosenberg (University of Michigan Press, 2006). She continues to co-direct a three-year educational partnership between Rutgers University and Kazan State University in Russia. (See article on page



3.) She completed her term as chair of the Department of History. On July 1, 2006, she became the acting executive dean of the Rutgers-New Brunswick School of Arts and Sciences.

## Judith Gerson

*(Sociology & Women's and Gender Studies)*

Gerson's research focuses on Jewish refugees from Germany who resettled in the U.S. during the 1930s and 1940s. Her work brings together the literatures on Holocaust studies and on immigration with a particular emphasis on how people recall their pasts. She is particularly interested in the hidden legacies of the Holocaust among these refugees, and how their recollections shape and are shaped by the process of becoming American.

### RECENT PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY

During the 2005-2006 academic year Gerson was the recipient of the "Life Reborn" Fellowship for the Study of Displaced Persons" at the Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum. (See page 5.)

## David Greenberg

*(SCILS-Journalism and Media Studies)*

Greenberg is a historian of American politics and culture, with an interest in secular Jewish thought.

### RECENT PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY

In the last year Greenberg has published numerous articles and reviews in such publications as *The American Prospect*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The Boston Globe*, *The New York Times*, *The Journal of American History*, *Political Science Quarterly*, *Moment*, *Clio's Psyche*, and *Slate*. His teaching has included courses on the media and history and an honors seminar on the Holocaust in American culture.

## Paul Hanebrink

*(History)*

Hanebrink's research interests include Modern East Central Europe, with a particular focus on Hungary; the history of nationalism and anti-Semitism as modern political ideologies; and the place of religion in the modern nation-state.

### RECENT PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY

During the 2005-2006 academic year Hanebrink published *In Defense of Christian Hungary: Religion, Nationalism, and Antisemitism, 1890-1944* (Cornell University Press, 2006).

## Martha Helfer

*(German)*

Helfer's research examines representations of Jews in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century German literature, with a special focus on the structure and function of anti-Semitism. She analyzes literature that does not appear on first reading to be anti-Semitic, and considers the subconscious messages these texts communicate to their readers.

### RECENT PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY

Helfer is currently working on a book manuscript, *The Word Unheard*, which examines discourses of anti-Semitism in mainstream German literature of the 19th century.

## Barbara S. Reed

*(SCILS-Journalism and Media Studies)*

Reed does research on the Jewish and ethnic press. She has written on the history of Jewish publications, and on historical and contemporary ethnic publications.

### RECENT PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY

Reed presented a paper, "Everywhere and Yet Nowhere a Stranger: (London) Jewish Chronicle's Coverage of the American Civil War," at the joint conference of the American Society for Education in Journalism and Mass

Communication's History Division and the American Journalism Historians Association, at Fordham University (March 2006). She was among the professors selected from each school at Rutgers to receive the University's first Diversity Award in April. She also received the Outstanding Educator Award from the AEJMC Magazine Division at its national convention.

## Gary A. Rendsburg

*(Jewish Studies)*

Rendsburg works mainly in the interrelated fields of Bible, ancient Israel, and classical Hebrew language, using literary, linguistic, and historical methodologies to elucidate the earliest period of Jewish history and literary and theological expression. He expands from this base to include other societies of the ancient Near East, in particular Canaan and Egypt, and to incorporate post-biblical Jewish texts (Mishna, Dead Sea Scrolls, etc.) into his research and teaching.

### RECENT PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY

Rendsburg published an essay entitled on "Israelian Hebrew in the Song of Songs" in the volume entitled *Biblical Hebrew in Its Northwest Semitic Environment* (Magnes Press, 2006). A longer version of this article will appear in his forthcoming co-authored book (with Scott B. Noegel) entitled *Solomon's Vineyard: Studies in the Song of Songs*. In addition, Rendsburg delivered lectures at the annual Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) meeting in Philadelphia (November 2005) and at the International SBL meeting in Edinburgh (February 2006).

## Jeffrey Shandler

*(Jewish Studies)*

Shandler studies modern Jewish culture, focusing on such topics as Yiddish culture, Holocaust remembrance, new media, and Jewish vernacular cultures. His current research examines new

media in American Jewish religious life during the past century, from the role early sound recordings played in cantorial art to the implications of videotaping life-cycle celebrations for how rituals are experienced. In addition to teaching at Rutgers, Shandler is co-convenor of the working group on Jews, media, and religion at the Center for Religion and Media, New York University.

#### RECENT PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY

Shandler published *Adventures in Yiddishland: Postvernacular Language and Culture* (University of California Press, 2005) and a translation of *Emil and Karl* (Roaring Brook Press, 2006). (See page 2 for details.) Shandler presented the following talks: “*Di toyre fun skhoyre*, or, I Shop, Therefore I Am,” at the Conference on Jewish Consumer Culture, University College London (2006); “American Jewish Popular Culture,” at the Annual Tulskey Lecture on the Jewish Future, Spertus Institute, Chicago (2006); “The Media and the Messenger: Transforming the Cantor’s Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” at the Association for Jewish Studies Conference, Washington, D.C. (2005); and “Absolut Tschotchke: Materializing the Mother Tongue,” at the Conference on Yiddish Popular Culture, University of California-Berkeley (2006).

### Nancy Sinkoff

#### (*Jewish Studies and History*)

Sinkoff is a historian of modern East European Jewry, whose research and teaching encompass the history of the Jews of eighteenth-century Poland-Lithuania as well as the history of twentieth-century East European Jewish immigrant communities. Within this vast field, she is particularly interested in how the Jews understood themselves intellectually and politically. She is currently at work on a book-length historical study of Lucy S. Dawidowicz,

an American-born historian of East European Jewry, who was central to articulating a post-war shift in American Jewish political strategy.

#### RECENT PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY

Sinkoff made three academic trips to Eastern Europe this past year: to Moscow and St. Petersburg to meet with colleagues in Jewish studies, to Kazan State University to teach, lecture, and consult on East European Jewish history, and to Wrocław, Poland, for a conference on the Jewish Enlightenment. Two articles in the *YIVO Encyclopedia of East European Jewish History*, as well as an article, “Women and Socialism,” in the supplement to the *Encyclopedia Judaica* compact disc are forthcoming. Her review of *Jewish Life in Cracow, 1918-1939* appeared in the summer 2006 issue of *Slavic Review*.

### Azzan Yadin

#### (*Jewish Studies*)

Yadin’s primary area of research is in legal midrash, that is, the early rabbinic texts that interpret biblical laws, and he is interested in the way new interpretations of sacred texts are justified. As a result of his findings, he is now also working on the relationship between rabbinic teachings that are justified through an appeal to Scripture (i.e., through midrash), and those that are justified as having been received through oral tradition, sometimes referred to as the Oral Law. In addition, he has a general interest in the interaction between Jewish thought and literature and the broader cultural context in which these are situated.

#### RECENT PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY

This past year Yadin published an article that examines a famous Mishna passage in which a rabbi meets a philosopher in a Roman bathhouse. He also published his first article in Hebrew, an examination of two texts by a 13th century kabbalist

named Yosef Gikatilla. The later of the two has generally been understood as an expanded version of the earlier, but he has tried to show that in fact they contain a different understanding of kabbalistic symbols and language. He also gave a number of scholarly talks, including one at the Cardozo Law School in which he compared the status of the legal text in early rabbinic midrash and American constitutional interpretation.

### Yael Zerubavel

#### (*Jewish Studies and History*)

Zerubavel’s areas of research are Israeli society and culture, history and memory, and Hebrew literature. Her work explores the transition from Jewish tradition to Israeli national culture focusing on the study of collective memory and national identity, myths and symbols, and the impact of the Middle Eastern conflict on Israeli society. She is currently working on a book manuscript entitled *Desert in the Promised Land: Nationalism, Politics, and Symbolic Landscapes*.

#### RECENT PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY

Zerubavel gave keynote lectures at the annual meetings of the Society of Biblical Literature in Philadelphia and the Association for the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism in London, and at a conference on “The Desert in Zionist Imagination” at Ben-Gurion University in Israel. She presented a paper at the Association for Jewish Studies and served as discussant at the meeting of the American Historical Association. Her article “Transhistorical Encounters in the Land of Israel: National Memory, Symbolic Bridges, and the Literary Imagination” appeared in *Jewish Social Studies* (Spring/ Summer 2005). She currently serves on the editorial boards of *Israel Studies*; *Journal of Israeli History*; *Israel Studies Forum*; and *Postscripts*.

## 2006 – 2007 PROGRAMS

### Jews and the Media:

#### A View from the Editor's Desk

Speaker: J.J. Goldberg

September 17; 7:30 p.m.

### Translating the Bible: A Symposium

The Toby and Herbert Stolzer

Endowed Program

October 16; 7:00 p.m.

### Three Scholars, Three Texts:

#### Reading Rabbinic Literature

October 23; 6:30 p.m.

### Rutgers New Jersey Jewish Film Festival

November 9 – November 19

### The Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights

The Raoul Wallenberg Annual Program

Supported by the Leon and Toby

Cooperman Fund

February 7; 7:00 p.m.

### Beyond Eastern Europe: Jewish

#### Cultures in Israel and the United States

An International Conference

March 18-20

### Russian Roots in Israeli Soil:

#### From the Dneiper to the Jordan

The Ruth and Alvin Rockoff

Annual Lecture

Speaker: Anita Shapira

Tel Aviv University

March 18; 8:00 p.m.

### Back to the Old World: Jewish

#### Filmmakers' Journeys to

#### Eastern Europe

The Abram Matlofsky

Memorial Program

Funded by the Karma Foundation

March 19; 7:30 p.m.

### Israeli Traditionalists:

#### Modernity without Secularization

Funded by the

Sagner Family Foundation

Speaker: Yaacov Yadgar

April 30; 7:30 p.m.

### Political Ethnography on Israel:

#### Retrospective of a Career

Speaker: Myron J. Aronoff

May 13; 10:30 a.m.

*All programs subject to change.*

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