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**American Shtetl: The Making of Kiryas Joel, A Hasidic Village in Upstate New York
Public Talk at Rutgers, Oct. 20**

NEW BRUNSWICK/PISCATAWAY, N.J. – Freedom of religious expression has become an increasingly fraught topic in the current cultural, political, and legal climate. At the same time, the ultra-Orthodox Jewish community--the fastest growing segment of the American Jewish community--has arguably received unprecedented nationwide attention over the past few years. The recent *New York Times*' article about Hasidic education in New York elicited an impassioned and varied response.

Renowned scholars **Nomi Stolzenberg** and **David Myers** will grapple with these timely and complex issues when they discuss their new book, *American Shtetl: The Making of Kiryas Joel, A Hasidic Village in Upstate New York* (Princeton University Press, 2022) on Thursday, October 20, at 7:00 p.m. Settled in the mid-1970s by a small group of pious Yiddish-speaking Hasidic families, Kiryas Joel is an American town with few parallels in Jewish history—but many precedents among American religious communities. Using the very instruments of secular political and legal power that it rejects, the community has developed into a thriving insular enclave and a powerful local government. Stolzenberg and Myers paint a nuanced portrait of daily life, exploring the village's history and how its legal and political battles have bolstered the community.

Free and open to the public, this event is part of the 25th anniversary celebration of the **Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life** at Rutgers University. Light refreshments will be served after the program. The talk is made possible through funding from the Sagner Family Foundation and will be held at the Douglass Student Center, 100 George Street, New Brunswick. Advance registration is required at **BildnerCenter.Rutgers.edu**. Free parking is available.

Nomi M. Stolzenberg is the Nathan and Lilly Shapell Chair in Law at the USC Gould School of Law. **David N. Myers** is Distinguished Professor and Sady and Ludwig Kahn Chair in Jewish History in the Department of History at UCLA.



The Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life connects Rutgers University with the community through public lectures, symposia, Jewish communal initiatives, cultural events, and teacher training in Holocaust education.