

The Chronicle

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Change is the Law of Life

Rabbi Moses Isserles (1520-1572), the great author of the preeminent code of Jewish law, the *Shulchan Aruch* (1564), enunciated the principle of "*Ha-idana* - the present time" in his own legal writings. This principle holds that if contemporary sociological conditions and philosophical understandings have changed from what they were in earlier epochs, then adaptations and changes in customs and practices are permitted and even required. Rabbi Isserles was teaching us that Judaism views change and adaptation as constant parts of our *massoret* (heritage), even as our people continues to find rootedness and celebrates the sense of community that derives from the traditions that we have inherited.

HUC-JIR is building upon the past even as we stand on the frontlines of those who anticipate and chart the changes that mark the Jewish people today. We do this by anchoring our students in traditional texts and developing the innovative academic and professional programs that address the emerging needs of our people.

In this issue of *The Chronicle*, we report on our

proactive approach to new trends within the Reform Movement and the Jewish and larger world:

- The encouraging *and* unsettling data presented by the just-released demographic study on the New York Jewish community and its implications for our Reform Movement (pages 2-4);
- Our role in nurturing interreligious understanding through our graduate studies programs (page 5);
- New initiatives preparing educational leaders to transform Jewish education (pages 6-7);
- The revisioning of *bar/bat mitzah* to enhance youth engagement (pages 8-9);
- Supporting congregants through illness and wellness through our groundbreaking pastoral care programs (pages 10-11);
- Novel approaches to theology discovered in Israeli literature (page 12);
- Linguistic studies as a key to understanding the American Jewish community (page 13);
- The latest faculty scholarship (page 14-15);
- The role of our alumni as Reform clergy in military chaplaincy (pages 16-17); and
- The power of art in promoting LGBTQI inclusivity and human rights (page 24).

לשנה טובה
תכתבו ותחתמו

*May you be written
and inscribed for
a good year.*

As our Tradition asserts, "*Shinnui ha-ittim*," changing times are unavoidable. We at the College-Institute and in the Reform Movement embrace its opportunities.

We are thankful to our devoted Board of Governors, Boards of Overseers, the congregations and leaders of Reform Judaism, our many generous friends, and our faculty and students for their abiding support for our mission. My wife Jackie joins me in expressing heartfelt wishes for a New Year blessed with health, peace, and joy for you and your loved ones.

Rabbi David Ellenson '77, Ph.D., President

In this issue: 2| Steven M. Cohen, Ph.D. 3| Steven Windmueller, Ph.D. 3| Jay H. Geller 4| Jonathan Krasner, Ph.D. 4| Rabbi Aaron Panken, Ph.D. 5| Dr. Nili S. Fox 6| Lesley Litman 7| Rabbi Melissa Zalkin Stollman 7| Barrett Harr 8| Rabbi Carole B. Balin, Ph.D. 9| Dr. Isa Aron & Rabbi Bradley Solmsen 10| Rabbi Julie S. Schwartz 10| Michele Prince 11| Rabbi Nancy Wiener, D.Min. 12| Rabbi Haim O. Rechnitzer, Ph.D. 13| Sarah Bunin Benor, Ph.D. 14| Rabbi Norman J. Cohen, Ph.D. 15| Rabbi Reuven Firestone, Ph.D. 16| Cantor David Frommer 18| 2012 Graduation/Ordination Album 18| Rabbi Rick Jacobs 18| Senator Russell Feingold 19| Rabbi William Cutter, Ph.D. 19| Professor Sara S. Lee 20| Rabbi Eric H. Yoffie 20| Cantor Angela Warnick Buchdahl

“The Few. The Proud. The Marines.” This is the award-winning advertising slogan of the US Marine Corps. With some adjustment, it may soon apply to the condition of Reform and other committed Jews from the vital religious center. That’s one critical inference emerging from the *Jewish Community Study of New York: 2011* that we wrote, and which was sponsored by the UJA-Federation of New York.

The study we conducted encompassed Jews living in Westchester, Long Island, and the five boroughs of New York. We found 1.54 million Jews in the eight-counties, 9% more than in 2002. The increase derived primarily from high birthrates among the Haredi Orthodox, and growing longevity (13% of the Jews are age 75 and over, as compared with just 5% in 1991). In addition, we observed more “Jews-by-personal-choice,” people who identify as Jews, do not have a Jewish parent, and have not undergone formal religious conversion; they outnumber converts by 3:1.

The Orthodox population increased by about one third since 2002. In contrast, over the last two decades in the New York area, Reform and Conservative numbers plummeted. From 2002 to 2011, the number of Jews in Reform households – both congregationally affiliated and not – fell from 345,000 to 303,000, a drop of 12% in nine years. In 1991, 36% of Jews in the eight-county New York area called themselves Reform (even as most of them did not belong to Reform temples). By 2011, the number fell to 23%. In the same period, Conservative identification also fell, dropping from 34% to 19%.

Percent Affirming Selected Jewish-Engagement Activities by Denomination and Congregational Membership, Jewish Respondents

	Attends Services Monthly or More	Shabbat Meal Some-times or More Often	Closest Friends Are Mostly Jewish
Congregational Members			
Reform	22%	59%	55%
Nonmembers			
Reform	2%	15%	42%

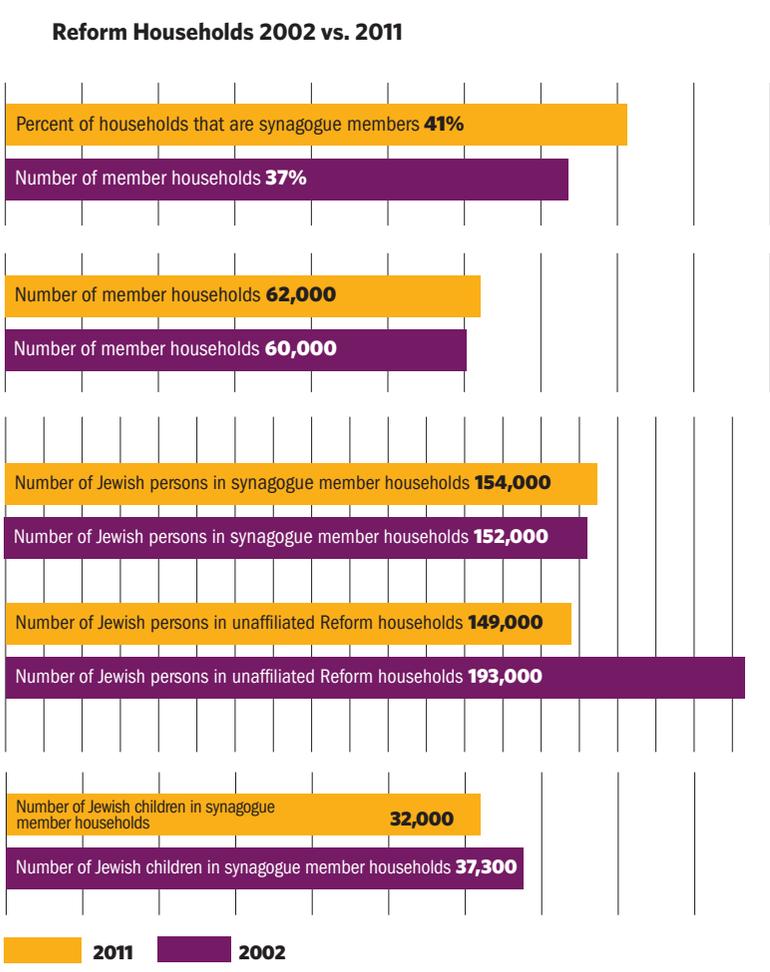
The prospects for Reform and Conservative identities holding their market shares of the population do not look good, if only because Orthodoxy is poised to grow dramatically. Today, the Orthodox constitute just *one fifth* of the area’s Jewish households; but these households are home to *three fifths* of the New York area’s Jewish children.

Wildly contrasting birthrates are the key to understanding these demographic shifts. Among women 35-44, a group with nearly completed fertility, Hasidic women report an average of nearly six children currently living in their household, while the Modern Orthodox average 2.5. For the non-Orthodox the comparable figure rests at 1.3.

The adverse population consequences of non-Orthodox Jews’ low overall fertility are further exacerbated by intermarriage. While 98% of all inmarried

Encouraging Engagement, Disturbing Demography

Dr. Steven M. Cohen, Research Professor of Jewish Social Policy, HUC-JIR/New York, Jack Ukeles, and Ron Miller



Jewish households raise their children as Jews, just 31% of the children in intermarried homes are being raised as exclusively Jewish. The long-term impact of the low percentage raised Jewish among intermarried couples is underscored by a high intermarriage rate. Among the non-Orthodox, the intermarriage rate reached 50% for couples married after 2006.

But, perhaps paradoxically, while the demographic picture among Reform (and Conservative) Jews is troubling, the same cannot be said for their quality of Jewish engagement and community, especially for those who are congregationally affiliated. For example, younger Reform Jews report significantly higher rates of Jewish schooling than do Reform Jews their parents’ age. Similarly, in comparing younger with older Reform Jews, we find that attending Jewish camp also moved upward, such that 40% of Reform adults age 18-34 have been to a Jewish camp.

Still other positive signs emerge. We found evidence suggesting that Jewish camping makes a clear contribution to adult Jewish engagement. Reform synagogues attract those more Jewishly engaged; to some extent, temple membership encourages and supports Jewish engagement. To take one telling statistic: 15% of Reform non-members say they attend a *Shabbat* meal at least “sometimes;” for the members, it’s 59%.

Indeed, in the same 2002-2011 period that Reform identifiers fell, Reform congregational affiliation patterns were stable. From 2002 to 2011, the number of affiliated Reform households held steady (60,000 vs. 62,000) as did the number of Jews in affiliated Reform households (152,000 vs. 154,000). Yet all is not rosy in this domain, as the number of children in Reform congregations fell markedly, from 37,000 in 2002 to 32,000 in 2011 – a drop of over 13% for the nine years, or about 1.5% per year.

If the number of affiliated Reform families and population held steady, how do we explain the decline of Reform identifiers? The answer is that the drop took place exclusively among the Reform “hinterland” – among the non-affiliated Reform Jews. For Reform Jews outside congregations, the population shrank by a quarter, dropping from 193,000 in 2002 to 149,000 in 2011. The upshot is that congregational affiliation rates among Reform households actually climbed, from 37% in 2002 to 41% in 2011. Moreover, these patterns are not unique to Reform, as similar findings also characterize Conservative Jews, albeit at higher levels of education and engagement.

Age-related patterns of educational participation and community affiliation among Reform Jews point to what may be called “encouraging engagement.” But, surprisingly, these patterns co-exist alongside what we may call “disturbing demographics”: primarily the sharp decline of non-affiliated Reform Jews, and the shrinking number of Jewish children in affiliated Reform households. Demographically, the Reform core (the affiliated) has held, but the children’s decline may mean it is weakening. Undeniably, the Reform periphery (the unaffiliated) has crumbled as vast numbers have abandoned Reform identity, probably for non-denominational or secular options.

The co-existence of encouraging engagement with disturbing demographics means that shrinking numbers need not imply qualitative failure. At the same time, we can no longer assume that high-quality, inspired communities will counteract the depressing demographics. To elaborate, some have argued that if Judaism is properly presented, if people find meaning in being Jewish, and if communities are sufficiently learning, caring, and spirited then several beneficial demographic changes will ensue: more Jews will marry Jews, more non-Jewish spouses will come to choose Judaism, and more intermarried couples will raise children as Jews. Alas, such is *not* the case. Jewish education, synagogue affiliation, and other signs of vitality are undoubtedly valuable; but they don’t necessarily bring about Jewish demographic growth, let alone stability.

For years, Reform clergy, educators, and congregational leaders have devoted considerable attention to enriching our communities and improving our caring, our learning, our social justice work, and our spiritual lives. Much remains to be done, but, arguably, we have made considerable progress in all these areas. But apparently, a better quality of Jewish life has had only a marginal impact upon quantitative demographic measures, in particular, in-marriage and birthrates. It is now time to turn our attention, imagination, and energy to the demographic challenge that faces the part of the Jewish engagement spectrum populated by Reform Jews — as well as Conservative, Reconstructionist, and committed secularist Jews.

At the heart of the demographic challenge is that more Jews are marrying later and fewer Jews are marrying Jews. Jewish education certainly promotes in-marriage; but propinquity and association are equally influential. Policy-makers will need to focus on bringing more Jews into sustained contact with one another. Youth groups, Jewish camps, campus involvement (Hillel and otherwise), Jewish Studies engagement, Birthright, and Masa (longer-term programs in Israel) all promote association today and in-marriage tomorrow.

Other policies that promote association need to be explored. Among them:

- establishing new opportunities for connection in neighborhoods with large numbers of Jewish young adults;
- expanding the number and range of cultural events, particularly concerts and film festivals;
- enlarging opportunities for intensive Jewish service experiences; and
- devoting more time and attention to teenagers, and especially retaining engagement past the *bar/bat mitzvah*.

Absent a significant shift in in-marriage and birthrates, Jewish population numbers for Reform, Conservative, and committed non-denominational sectors will continue to decline. We may be proud, but we will also be few. A high-quality Jewish community without many Jews to participate in it may not be all that sustainable. And, with very few Jews, it may not be all that valuable either. ■

Marketing a New Jewish Message: Rethinking “Community” and Redefining “Affiliation”

Steven Windmueller, Ph.D., *Rabbi Alfred Gottschalk Emeritus Professor of Jewish Communal Service, HUC-JIR/Jack H. Skirball Campus/Los Angeles*

What can we glean from the *Jewish Community Study of New York: 2011* that may generate a new course for “*encouraging engagement*”? This report ought to be understood as a collective challenge to the Jewish community on the need to create multiple entry points for Jewish participation. The defining reality affirmed by the data is that how we have traditionally embarked on the business of organizing Jewish life will be forever altered.

What has become increasingly evident is that younger liberal Jews are far less prepared to affiliate or support Jewish institutions, at least along the same organizational pathways as their parents and grandparents. The sovereign-self has trumped the traditional collective models of participation and affiliation. Our focus can no longer be about only promoting “membership” or institutional loyalty but about also creating points of connection to Judaism and to other Jews, where the synagogue becomes a moveable feast of choices and tastes and where the communal marketplace offers a smorgasbord of cultural and social choices.

The luxury of defining affiliation along denominational and organizational lines, for example, is no longer a helpful assessment. If we are to embrace the vast numbers of Jews who remain outside of our communal and religious enterprise, a joint initiative of talent and resources will be required on the part of the liberal denominational community. How we market and brand our Jewish messages must be joined with a strategic effort to continue to promote innovative programs and services, as called for by the authors of this study.

One of the missing links associated with this research involves an examination of alternative forms of religious and communal expression. Namely, what is happening beyond the walls of our “traditional” institutions? Here, we might well imagine that Jewish engagement is actually far richer and more varied than we may have anticipated. In an age of virtual participation and in a Jewish economy where there are multiple institutional options, individuals and families are likely to express their ethnic and religious connections employing alternative forms of engagement. A significant but essential sidebar to this story is the conversation that must take place on how we identify and count Jews and the myriad of folks who are now part of our cultural orbit who may sit outside of our standard measures of “who is a Jew.”

Today we might define the Jewish enterprise as a series of tribes and communities, where we struggle to create the common ground that binds us as a people, while celebrating the distinctive and creative expressions that allow for our individualized Jewish identities. ■

Uniquely New York?

Jay H. Geller, *Chairman, Communications Committee, HUC-JIR Board of Governors*

One should not assume that results from the New York Jewish population survey are representative of North American Jewry as a whole. There are many demographic characteristics of the New York Jewish population that are unique to New York and not necessarily representative of Jewish populations in other cities or geographic areas of North America. A detailed survey of North American Jewry asking the same questions as those posed in the New York survey would probably go a long way toward determining whether the New York results are representative of all of North America or unique to New York. ■

Focus on Young Adult Reform Jews

Jonathan Krasner, Ph.D., *Associate Professor of the American Jewish Experience, HUC-JIR/New York*

Given the alarming portrait that Dr. Steven M. Cohen, Jack Ukeles, and Ron Miller paint of the Reform and Conservative movements in a state of hemorrhage, their proposed remedies are surprisingly modest. Although Jewish film festivals and social mixers are culturally valuable and doubtless engender some happy Jewish couplings, they are no match for 21st-century social networking. Group pages aside, companies like Facebook ultimately make it their business to break down rather than uphold religious and ethnic boundaries. This is the world in which our Jewish digital natives reside.

On a broader level, the demographic trends so dramatically reflected in their recently released study are unlikely to be reversed in the foreseeable future. Factors such as delayed marriage and childbearing in non-Orthodox communities are obviously tied to general societal trends and stand little chance of being reversed by Jewish communal policy. Similarly, interfaith marriage is the inevitable price of living in an open and hospitable society. These phenomena are here to stay.

Rather than focusing on social contrivances, the Movement should focus its attention on the young adult Reform Jews who are abandoning Reform Judaism in droves for the “Just Jewish” label. Some may be leaving because they philosophically reject institutional membership and denominational labels. Yet we must own up to the fact that many Reform Jews are failing to retain their connection because their childhood homes were bereft of meaningful Jewish culture and the religious schools and synagogues they experienced left them uninspired. The signal accomplishment of the Reform Movement in the last thirty years has been its outreach. But being welcoming and inclusive is not enough. Rabbi Alexander Schindler, the Reform leader who spearheaded the Movement’s outreach efforts, poignantly wondered aloud: “What [is the] purpose of outreach, pray tell, if there is nothing within?”

Lowering barriers to inclusion need not and should not translate into an erasure of Jewish boundaries. The Movement should proudly and boldly offer a liberal Judaism that is more than a thin gruel. It must not be afraid to make demands on its congregants, intensify its educational programs, and replace the intellectually appealing but impractical slogan of “informed choice” with an ethic of religious obligation and social responsibility. We must build communities of meaning based on a shared commitment to intensive Jewish living. The New York survey and anecdotal evidence suggests that the Movement has already begun to take baby steps in this direction. Reform camping is a bright spot on the educational landscape, while initiatives like the Experiment in Congregational Education and Synagogue 3000 have had some success in revitalizing our synagogues. But we need to do more.

The most profound challenge that we face is cultivating group loyalty in young people who have been steeped in cosmopolitanism and concern for universal causes. Liberal Judaism cannot offer a message indistinguishable from the aphorisms on a Starbucks coffee cup. Yet neither can we lapse into a parochial, ethnocentric discourse. We might instead heed the call of the United Kingdom’s Chief Rabbi, Lord Jonathan Sacks, who champions a particularism that looks to God and tradition to sanctify universal values. Such an approach bestows meaning and purpose on the mundane and frames the pursuit of justice in the covenantal relationship. If Reform can present a vision of Judaism that hallows the individual in pursuit of a universalistic mission, it will have found a way to reach disaffected Jewish youth and young adults who are searching for spiritual meaning. Far from being a departure from the past, such a vision would constitute an effort by contemporary Reform to (re)capture some of the spirit that animated classical Reformers like Rabbi Emil G. Hirsch.

Jewish social justice activist Ari Hart likes to speak about “embed[ing] universalistic work inside a lifelong Jewish journey so that it is ... not just another ‘experience.’” We can become the facilitators and travel agents for such lifelong Jewish journeys. In so doing we may very well be safeguarding the future of liberal Judaism. ■

New Approaches to Outreach and Conversion: The Gerecht Family Institute at HUC-JIR

Rabbi Aaron Panken '91, Ph.D., *Director, Gerecht Family Institute; Assistant Professor of Rabbinic and Second Temple Literature, HUC-JIR/New York*

The genesis of the Gerecht Family Institute for Outreach and Conversion at HUC-JIR came about in a unique way. While serving as Dean of the New York School in the mid-'90s, I was in Rockville, MD, and had just completed a public lecture when a distinguished gentleman approached me and asked: “Does the College-Institute have a Professor of Outreach?” After a subsequent meeting in Washington, DC, Ash Gerecht agreed to create a generous endowment, and the Gerecht Family Institute was born.

Over the next decade, with the help of students, faculty, alumni, such luminaries in the field as Dru Greenwood and Kathy Kahn (who headed the Union for Reform Judaism’s outreach programs), and the cooperation of the directors of the rabbinical programs on our stateside campuses, we created a well-respected co-curricular educational program that now trains all of our rabbinical and cantorial students on key issues of conversion and outreach. During the required three-day workshops, students learn the textual background that undergirds the

Jewish ideals relating to outreach and conversion across the many eras of Jewish history and the many streams of contemporary Jewish life. They study the psychology of conversion and the phases and feelings converts experience when moving from one faith to another. They hear from panels of those who have converted to Judaism – and their spouses – about their experiences, their challenges, and their joys. They consider what steps are necessary to create congregations that are welcoming to those not yet part of Jewish life in a formal way. They practice interviewing techniques and consider conversion curricula. They discuss circumcision, immersion, and *beit din* practices in Reform Judaism and beyond, in North America, Israel, and elsewhere abroad. They share best practices with extraordinary HUC-JIR alumni in the field who offer their own experiences and advice. Through constant review and improvement, the program has consistently garnered the most positive of responses, with evaluations regularly calling it one of our students’ most valued experiences.

The staff and consultants of the Gerecht Institute

are now looking beyond these educational settings to influence the Reform Movement and the greater Jewish community through additional generous support from the Gerecht family. We are developing online resources that will soon be available to assist all HUC-JIR alumni with building effective conversion programs, continuing their professional learning in these areas, and building a deeper culture of welcoming and accessibility within congregational and organizational settings. This past year, the Gerecht Institute held a very successful first retreat for alumni, a program that will recur every one to two years, with the goal of helping alumni benefit from the program if they graduated before it was in place.

As has been the case throughout Jewish history, our community has benefitted greatly from the addition of “fellow travelers” to our ranks. Through the work of the Gerecht Institute, we hope to continue to extend and enhance our efforts, making Reform Judaism stronger, intellectually deeper, more vibrant, and ever more welcoming. ■

BECOMING A SCHOLAR:

Diversity at the 21st-Century School of Graduate Studies, HUC-JIR/Cincinnati

Dr. Nili S. Fox, Director, School of Graduate Studies, HUC-JIR/Cincinnati

Founded after World War II by HUC-JIR President Rabbi Nelson Glueck, Ph.D., as an American haven for training scholars in Judaic subjects, the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) was, from its inception, a graduate degree program open to Jews and non-Jews. Now, more than six decades later, offering M.A. and Ph.D. programs in Bible, History of Biblical Interpretation, Judaism in the Greco-Roman World, Rabbinic Literature, Jewish Thought and Philosophy, and the American Jewish Experience, it continues that mission in a 21st-century context.

We pride ourselves on the religious and ethnic diversity of the student body. Among our Jewish students are a number of rabbis from North America and Israel who aspire to become scholars in a field of Jewish Studies. Our Christian students, representing various Protestant denominations, come from towns and cities in every region of the U.S.; some are international students from Europe and Asia – countries such as Italy, Finland, Russia, and Korea. These students, who already hold M.A. degrees

from leading universities, colleges, and seminaries, chose to further their education at the SGS. This year we welcomed our first Hindu student, who is pursuing an M.A. in Rabbinics.

Our Ph.D. alumni, now more than 300, teach in a variety of venues that include seminaries, colleges, and universities worldwide. Recent graduates hold professorial positions at institutions such as Xavier University, Boston College, Biola University, Columbia International University, and Franklin Marshall College. One alumna, Kristine Garroway, is on our Bible faculty in Los Angeles, continuing the long history of SGS alumni on our faculty.

Our Ph.D. alumni are prolific scholars, contributing a wealth of scholarly writings in the diverse fields of Judaic and cognate studies. Several new books in the Eisenbrauns series: *History, Archaeology, and Culture of the Levant* are authored by recent doctoral degree graduates, including Kenneth Way '06, Angela Roskop '08, and Jeffrey Cooley '06. Our prolific alumni publications are detailed in the semi-annual SGS newsletter *Kol Hadash*.

As the Book of Proverbs proclaims in its opening lines:

לְדַעַת חִכְמָה וּמוֹסֵר לְהַבִּין אֵימָרֵי בִּינָה
“For learning wisdom and discipline;
for understanding words of discernment (1:2)”

These precepts have been and continue to be central to the mission of our School of Graduate Studies. ■

Two of our Ph.D. students, who received their intermediary Master of Philosophy in Judaic, Hebraic, and Cognate Studies at Graduation this June, showcase student diversity, yet also similarity. Born in the same year, **Reverend Vanessa Ward** and **Rabbi Audrey Korotkin '99**, are of distinct

backgrounds – Vanessa is African-American and a Baptist minister; Audrey is of European descent and a rabbi ordained at HUC-JIR. Both are currently serving congregations as clergy. What inspired these women to pursue a Ph.D. at HUC-JIR?

Ward: “My aspiration is to attain scholarly competencies that allow me to dialogue with those who wrote the scholarship I refer to in my teaching and preaching. The College-Institute has a rigorous scholarly tradition.”

Korotkin: “I want to be part of the centuries old rabbinical conversation, a Reform scholarly voice. Where are Reform Jewish scholars going to come from if not from HUC-JIR?” ■



Reverend Vanessa Ward and Rabbi Audrey Korotkin '99



feedback on my research projects. From course papers and conference presentations to my dissertation research, numerous faculty members have been willing to read my essays and help sharpen my ideas, which ultimately led to a handful of publications. The unique opportunity to interact with rabbinical students, both as fellow students and pupils, has provided me with a deeper understanding of Reform Judaism.” Gault will carry these experiences forward as Assistant Professor of Hebrew and Old Testament in the Seminary and School of Ministry at Columbia International University in Columbia, SC. ■

Cincinnati-native **Brian Gault, Ph.D. '12** (with Dr. Nili S. Fox on right) came to HUC-JIR because of the school's strong reputation for training scholars in Hebrew Bible and Ancient Near Eastern Studies. He explains, “I cannot overstate the strength and value of my education here. The philological focus of my studies at HUC-JIR, as well as various courses in the history and archaeology of Near East, have provided a strong base for my future writing and teaching on the Hebrew Bible.” Gault participated in HUC-JIR's graduate student summer archaeology seminar in Israel in 2006 and wrote his dissertation on the metaphoric language employed to describe the lovers' bodies in Song of Songs. He reflects, “Throughout my career at HUC-JIR, my advisors have provided valuable

Inspired! Excited! Moved! Challenged!

Lesley Litman, M.A., Coordinator, Executive M.A. Program in Jewish Education, HUC-JIR

These are just a few of the descriptors shared by the new cohort of the Executive M.A. (EMA) Program in Jewish Education whom the College-Institute welcomed in late May at a three-day orientation on the Cincinnati campus. The EMA program, made possible by a generous grant from the Jim Joseph Foundation, is designed principally for individuals currently serving as Jewish educational leaders in Reform congregations throughout North America and who have been in leadership roles for a minimum of five years. Most of these Jewish educators have risen to leadership positions through hard work and a commitment

and seriousness of purpose are exhilarating. Approximately 40% of the EMA program occurs in online courses with the other 60% taking place in face-to-face meetings at one of the four HUC-JIR campuses. Indeed, this is the only HUC-JIR program in which students study at all four campuses (our motto: HUC-JIR - we're all over it!). The first two cohorts look forward to traveling together to Israel and studying on the Jerusalem campus in December 2012.

Advances in technology, including the ability to engage in powerful and meaningful learning in the virtual environment, have made this program possible, enabling the College-Institute to reach out to those individuals who are unable to relocate to one of the campuses as part of a residential program. Students meet regularly in their virtual classroom, they study in *chevruta* by Skype, use

student learning experience, it has also had the benefit of placing them in the forefront of teaching and learning for the 21st century. While many educators in the field scramble to keep up with their young students technologically, the professionals participating in the EMA program live and breathe the world of technology inhabited by their young students. Indeed, the virtual tools and learning provided by HUC-JIR are at the cutting-edge of educational technology.

The second unanticipated benefit of the EMA has been the College-Institute's ability to reach out to alumni of HUC-JIR's Schools of Education. Each EMA student is assigned a clinical faculty mentor and is part of a clinical education group led by his or her mentor. The clinical faculty mentors are drawn from the ranks of our Schools of Education alumni throughout North America and engage with their students using the same distance learning tools used in courses. These six exemplary educational leaders have expressed their excitement at being able to be part of the Schools of Education in a way that has traditionally been open only to alumni who reside close to one of the HUC-JIR campuses. They are able to continue to learn and grow while mentoring a new generation of educational leaders into the field.



Dr. Michael Zeldin teaching students in the Executive M.A. Program in Jewish Education during their two-week intensive course on the New York campus.

to Jewish education. For personal and/or family reasons, however, they have not had the opportunity to engage in systematic and formal study of Jewish education. By studying in this program, they will come to understand their work better and gain important and innovative Jewish educational tools so they can improve their practice and thereby transform Jewish education in their communities.

As the program enters its second year (Cohort 1, comprised of sixteen students, is halfway through the program), the students' depth of engagement

YouTube, VoiceThread, and many more technologies to share their thinking, grapple with new concepts, and try out new tools. With the guidance of the College-Institute's Department of e-Learning, both students and faculty have shown an extraordinary willingness and capacity to embrace new technologies and rethink what constitutes an effective learning environment.

Any new endeavor brings with it unanticipated consequences. The EMA is no exception. Two exciting and wonderful results stand out. First, while the use of technology has been key in the

The faculty of the Schools of Education look forward to a second successful year, to graduating the EMA's first cohort in May 2013, and, most importantly, to continuing to blaze new pathways in expanding the reach of HUC-JIR into cyberspace and into the future. ■

For more information: email ExecMA@huc.edu or visit huc.edu/academics/education/execMA

Engaging Teens and Young Adults

Rabbi Melissa Zalkin Stollman '10, MARE '08, MSW, Director, Certificate Program in Jewish Education for Adolescents and Emerging Adults, HUC-JIR



Teens at Temple Shalom of Dallas engaging in the "Next Dor" program.

In the fall of 2009, HUC-JIR conducted a survey of members from the National Association of Temple Educators (NATE), youth professionals, and Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) camps' staffs. Many noted that in order to succeed in their work and be viewed as serious Jewish educators, they felt a need to upgrade their skills in Jewish educational leadership and increase their learning and specialized knowledge regarding adolescent development, experiential learning, new media, service learning, and social justice leadership.

The desire and need for a program such as this became evident quickly, with over 80 inquiries by Jewish youth professionals received in the first few months of this survey. While all were successful youth workers, they felt that they were missing the serious Jewish background and academic training needed to do their work more successfully and to be seen among their colleagues and peers as true educators and professionals.

In response to these findings and an invitation from the Jim Joseph Foundation, HUC-JIR's Schools of Education developed the new Certificate Program in Jewish Education for Adolescents and Emerging Adults. Generously supported by the Jim Joseph Foundation, this program is part of a greater educational initiative designed to increase the number of highly qualified Jewish educators creating compelling Jewish learning experiences with Jewish youth and young adults. This Certificate Program specifically aims to enhance the skills, knowledge, and personal capacities of youth professionals who already serve those populations.

The inaugural cohort of fifteen students, nearly all serving Reform congregations, recently completed the nine-month course of study. These students, ten of whom work in congregations, three in organizations, and two in camps, focus their professional lives on engaging Jewish teens and young adults. A new cohort of sixteen students will start the program this fall. While continuing to work and live in their hometowns, the students will meet face-to-face three times at intensive seminars and a ten-day institute as well as join each other online for study and coursework. The institute and intensives will take them to HUC-JIR campuses in addition to URJ camp sites.

Their studies focus on four main rubrics and electives in three additional areas. The rubrics include Adolescent Development and Emerging Adulthood; Jewish Experiential Education, including theory and curricular planning; Judaic Studies; and Dynamics of Organizational Change. The electives teach skills needed to employ social media and new technologies, explore engagement through the arts, and teach Jewish values through service learning. With the guidance of a mentor through ongoing communication, the students integrate this learning into their professional practice. The mentors help the students translate theory into practice while challenging them to explore more deeply how they think about their work of educating and engaging teens and young adults. ■

For more information: email EdCert@huc.edu or visit huc.edu/academics/education/certificate

From "Next Dor" to "L'Dor V'Dor"

Barrett Harr, Ed Cert '12; Director of High School and Youth Programs, Temple Shalom of Dallas, TX

Barrett Harr recently completed the Certificate Program in Jewish Education for Adolescents and Emerging Adults, which opened her eyes to different ways of interacting with others at her congregation, from teens to parents to colleagues, in order to increase the likelihood of garnering support for her youth program's initiatives.

I have gained a stronger sense of what 'intentional planning' looks like in experiential settings, and the need for evaluation of programs to help determine success. These two aspects of the program, as well as classes on family dynamics and adolescent development, have impacted me and my work greatly.

As my final project for my studies in 'navigating organizational dynamics,' I developed a proposal for a new program that would fulfill the wishes of parents in our synagogue, who for the past three years had expressed a strong interest in taking the classes their teens were taking in the "Next Dor" post-b'nai mitzvah program. Modeled after this teen program, "L'Dor V'Dor - Adult Jewish Learning from Generation to Generation" would run concurrently with the teen program.

The proposal was accepted by the congregation and gained full financial support through a partnership with the Union for Reform Judaism's generous Incubator Grants, enabling us to make this program a reality this year. The program will be open to all adults in the congregation (and other members of the greater Dallas Jewish community). Adult learners - just like our teens - will get to choose from a variety of classes offered simultaneously and accrue credits toward graduating from the program by participating in education, worship, *tikkun olam*, and community experiences. The 'intentional planning' work that I did as part of the Certificate Program taught me how to enact this process.

"Next Dor" and "L'Dor V'Dor - Adult Jewish Learning from Generation to Generation" offers classes in:

- Seven Habits of Highly Effective Jewish Parenting
- Comparative Religion
- The REAL Stories of the Jewish Holidays - Taking a Deeper Look into the Stories of our Tradition
- Packing for College - Helping to Prepare Your Family
- Sex Ed in the Jewish Tradition
- Jews Around the World
- Jewish Archeology
- No, Your Teen is Not Crazy - A Crash Course in Adolescent Development
- Jewish Cooking - Traditional and Innovative Recipes for Busy Families
- What Is the Big Deal about Israel...and Why Should We Care?
- Beginning Hebrew - No Prior Experience Required

Bat Mitzvah's Delayed Coming-of-Age in Reform Judaism

Rabbi Carole B. Balin '91, Ph.D., Professor of History, HUC-JIR/New York

When my Hebrew teacher, a young rabbinical student at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati named Hank Skirball, suggested that I become *bat mitzvah* when I turned thirteen, I responded, "What's that?" I didn't know of the concept. . . . I [only] knew of the group confirmation ceremony. . . . Even my father, who was born in 1902, didn't have a *bar mitzvah*. So [my teacher] explained it to me, . . . and I said, "Okay! I'll try that."

— Reminiscence of Judith Hyman Darsky

BAT MITZVAH COMES OF AGE

A TOURING EXHIBITION PRESENTED BY THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN JEWISH HISTORY AND MOVING TRADITIONS

T rue to her word, on Saturday morning, April 23, 1955, thirteen-year-old Judith Hyman stepped onto the *bimah* to become the first girl to mark her *bat mitzvah* at the Isaac M. Wise Temple, the congregation playfully dubbed the "Mother Church" of Reform Judaism. Dressed to the nines in a blue-and-white-checked spring suit with matching heels, the *bat mitzvah* girl read Torah, recited the *haftarah*, led part of the service, and delivered a *bat mitzvah* speech. The following day, to celebrate the *simchah*, guests enjoyed tea and cookies at the Hyman home while teenagers danced on the small patio in the backyard to the music on Judith's new, electric blue record player.

To our 21st-century eyes, Judith Hyman's *bat mitzvah* looks like a rather typical, if modest, version of what we are accustomed to seeing. Girls regularly mark their coming-of-age on Saturday mornings in ceremonies identical to those of boys. Like Judith, they are permitted to participate in all aspects of communal worship. They regard themselves, as their brothers do, as rightful heirs to the

traditions contained in the Torah scroll,

which is usually passed down to them, both literally and figuratively. To celebrate the milestone, parties of all shapes and sizes commonly follow the service, as in the case of Judith's lovely suburban soiree.

But in post-World War II America, marking a *bat mitzvah* was a rare event, especially among Reform Jews. Temple records, along with a national effort to survey "Bat Mitzvah Firsts," have yielded fewer than a dozen who stepped onto the *bimah* prior to Judith Hyman.

The road to *bat mitzvah* was not necessarily straight. A first did not necessarily yield a second. Wise Temple, for instance, would wait twelve years before another girl followed in Hyman's footsteps, and only thereafter did *bat mitzvah* become a regular feature of the congregation's ritual practice.

Until 1979, confirmation remained the coming-of-age ceremony of choice among Reform Judaism's female adolescents. When Judith Hyman ascended the Wise Temple *bimah* for a second time in 1958 to become confirmed, she stood among 104 (!) students, including 41 boys and 63 girls.

In a strange twist of fate, the Reform Movement, the first to promise religious equality to women, was last among liberal Jews to regularize *bat mitzvah* in congregational life. Ironically, thirteen-year-old Sally Priesand did not chant *haftarah* or read Torah to mark her coming-of-age; she acquired those skills years later in rabbinical school at HUC-JIR. Her groundbreaking ordination did, however, inspire at least one girl to take the plunge. Shortly after Rabbi Alfred Gottschalk ordained Sally Priesand, thirteen-year-old Sally Rappeport agreed to become the first *bat mitzvah* at Congregation Oheb Shalom in Baltimore in 1973. As she remembers with pride: "I was Sally, too. I felt a strong connection to Rabbi Priesand - from Sally to Sally."

Within six years of Rappeport's first, the Reform Movement's Responsa Committee would report that Reform Jews "universally observed" *bat mitzvah* as "an initial step toward maturity," leading to "continued Jewish education." Within a decade, the *bat mitzvah* girls would have ceremonies identical to their brothers, both in terms of content and timing. *Bat mitzvah* had come of age in the Reform Movement.

Given the current, vigorous efforts in our Movement to engage and retain youth after *b'nai mitzvah*, the experiences of *bat mitzvah* pioneers can invigorate our thinking and help us to chart a path forward. ■

Rabbi Carole B. Balin, Ph.D., is a co-curator of "Bat Mitzvah Comes of Age," a traveling exhibit sponsored by Moving Traditions and the National Museum of American Jewish History, which tells how pioneering girls stepped onto the *bimah* to become *bat mitzvah* and changed Jewish life forever. For more information and to secure the exhibit for your community, go to batmitzvahcomesofage.com.



The B'nai Mitzvah Revolution:

A Joint Project of HUC-JIR's Rhea Hirsch School of Education and the Union for Reform Judaism's Campaign for Youth Engagement

Dr. Isa Aron, Professor of Jewish Education, HUC-JIR/Jack H. Skirball Campus/Los Angeles

Rabbi Bradley Solmsen '01, Director, Campaign for Youth Engagement, URJ

What could be wrong with a tradition that motivates hundreds of thousands of Jewish families to join synagogues? We believe that the tradition of *bar/bat mitzvah*, at least as practiced in contemporary America, is a mixed blessing. Preparation for the ceremony is seen by many parents as the primary goal of religious school and as one of the main reasons for joining

a congregation. While this leads to relatively high rates of synagogue affiliation, it has a serious down side. Parents and teachers are often so focused on the child's performance that opportunities for age-appropriate, engaging learning are diminished, as is the power of the life-cycle ceremony itself. *B'nai mitzvah* celebrations are standardized, taking into account neither the differences among thirteen-year-olds in terms of maturity and interest, nor the differences among families in their motivations and Jewish identification.

Because these celebrations focus on the individual child's performance of a ritual that s/he may not be able to fully understand or appreciate, current methods of *b'nai mitzvah* preparation are inefficient, wasting instructional time in the religious school. They are often counter-productive as well, driving children and their families away from the synagogue as soon as the ceremony is over, rather than motivating them to continue their involvement.

The *B'nai Mitzvah Revolution*, a joint project of HUC-JIR's Rhea Hirsch School of Education and the Union for Reform Judaism's Campaign for Youth Engagement, was created to address these issues. The project, which will be launched in November 2012, will work with 10-15 Reform congregations to experiment with new ways of marking and celebrating *b'nai mitzvah*; preparing students and their families for *b'nai mitzvah* ceremonies; and teaching Hebrew and Jewish prayer.

The goals of the project are:

- To devise a range of new approaches to *b'nai mitzvah* preparation and celebration. Among them may be ceremonies that demonstrate the readiness of *b'nai mitzvah* to be active participants in the Jewish community in ways other than leading prayer, perhaps through *tikkun olam* (social justice), *gemilut hasadim* (caring for community members), or *talmud torah* (learning and/or teaching).
- To create a network of synagogue leaders throughout our Movement who support one another in experimentation, and provide one another with honest and critical feedback.
- To share the models and resources created by this network with an ever-widening group of congregations, so that they too can experiment and document their efforts.

A key element of the project is action research. At least one leader at each congregation will work under the guidance of a mentor to document the experiments and collect data on the successes and challenges they encounter along the way. Thus, by the end of the first phase of the project (in December 2014), we will have collected a wealth of information to share about these new approaches. It is our hope that additional, larger cohorts will follow the first one. ■

To find out more about the *B'nai Mitzvah Revolution*, visit bnaimitzvahrevolution.org

A Reframing of the Bar Mitzvah Ceremony



Simon Kuh did not only chant a *haftarah* for his *bar mitzvah* on *Shabbat* morning at Temple Emanuel of Beverly Hills.

Simon explained that he had spent the last six months "doing things I never thought to do before – walking from Los Angeles to the Valley through the Hollywood mountains, feeding dinner to children with cancer at the Children's Hospital of Los Angeles, walking in support of Darfur, riding on the 720 Wilshire city bus across Los Angeles on a Friday at rush hour to see my city from a different perspective (90 percent of the city's bus riders are from minority populations), and eating at Langer's Deli in McArthur Park and writing a review of its food and posting it online. There were thirteen badges in all that I had to accomplish. They were mostly to teach me more about understanding the larger world I live in."

Temple Emanuel's senior rabbi, Laura Geller '76, who has led the 800-household congregation for seventeen years, acknowledges that Simon's *bar mitzvah* service was

highly unusual. She explained in an interview that Simon's mother felt that a ritual marking a transition out of childhood should reflect the skills required to become a Jewish adult in the community. So after a series of conversations, the rabbi and Simon's parents came up with a list of tasks, which the rabbi compared to Boy Scouts merit badges, that they felt would be appropriate to signify an appropriate coming of age and communal responsibility for Simon.

"It was a reframing of the *bar mitzvah* ceremony," Rabbi Geller said, noting that Simon's talk to the congregation showed his heightened awareness of class differences in society. Simon noted that Moses, raised as a prince, stepped up to lead the downtrodden Jewish slaves in Egypt, and reflected on the implications for his own engagement in today's world. ■

Excerpted from *The New York Jewish Week*, June 26, 2012.

CPE IN CINCINNATI

Rabbi Julie S. Schwartz '86, Jay Stein Director of Clinical Pastoral Education and Pastoral Care, HUC-JIR/Cincinnati

This summer, our groundbreaking program of Clinical Pastoral Education on the Cincinnati campus was recommended to receive re-accreditation upon the completion of its Five Year Review by the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE), the international body for education, certification, and accreditation. While we were the first Jewish seminary to offer CPE through our own curriculum and the first seminary to be fully accredited as an independent center, this is another landmark attainment demonstrating our role as the leaders in rabbinical formation, which integrates classic academic studies with supervised clinical practice. We are especially proud that our CPE program includes placements in both adult and children's hospitals, specialized care for families suffering traumatic losses, and focused outreach to the frail, elderly, and those in hospice care.

In the coming year, our students will continue these responsibilities as well as offer training workshops for local congregations' lay pastoral care outreach groups. Because Jewish texts and resources are intentionally woven into our CPE curriculum, our students can immediately apply their learning to the unique concerns and challenges of today's complex Jewish community. At the same time, we continue to include Christian clergy and seminarians, as well as other lay people, in our student groups. This outreach enriches our rabbinical students' experiences and provides a meaningful introduction to Jewish traditions for those outside the walls of our seminary. We are especially grateful to the members of the Pastoral Care Advisory Committee, a group of Jewish lay leaders, HUC-JIR faculty, and local clergy and specialists in pastoral care. This committee, chaired by Kathy Claybon, provides ongoing guidance and ensures that our program can meet the high standards of the ACPE. ■

Supporting Illness and Wellness

Michele Prince, Director, Kalsman Institute on Judaism and Health, HUC-JIR/Jack H. Skirball Campus/Los Angeles

HUC-JIR is deeply committed to creating a new generation of Jewish leaders who are prepared to sensitively and capably help congregants and community members deal with the critical issues they face throughout their lives. The Kalsman Institute on Judaism and Health worked with HUC-JIR's rabbinical program in Los Angeles to adopt a new requirement for all students to complete a pastoral internship as a prerequisite for ordination, in addition to their years of congregational work. The pastoral fieldwork complements coursework that provides academic grounding in Jewish theology, rabbinical practice, and pastoral counseling. HUC-JIR faculty, as well as local rabbis and healthcare professionals, teach medical ethics, creative use of prayer at bedside, responses to beginning and end-of-life issues, and Jewish death and mourning practices, and draw from ancient and contemporary texts related to health and healing.

Taking advantage of the interdisciplinary nature of studies on campus, the Kalsman Institute oversees pastoral education for students not only in the rabbinical program, but also Jewish education and Jewish nonprofit management students. Second-year education students participate in an



Rabbinical student Sara Abrams '13 is a Kalsman Institute chaplaincy intern at St. John's Health Care in Los Angeles.



Rabbinical student chaplains April Peters '15 and Brandon Bernstein '14 supervised by Rabbi Rafael Goldstein (center), Director of Department of Pastoral Care at Mount Sinai Medical Center in New York, and a Doctor of Ministry student at HUC-JIR/New York.

updated Human Development II course, which examines how issues around illness and wellness impact students, educators, school, and community. Skill-building opportunities are provided for students to strengthen their ability to assess and respond effectively, acknowledging that educators are frequently first-line responders during times of need.

Periodic lectures, panels, and other events with Kalsman leaders on behaviors considered taboo or stigmatized in the Jewish community, and other topical subjects related to health and healing, are shared by all students, including those in the Jewish nonprofit management cohorts. Students are exposed to a concept of health that is broadly defined, encompassing physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and sociopolitical elements, focusing on resiliency and strength-based approaches. Students participate in the annual Case Presentation, a "Grand Rounds"-style experience. One student from each of the three programs helps dissect a complicated case vignette, addressing a broad community and professional perspective. ■

The Kalsman Institute on Judaism and Health was endowed by the Lee and Irving Kalsman Philanthropic Fund and The Kalsman Trust, with the support of Peachy and Mark Levy.



The Kalsman Institute on Judaism and Health and Cedars-Sinai are co-sponsoring "Jewish Wisdom and Wellness: A Week of Learning." From April 21 to 28, 2013, a community-wide series of lectures and workshops throughout Southern California will mine the Jewish tradition to improve health and well-being in the Jewish community. For more information: (213) 765-2184; Jewishwisdomandwellness@huc.edu; Jewishwisdomandwellness.org

On the Cutting-Edge of Jewish Pastoral Education

Rabbi Nancy Wiener '90, D. Min. '94, Director, Blaustein Center for Pastoral Counseling, HUC-JIR/New York

In April we celebrated the tenth anniversary of The Jacob and Hilda Blaustein Center for Pastoral Counseling at HUC-JIR/New York as the first center dedicated to pastoral education at a North American Jewish seminary. Since its inception, we have responded to the need for skilled pastoral care by creating an integrated pastoral education model of class work, field work, and reflection that other Jewish seminaries have since adopted and adapted. We have also taken to heart the questions Jewish pastoral caregivers have asked for decades: What's Jewish about Jewish pastoral care? Do Jewish beliefs, values, and practices inform the issues that people bring to a rabbi or cantor? How do Jewish caregivers' theologies inform their work? Three of the Blaustein Center's newest initiatives in pastoral education focus on these questions.

include a theological reflection on an aspect of the conversation that explicitly or implicitly reveals a theological issue for either the caregiver or the care receiver.

After several years of joint study, Rabbi Mychal Springer (Jewish Theological Seminary), Barbara Breitman (Reconstructionist Rabbinical College), and I have team-taught two master classes on Jewish pastoral theology, hosted by the Blaustein Center. Guided by our shared experience that pastoral encounters can further the caregiver's theological thinking, we worked with two distinct groups: first, one student from each of our seminaries; second, one congregational rabbi from each Movement. Over two days, faculty and participants explored, through role-play and discussion, theological issues that emerged from

Then and Now

A generation ago, the only learning opportunity students had in the area of Pastoral Counseling was a one-semester required course. The entire learning experience was in-class and quite limited. Graduates were ill-prepared to meet the needs of their congregants. Today, our students not only take a number of required courses, but benefit from substantive in-field supervised training, including, for many, 400 hours of reflective Clinical Pastoral Education in a hospital or healthcare facility, and greater supervision in their student pulpit placements. Simply put, the training that our students now receive has immeasurably enhanced the rabbimates and cantorates of our graduates. ■



Betty and Arthur Roswell (at left) and Rabbi David Ellenson and Rabbi Nancy Wiener (at right), presented the *Refuat HaNefesh* (Healing of the Soul) Award to The Lilian and Benjamin Hertzberg Palliative Care Institute of Mount Sinai Hospital in New York and Dr. Diane E. Meier, Founding Director (center). They were honored for their superlative work, their long-term partnership with The Jacob and Hilda Blaustein Center for Pastoral Counseling since its infancy (creating its first year-long pastoral internship), and their continued commitment to our shared goals.

In our pastoral care courses we challenge students to consider how their beliefs and identities as Jews motivate and guide them in their pastoral interactions. We consider how Jewish literature, imagery, music, and ritual, as well as Jewish holiday cycle and life-cycle offer frames for how we might make meaning in an ever-changing world. In class and in field work placements, we encourage students to listen for theological issues and questions of meaning. Under the auspices of the Blaustein Center, students participate in on-going supervision for field-work (pastoral, congregational, and organizational), by sharing written descriptions of interactions that

a pastoral encounter of each participant. An analysis and discussion of the first master class appears in the article "*P'tach Libi B'Toratecha*" (*CCAR Journal*, Summer 2012). We are looking forward to future team-taught master classes.

Thanks to Betty and Arthur Roswell and the Blaustein Foundation's continued generosity and endowment, the Blaustein Center will be able to offer clinical pastoral education (CPE) on campus in the coming years, providing another venue to promote the fusion of pastoral theology and practice. ■

Pastoral Education in Israel

Only ten years ago, the terms "pastoral care" and "spiritual support" were a mystery to Israelis. Now, thanks to the Blaustein Center for Pastoral Care at HUC-JIR/Jerusalem, an increasing numbers of Israelis are looking for ways to turn to Jewish sources for strength and succor.

The Blaustein Center's *Mezorim* Program, led by Ruchama Weiss, Ph.D., a scholar and artist, brings together rabbinical students, social workers, and healthcare professionals for an intensive four-semester program combining academic study of Jewish texts, the development of tools for support and counseling, and profound introspection in the fields of the spirit and the soul. *Mezorim* participants fulfill internships at some of the most renowned hospitals in Israel, including Tel Hashomer, Beit Levenstein Rehabilitation, and Hadassah Hospital. In addition, the Blaustein Center offers *Sugiyot Chaim* (*Texts for Life*), a *Beit Midrash* program of text study for senior citizens. ■

Hebrew Poetry as a Wellspring for Theological Renewal

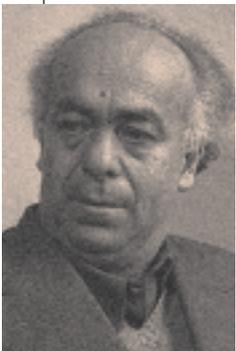
Rabbi Haim O. Rechnitzer '03, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Modern Jewish Thought, HUC-JIR/Cincinnati



Is there a specific Israeli Jewish theology and if there is, where is it? During many years of learning, research, and an existential re-examination of Judaism, I have grown increasingly frustrated by the reduction of Zionism to political Zionism, and the marginalizing of its spiritual facets. I have been underwhelmed by the spiritual impact of the university and scholarship on the renewal of Israeli-Jewish life. These concerns are coupled with the fact that a potential source of inspiration for new Jewish theology – Liberal Judaism – offered mainly ideas of a sociological nature, yet proved to be less capable of articulating substantive theological models. More so, its community-based practices stand to gain from a specifically Israeli-Hebrew theology.



Theology is the product of a critical-philosophical dialogue between the Muse of religious insight, sacred texts, traditions of interpretation, and science. One of the unique aspects of the Zionist revolution is the renewal of the Hebrew language and especially the pivotal role of the New Hebrew literature. Israeli Hebrew poets are a link in a long tradition that perceives poetry as part of the prophetic tradition. Indeed, within the Israeli cultural elite, poets have occupied that space since the early years of the *Yishuv* (pre-state Israeli society). Poets like Hayyim Nahman Bialik, Uri Zvi Greenberg, Avraham Shlonsky, and Avraham Chalfi actively constructed literary, political, and existential forms of dialogue with Jewish, theological, and philosophical sources. They opened up new horizons for a Hebrew-Jewish-Israeli theology that bridges the divide between the secular and religious realms.



While this poetry is commonly discussed within the disciplines of literary criticism and Zionist history, its theological potential was ignored or, at least, under-developed. Their literary inheritance stands before us as a wellspring for a creation of new theological perspectives that bridge the divide between the old and the new and the secular and religious realms. Recently, scholars have dedicated more attention to the theological potential of Hebrew poetry. However, a comprehensive contextualization of this poetry with the Jewish tradition and theological systems is yet to be accomplished.



In my own research, I seek to reconstruct theological models out of Modern Hebrew poetry. For example, the poet Chalfi called God out on his shortcomings and provided us with a unique concept of mysticism that combines Heikhlut and Kabbalah teachings. Shlonsky presented a forceful critique of the Zionist *Halutz* ethos. Its radicalism lies within the subversive interpretation of the Hasidic mystical traditions, offering both a vital and painful dialogue with God and a harsh criticism of the Zionist approach to redemption. T. Carmi tells the story of the heretic who enlists every religious image in order to glorify and sanctify the profane.

It is my hope that this new enterprise will inspire us to imagine innovative paths for engagement with the Jewish tradition and original theological models. ■



From top: Hayyim Nahman Bialik, Uri Zvi Greenberg, Avraham Shlonsky, Avraham Chalfi, and T. Carmi

והחכמה מאין תמצא
ואי זה מקום בינה

(Job 28:12)

*But where can wisdom be found;
where is the source of understanding?*

A Dream of Your Footprints

Avraham Chalfi

(Translated by Haim O. Rechnitzer)

I sought you but found you not.
I sought you, enveloped in a cloud.
I filled my soul with honey from your mouth,
I saw a dream of your footprints in the garden.

I knew that you fled far from us.
Commanded us to die perplexed.
You planted a world – our world is as a
garden,
Your dream rises within it like a floral scent.

But who are you? Who? In what image are your
incarnations?
And what is their number in the infinite
moments?
Reveal your face to me, to the wanderer in the
gloomiest kingdom of life.

I am your beloved, if you are not the same as
me,
and I shall not hate you, if sorrow [and
weariness] are thee.
See: our daylight is impoverished sunlight.
Feel: our nights are clouds of darkness.

And empty is the space – (our window is open
to see, how empty the space is).
I sought you at night and in wind,
I sought you in heat waves
And in the dew.

The title “A Dream of Your Footprints” sets the stage for the nature of the encounter between the speaker in the poem and God. The poet addresses God directly, using the second person, creating an impression of intimate dialogue. Yet the poet does not see his interlocutor. He can only account for “a dream,” and this dream is not even of the image of God but merely of God’s footprints. Thus, the title suggests a sense of obscurity, conveying in a few words (two words in Hebrew – *halom ikvoteikha*) the dialectic between intimacy and distance. The poet situates the drama of the poem between worlds, bridging between the here and now, and a mystical vision that captures a glimpse of God’s presence in the Garden. Chalfi’s poem situates the poet and the “us” of the text in the midst of the Garden and presents a radical change in the mystical drama of the ascent to the Garden. ■

See Dr. Rechnitzer’s article “To See God in His Beauty: Avraham Chalfi and the Mystical Quest for the Evasive God,” in *The Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*, 10 January 2012, at tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/14725886.2011.608555

Of *Midos* and *Mensches*: Language and the Diverse American Jewish Community

Sarah Bunin Benor, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Contemporary Jewish Studies, HUC-JIR/Jack H. Skirball Campus/Los Angeles

Question:

What do the following quotes have in common?

A

"I can't believe [your grandson] Jeremy co-chaired the [Jewish Federation] campaign: he's always been a *mensch*, and now he's a real *macher*. You must be *shepping* so much *naches*." (*mensch*: good person; *macher*: mover and shaker; *shep naches*: derive pride/joy)

B

"After I was *bat mitzvahed*, I only went to temple for *tikkun olam* events." (After I had my thirteen-year-old girls' coming-of-age ceremony, I only went to synagogue for community action events [*tikkun olam*: lit. 'repairing the world'])

C

"Halfway through the (full *kriyah*) Torah reading, it was announced that one could opt to join a *niggun* circle or Torah reading upstairs... I'm pleased to say that the *egal minyan* hopping in the Carroll Gardens/Park Slope area is quaint but sufficient. After *shul* I joined a group of eight folks, half of whom had made it to *davening* that morning. Following a delicious pescetarian (though vegan-friendly) meal..." (full *kriyah*: full weekly Torah reading, as opposed to a smaller section read in some congregations; *niggun*: melody; *egal*: egalitarian according to gender (women can participate fully); *minyan*: prayer group, lit. quorum; *shul*: synagogue; *davening*: praying; pescetarian: vegetarian but with fish)

D

"The *sugya* we're learning is too *lomdish* to say *outside*." (The topic [in the Gemora] we're studying is too complicated to summarize.)

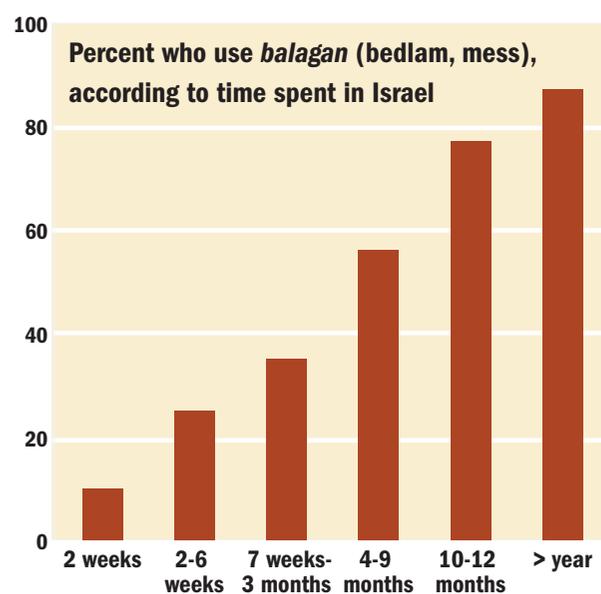
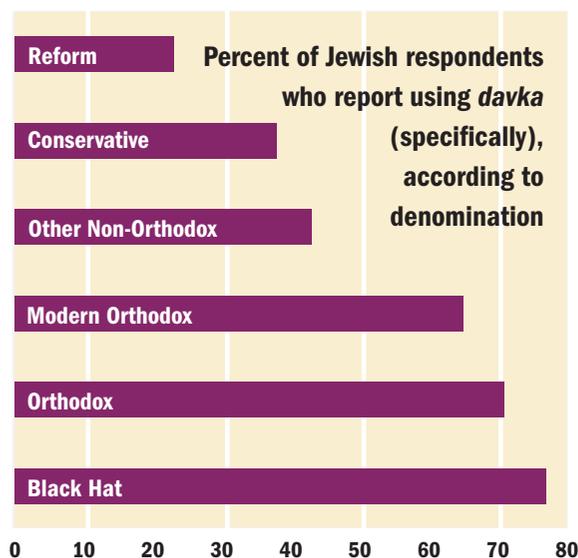
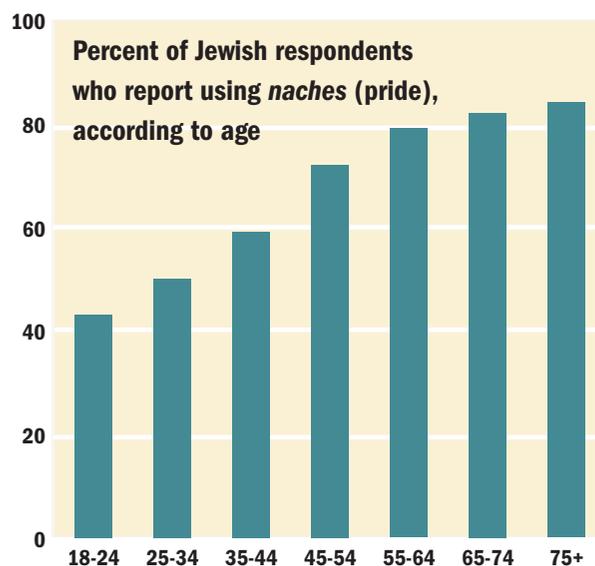
Dr. Sarah Bunin Benor holds a Ph.D. in Linguistics from Stanford University. She researches and teaches about American Jewish language and culture, and is the author of the forthcoming *Becoming Frum: How Newcomers Learn the Language and Culture of Orthodox Judaism*, Rutgers University Press, 2012.

Answer:

They were all said by American Jews, and they are all mostly English with some influences from Yiddish, Hebrew, and Aramaic. But anyone who says one of them would be unlikely to say the others. These quotes demonstrate the diversity of American Jews as reflected in language.

We see this diversity in many dimensions: age, religiosity, denomination, ancestry, time spent in Israel, and more. Jews in their golden years, especially children of immigrants from Eastern Europe, are likely to use Yiddish words like *macher* and *naches*, as in **Quote A**. **Quote B**, with its use of *bat mitzvah* as a verb, might be said by a young woman who grew up at a Reform temple. **Quote C**, full of Yiddish and Hebrew words, comes from a Jewschool blog post by a young New Yorker involved in independent *minyanim* in which men and women participate equally. And **Quote D**, with its Yiddish-influenced grammar and Yiddish and Aramaic words, comes from *FrumSpeak: The First Dictionary of Yeshivish*, a compilation of distinctive English used by young men in an Orthodox yeshiva. Someone who says **Quote D** might also use the word *midos*, or good character traits, with its Ashkenazi pronunciation, common among non-Modern Orthodox Jews. The other word in the title, *mensch*, is common among Jews of all backgrounds, especially those in older generations.

These characterizations seem to be accurate, but I wanted quantitative evidence to be sure. So I teamed up with sociologist Steven M. Cohen, Research Professor of Jewish Social Policy at HUC-JIR/New York, to create an online questionnaire. The survey went viral, and we received over 40,000 responses. I want to share a few correlations. These are just a few examples of the rich data we found (see jewish-languages.org). But they offer quantitative evidence for what we feel intuitively when we listen to Jews who are different from ourselves: the Hebrew and Yiddish words we use - and how we pronounce them - identify us not only as Jews but also as certain types of Jews. ■



David and Goliath: Donning and Removing Saul's Armor

Rabbi Norman J. Cohen '71, Ph.D. '77, Provost Emeritus; Professor of Midrash, HUC-JIR/New York

In his highly engaging look at clothing and identity in the Bible, Dr. Norman Cohen presents the Bible as a mirror, reflecting back to us our own personalities, ambivalences, struggles, and potential for growth.

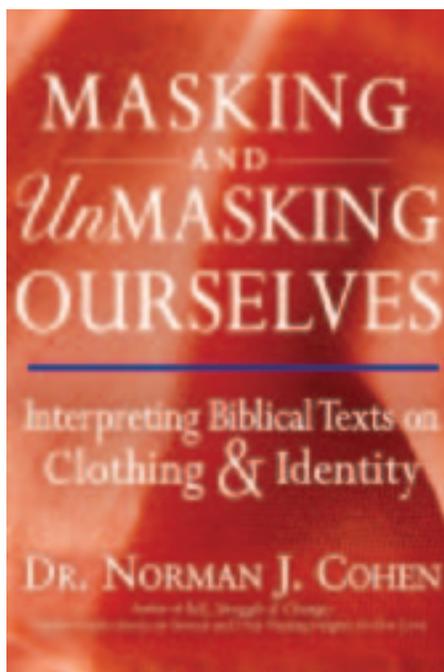
As the Israelites prepared to engage the Philistines in battle, Goliath, the Philistine champion, stepped forward and challenged them to send out a man to fight him. David, who was a mere lad and had only come to the battlefield to check on his brothers, volunteered to take on the giant from Gath (1 Samuel 17:1-37). Saul clothed David in his own armor, placing a helmet and breastplate on him and girding him with his sword. As the king, Saul had the strongest suit of armor of any of the Israelites. However, as one could imagine, under the weight of the armor, David was unable to walk, let alone fight. He tried vainly but simply could not and had to remove the king's armor (1 Samuel 17:38-39).

Scholars who study the nature of clothing and appearance vis-à-vis a person's identity speak of both role embracement and role distance. Role embracement refers to a close link between a particular role and the individual's identity. The role is likely to be integrated into one's self-concept. On the other hand, role distance relates to a lack of inner identification with a particular role. Often, in both these instances, how the person feels wearing particular clothing that signifies the role is crucial. This is especially the case in contexts that are novel to the person, when new and different garments are worn. In these cases, self-awareness is usually heightened.¹ The case of David attempting to wear Saul's armor makes these concepts very clear.

Saul's armor, in Hebrew called *madim*, was custom made for him, and he was head and shoulders taller than anyone in the Israelite camp. The term *mad* (and the more frequent *middah*) means "measure," underscoring that they were tailored to Saul's measurements.² *Middah*, however, also means "characteristics" or "qualities," indicating that the garments represented who Saul was, his essential nature.

In this interpretive light, David took off the garments, refusing to assume Saul's identity.³ He had to be his own person if he were to defeat Goliath and ensure the survival of God's covenanted people. This was a clear anticipation that David would eventually replace Saul as king and establish his own monarchy. David simply could not assume Saul's identity.

But many individuals do attempt to embrace the identity and role of others, sometimes to their own detriment. They assume the appearance of others and, in so doing, are



essentially changed. Changing clothing can have a drastic effect on individual behavior. Note the classic case of *Macbeth*. Shakespeare utilizes clothing to symbolize not only the change of power in Scotland but also the essential changes in Macbeth himself. As soon as Macbeth is told that he has been made the Thane of Cawdor, he says, "The Thane of Cawdor lives. Why do you dress me in borrowed robes?" (1.3.108-9). Not only does Macbeth not believe that the prediction of the witches has come true, but also, like David, he feels totally uncomfortable in another's clothing, another's identity. Yet, by accepting the new garments and new role, he also loses himself while taking on the Thane of Cawdor's traits. Macbeth's dressing in "borrowed robes" effects his change into a monstrous murderer. The moment he becomes the Thane, he cannot stop contemplating the killing of Duncan so he can become king. His entire being has changed. And after killing Duncan, Macbeth rapidly becomes a control- and power-hungry madman.

Unfortunately, as Shakespeare emphasizes, Macbeth's new title and role never fit him. His title, as Shakespeare says, "hangs loose about him, like a giant's robe upon a dwarfish thief" (5.2.21-22). Macbeth simply does not fit properly into his "borrowed robes." He should have never accepted the title of Thane of Cawdor.⁴

In contemplating the implications of David's actions, his rejecting Saul's armor and preferring to face Goliath with merely his slingshot and his shepherd's bag full of stones, can we think of times when we attempted to wear someone else's symbolic garments that simply did not fit us? Sometimes, we might have even tried every which way to make them fit. Did we ever undertake a role or assume a position that did not match who we were? Were we seduced by the beauty or cost of the clothing, or rather, were we insightful enough to realize that the clothes just were not us: they didn't

fit our personalities, goals, or values? Did we have any sense of role distance? ■



Leonard Everett Fisher, "David and King Saul" from *David and Goliath*, acrylic on paper, 1993.

1. Kaiser, *Social Psychology of Clothing*, pp. 195-196.
2. *Me'am Lo'ez* to 1 Samuel 17:38.
3. Segel, *Sifrei Shmuel* to 1 Samuel 17:39.
4. Erica M., "Macbeth and the Clothes That Make the Man," teenink.com/college/guide.

Excerpted from *Masking and Unmasking Ourselves: Interpreting Biblical Texts on Clothing & Identity* © 2012 by Norman J. Cohen. Permission granted by Jewish Lights Publishing, P.O. Box 237, Woodstock, VT 05091; jewishlights.com.

Holy War in Judaism: The Fall and Rise of a Controversial Idea

Rabbi Reuven Firestone '82, Ph.D., Professor of Medieval Jewish Studies, HUC-JIR/Jack H. Skirball Campus/Los Angeles

Dr. Reuven Firestone's newly published *Holy War in Judaism: The Fall and Rise of a Controversial Idea* is the first book to consider how the concept of "holy war" disappeared from Jewish thought for almost 2000 years, only to reemerge with renewed vigor in modern times.

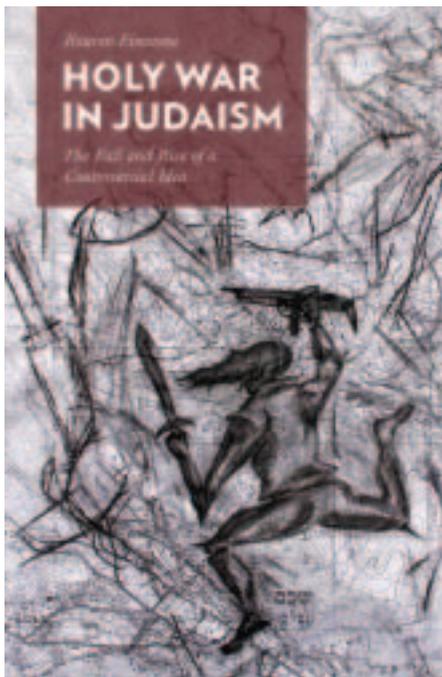
Holy war is, by definition, sacred. And the most obvious association of sanctity is with the divinity, however defined or understood. When war is authorized by God it is holy. That is the bottom line with holy war – it is authorized by God.

But how does one know the divine will? Divine communication has been acknowledged by humanity through signs, oracles, priests, prophets, and revelation, and all of these media have authorized holy war at one time or another. As religions become established, institutionalized, and standardized, however, fresh communication between God and humanity becomes limited, revelation becomes controlled through canonization into scripture, and prophecy is severely restricted or ended altogether. With hardly an exception, it is only the record of previous divine revelation in the form of scriptural text that continues to represent the actual direct, public, and authoritative public communication from God.

We know what we know about God's will and design through our attempts to decipher and make sense of the record of God's revelation in scripture. Religious leadership is always engaged in this process because it is charged to help its followers understand what God expects of them. Religious leaders thus translate, illuminate, and elucidate the demands of God to the community of believers.

But the processes of interpretation are anything but simple. This book attempts to examine and make sense of the interpretive history of the notion of holy war in post-biblical Judaism. We shall observe that holy war is a common theme in the Hebrew Bible. Divinely legitimized through the authority of biblical scripture and its interpretation, holy war then became a historical reality for the Jews of antiquity. Among at least some of the Jewish groups of the late Second Temple period, Jews engaged in what is defined here as holy war.

According to early Judaism, God on certain occasions not only authorized but also commanded war, and three major Jewish wars were waged as holy wars during this period: the Maccabean revolt against the Seleucid Greeks, the Great Revolt against Rome, and the Bar Kokhba Rebellion in the



2nd century. The first succeeded in repelling a powerful repressive foreign regime and establishing religious and national independence, but the failures of the second and third resulted in such overwhelming destruction that they threatened to destroy Judaism and the Jewish people itself.

For the survival of Jews and Judaism, the Jewish leadership that became dominant during the rabbinic period (from about 70 to about 600 CE) engaged in certain strategies to prevent the dangerous wild-card of holy war to be easily played. We shall observe how the rabbis of the Talmud responded to the repeated catastrophic failures of military campaigns that were considered holy wars by their protagonists. They agreed that holy war was a genuine and perhaps even eternal divinely authorized institution, but they also made it virtually impossible for holy war to be an operative category in Judaism.

It remained dormant for centuries, but even in its dormancy it continued to evolve... Holy war thus remained academic, an institution that could be studied but with the assumption that it would not be applied – until the coming of the messiah...

The book examines the struggle to make sense of the need to wage war in the period of Jewish statehood. It observes how after the Holocaust and establishment of the State of Israel, but especially after the 1967 War, divinely authorized war was explored in religious Zionist discourse. During this period the notion and language of religious war also passed from the yeshivas and journals of Orthodox Jewry into the larger Israeli public discourse... This study of the history of holy war's suppression and subsequent revival in Judaism ends, therefore, with the mid-1980s. Although the discussions and disagreements

over messianism, the possibly transcendent meaning of the State of Israel, and divinely authorized war continue unabated in contemporary Jewish discourse, the revival of Jewish holy war has occurred for at least a significant segment of the Jewish world.

This book begins in the dark corridors of antiquity. It ends with the blinding explosion of the "Jewish Underground" in the early to mid-1980s. Expressions of violence perpetrated by Jews who believe their acts to be divinely sanctioned have continued since then, including even the assassination of the Prime Minister of the State of Israel, Yitzhak Rabin, in 1995. ■



"From the death camps to the war of life: A Holocaust survivor takes up arms in defense of the new Jewish State." Photograph from *The Palmach Archives: Documentary Photographs of Israel's War of Independence*.

Collection of Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion

Frommer's Guide to Af

Cantor David Frommer, '11

Cantor David Frommer '11, the first Reform cantor to serve as a U.S. Army chaplain, joins a growing number of HUC-JIR students and alumni engaged in military chaplaincy. The Rabbi Richard Sternberger Endowed Scholarship Fund for Military Chaplaincy supports HUC-JIR rabbinical and cantorial students preparing for this career.



Passover

God parted the seas of Army bureaucracy with biblically dramatic timing. I marched into Kabul on April 5, exactly 24 hours before the *Seder* was scheduled to start.

The location of our first *Seder* was at a base inside the Green Zone that abuts the U.S. Embassy. Several Jewish civilians working at the Embassy came to that *Seder* and brought their non-Jewish co-workers as guests. When I introduced myself as a cantor, one of those guests approached me with a surprising request: would I sing *Kol Nidre* for him after the *Seder* was over. When he explained that it was the most beautiful music he'd ever heard and he was in need of some spiritual relief at the moment, I was ready to sing it.

Seeking a quiet place away from the other guests, I sang *Kol Nidre* for this non-Jewish guest on the first night of Passover. And when I finished the prayer, he had started to weep. Reading his biography online that night, I learned that he had served for almost twenty years in some of the harshest war zones in the world, from Angola and Rwanda to Iraq and Afghanistan. Later, he sent me the following email:



1. *Seder* at Camp Eggers, Kabul.
2. Insurgents' attack on hotel in Kabul.
3. Celebrating *Shavuot* with cheesecake.
4. Discovering a *shofar* at the bazaar.

"David, I can't thank you enough for the wonderful seder... But I'm writing more so to say thank you for singing the Kol Nidre for me. You have no idea how much your voice and the voice of a cantor penetrates my soul with beauty. Music doth hath charms to soothe the savage breast...especially mine right now as I seem to have lost my way. Too many wars I've seen, too much suffering in this world, too much sorrow for even a seasoned adventurer and traveler and aid worker that I am [but] I felt very alive for a moment when I heard you sing it. Thank you!!"

This encounter took a truly unforeseen turn when I visited him at the Embassy a few days later. After exchanging life stories for a while, he asked me if I'd gotten to see anything beyond Kabul since I'd arrived. "Well, I do battlefield circulation to a different part of the country every week," he said. "You should join me."

The next morning, I met up with the rest of the USAID team at 0700 outside the Embassy, for our helicopter flight to Kunar Province. The USAID officers' mission for the day was to



meet with the agency's Provincial Reconstruction Team, a cooperative military-civilian effort to help the Afghan government provide democratic governance, rule of law, sustainable agriculture, and basic infrastructure to Kunar's population. One PRT agricultural specialist explained to me that depending on where you go, a community might be using farming techniques from the 1970s, or the 1930s, or even the 1800s – sometimes just down the road from each other.

In the face of such seemingly monumental challenges, I was overwhelmed with admiration for these USAID civilians; bright, creative, and educated young adults who had put their lives at risk yet whom we never seemed to hear about on the news back home. My shining moment actually came during our return flight home, when it was discovered that I was the only one who had thought to bring along a snack, and I enthusiastically distributed *matzah* to all the senior military

Afghanistan and Kuwait

and civilian personnel who had spent the whole day trying to figure out what I was doing on their mission.

I was lucky enough to travel on a more local (and uplifting) outing as the guest of a different *Seder* attendee, a Jewish female sergeant from Texas, serving in a National Guard unit from Georgia. Her mission was to oversee various humanitarian aid projects around the capital, and she invited me along to visit a school that the U.S. was in the process of building. Guided by our Afghan interpreter, who had been disfigured when he stepped on an IED while assisting Marines a few years ago, we drove out to the neighborhood of Khair Khana, in northwest Kabul. The school consisted of one main building, with several adjacent tents, a playground, and an out-house. Due to shortages of space and personnel, the same group of teachers was responsible for teaching every grade level, so students only attended for a few hours each day. Improvements in Afghanistan's educational opportunities have been a really positive story of our involvement



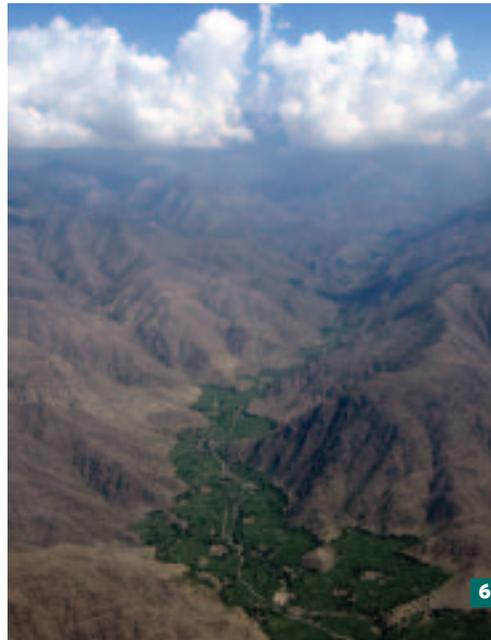
there over the last three years. According to *The New York Times*, 5.2 million boys and, more significantly, 3 million girls are now in school, up from 3.9 and 2 million in 2009. As it happened, we arrived just in time for my favorite class (recess) and I spent a good half-hour demonstrating to the children why there are still faculty members at Yale who wonder how I was ever admitted there. "Let us go into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God," Moses demands of Pharaoh, as the story of our nationhood begins. I never really understood that passage until this visit, but I have now seen the face of true sacrifice in what is a very frightening wilderness.

Shavuot / Memorial Day

My *Shavuot* prayers were answered with perfect timing by The Jewish Welfare Board and KosherTroops.com. These organizations sent boxes of supplies including pocket-sized bibles,

informational *Shavuot* brochures and the most important ritual item for this sacred occasion: tiny, individual cheesecakes. We made *Havdalah*, davened *ma'ariv*, recited Psalm 23 from *Yizkor*, studied Rabbi Harvey Fields' summary of *Shavuot*, and read through the Ten Commandments.

On Memorial Day, the Command Chaplain up at Camp Buehring, a northern installation about thirty miles from the Iraqi border, invited me to participate in an interfaith Service of Remembrance that he and his team were organizing for that evening. There, the USO had partnered with the Army to create a memorial of 6500 paper lanterns arranged in rows across the ground like a glowing cemetery - one lantern for each soldier, sailor, airman, and marine killed in action since September 11, 2001. Next to the memorial and the podium, the faces of the fallen illuminated the concrete surface of a t-wall in a slideshow, while the mournful strains of The Calling's *Wherever You Will Go* and The Band Perry's *If I Die Young* filled the silence.



- 5. School visit, Provincial District 11, Kabul.
- 6. USAID tour flight to Kunar Province.
- 7. Memorial Day at Camp Buehring.

The soldiers participating in the run earlier that evening had been given colored glow-sticks (chem-lights, as they're called in the Army). I watched as they finished the final mile and came into view of the memorial, and you could feel them realize that they had unexpectedly come upon a holy place. Sweaty and winded from the run, visible only by the beams of color that dangled from every part of their running clothes, they explored the memorial. Groups of them clumped together to watch the slideshow while others wandered around the glowing cemetery,

silently communing with memories of the friends they would never see again.

The service was conducted entirely in the dark, illuminated only by the soldiers' chem-lights, the podium, and the slideshow; it felt more like a vigil among friends and family than a formal service in the military. We recited the 23rd Psalm, read passages from the Prophets and the New Testament, and listened to a short memorial message from the Installation Chaplain. A quartet of female soldiers sang "Amazing Grace," and I sang *El Male Rachamim*, after which an honor guard fired memorial volleys and a bugler played taps to conclude the program.

Then something happened that was truly as magical as it was spontaneous. As the crowd dispersed, a soldier walking among the rows of white lanterns removed his chem-light and placed it inside one of the paper bags, which now glowed with color. Another soldier followed and another and another. The whiteness of death and loss literally started to dissolve in a rainbow of



memory and hope. "Like the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud on the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness all around," described the Prophet Ezekiel, in the *Haftarah* portion for *Shavuot*. "Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord."

Just as God's covenant with us is manifest in the creativity and innovation that have sustained this single holiday of *Shavuot* and our entire religion in times of great crisis, so is God's covenant with all of humanity manifest in the fact that, after ten years of war, we can still have hope for a future of peace. When Ruth's eyes saw nothing but sorrow and death in her family, her heart - inexplicably but unmistakably - could see a brighter future ahead. Her embrace of Judaism was more a prayer for what could be than a reaction to what already was. Some prayers we create ourselves and some are out there waiting to find us. I'm glad I was here on Memorial Day for this one to find me. ■

CINCINNATI



Rabbi Rick Jacobs '82, President, Union for Reform Judaism;
Cincinnati Ordination Address, June 2, 2012

Class of 5772, we've been waiting for you to reach this day. No pressure, but we desperately need your idealism, your creativity, your dedication, and your stamina. We've been counting the days, and now, here you are, poised to take your rightful place at the helm of a Jewish community that stands at a crossroads. The Jewish world that you are about to lead is awash in change and challenge. Don't be caretakers of the status quo. This moment in Jewish history demands bold thinking and big ideas. It's time to reinvent the architecture of Jewish life. It's a time to cast a broad net, to explore options rather than to rule things out, and to recreate a movement of meaning and depth. *Naso et Rosh*—Lift up your heads to become the Jewish leaders we need you to be.

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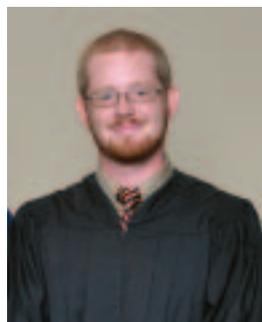


Russell D. Feingold, United States Senator for Wisconsin, 1993-2011; Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters recipient; Cincinnati Graduation Address, June 3, 2012

Our task, my friends, is to heal divisions in our community that are making it impossible for us to accomplish great things together. We must renew our commitment to community in the spirit of it being all inclusive. Our efforts must be everyone's and our accomplishments must be everyone's. You can play a role in recreating common ground within our communities and within our nation. However it is done, the goal has to be clear. Not necessarily to build a magnificent beautiful building, but to further meaningful causes in order to build a beautiful community. This is not my charge to you, but it is my request and my plea. My prayer for you is that you experience joy as you go about repairing our community.



Doctor of Philosophy in Judaic, Hebraic, and Cognate Studies



Master of Arts in Judaic, Hebraic, and Cognate Studies



Master of Philosophy in Judaic, Hebraic, and Cognate Studies

Shabbat Service and Rabbinical Ordination at Plum Street Temple in Cincinnati
Rabbinical Class of 2012 is pictured on front page



A tribute to the 40th anniversary of the ordination of Rabbi Sally Priesand (at right) as the first woman rabbi in America

LOS ANGELES



Rabbi William Cutter '65, Ph.D., Founding Director, Kalsman Institute on Judaism and Health; Steinberg Professor Emeritus of Human Relations and Professor Emeritus of Modern Hebrew Literature and Education, HUC-JIR/Jack H. Skirball Campus/Los Angeles; Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters recipient; Los Angeles Ordination Address, May 13, 2012

The stability in Jewish culture is the stability of themes and their variations, for Jews, of texts and their commentaries, of primary ideas – even ideas that stand behind our gods – some kind of Rock that guarantees our authenticity and ultimately our warrant for leadership. For we are not leaders because we have the best ideas, or the truest tradition, or the most noble values. We are not leaders because we eat a certain diet, though we must; or think twice about driving on Shabbat when we must. We are leaders of a culture that understands culture.

▶▶▶▶ huc.edu/gradord/12/laord



Rabbinical Class of 2012

Not pictured:

Orly Barad, Master of Arts in Jewish Studies recipient



Professor Sara S. Lee, MARE '76, Director Emerita, Rhea Hirsch School of Education; Project Leader, Mandel Initiative for Visionary Leadership; and Adjunct Professor Emerita of Jewish Education, HUC-JIR/Jack H. Skirball Campus/Los Angeles; Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters recipient; Los Angeles Graduation Address, May 14, 2012

To the graduates today I say with confidence that your education at HUC-JIR has provided you with many of the skills and much of the knowledge that will allow you to be an effective leader, and that is incredibly important and necessary. To be the visionary leader, blending the roles of priest and prophet and exercising them as circumstances demand, these different kinds of leadership roles require more. That kind of leadership, that takes on the challenges facing us head on, that holds out a vision of what should and can be, that takes risks and yet responds to the needs of individuals and the reality of communities as they are, demands that you know where you stand on the core values and beliefs of Judaism, the practices that define a Jewish community, and the enduring aspirations we have as a Jewish People. These are the commitments that will shape your vision of your own leadership and the impact you want to have on Jewish life and the Jewish future. ▶▶▶▶ huc.edu/gradord/12/lagrad



Master of Arts in Jewish Nonprofit Management recipients



Master of Arts in Jewish Education recipients

NEW YORK



Rabbi Eric H. Yoffie '74, Past President, Union for Reform Judaism (1996-2012); Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters recipient;
New York Graduation Address, May 3, 2012

I believe in the power of leadership. I believe that a people dies from the top. And I believe that the role of religious leadership is fundamental and decisive. In saying this I do not minimize in any way the part that volunteer leaders and national institutions play in Jewish life. After all, I headed such an institution, relying heavily on the skills and insights of our dedicated volunteers who lovingly held me up. Nonetheless, it is our *klei kodesh* who are central - the rabbis, cantors, and educators who do the holy work of serving the Jewish people and supporting them in their religious life; they are most important of all.

▶▶▶▶ huc.edu/gradord/12/nygrad

Cantor Angela Warnick Buchdahl '99, Rab '01, Senior Cantor, Central Synagogue, New York, New York Ordination Address, May 6, 2012

I imagine that Moses, and Rabbi Akiva, if they were to time travel to 2012, would look at Jewish life today and be mystified at the changes. It would in some ways be as unrecognizable to Rabbi Akiva, as *his* teachings were to Moses in that *bet midrash*. And yet, I think they would be smiling at the vitality of Jewish life and the innovations in our time. Jewish memory was never meant to be frozen or finished. Jews don't live in *history*. We live in *Memory* - in remembrances that are authentically rooted in tradition, but in each generation, evoked in new ways. If we want Judaism to be essential today and tomorrow, we must continue to transform it. This is our task, as rabbis and cantors. And this is *your* generation to shape - what impact do you want to make?

▶▶▶▶ huc.edu/gradord/12/nyord



Rabbinical and Cantorial Classes of 2012



Master of Arts in Religious Education recipients



Service of Ordination at Congregation Emanu-El of the City of New York

HONORARY DOCTORS OF HUMANE LETTERS

Cincinnati

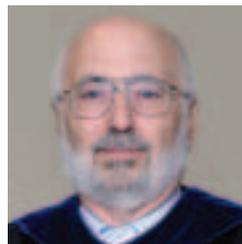
■ Ruth Behar, Ph.D.,
Victor Haim Perera
Collegiate Professor
of Anthropology,
University of Michigan



■ Russell D. Feingold, *United States Senator for Wisconsin, 1993-2011* (pictured on page 18)



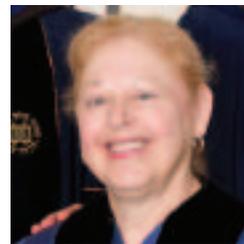
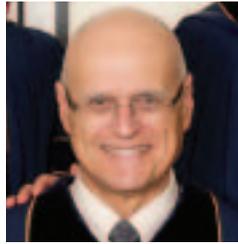
■ Rabbi Edward A. Goldman, Ph.D.,
Professor Emeritus
Israel and Ida Bettan
Chair in Midrash and
Homiletics, HUC-JIR/
Cincinnati



■ Stephen A. Kaufman, Ph.D.,
Professor Emeritus of Bible and
Cognate Literature,
HUC-JIR/Cincinnati

Los Angeles

■ Rabbi Lewis M. Barth, Ph.D.,
Professor Emeritus of Midrash and
Related Literature and
Former Dean, HUC-JIR/
Jack H. Skirball Campus/
Los Angeles



■ Judith Baskin, Ph.D.,
Knight Professor in Humanities and
Associate Dean of Humanities,
University of Oregon

■ Rabbi William Cutter, Ph.D.,
Founding Director, Kalsman Institute on
Judaism and Health; and Steinberg
Professor Emeritus of Human Relations
and Professor Emeritus of Modern Hebrew
Literature and Education, HUC-JIR/
Jack H. Skirball Campus/Los Angeles
(pictured on page 19)

■ Professor Sara S. Lee, Director Emerita,
Rhea Hirsch School of Education; Project
Leader, Mandel Initiative for Visionary
Leadership; and Adjunct Professor
Emerita of Jewish Education, HUC-JIR/
Jack H. Skirball Campus/Los Angeles
(pictured on page 19)

New York

■ Professor Jo Kay,
Director Emerita, New York School of
Education, HUC-JIR/New York



■ Rabbi Stanley Nash, Ph.D.,
Professor Emeritus of Hebrew Literature,
HUC-JIR/New York

■ Peter J. Weidhorn,
Immediate Past Chairman, Board of
Trustees, Union for Reform Judaism



■ Rabbi Eric H. Yoffie, Past President,
Union for Reform Judaism (1996-2012)
(pictured on page 20)

Mazel Tov

to our Alumni Honorary Doctorate recipients (see next page)

25 years of dedicated service to the Jewish people

in recognition of their

Rabbinical Alumni – Doctor of Divinity, *honoris causa*

Donna Greenfield Adler
Esther Adler
Richard Mark Baroff
Joseph Robert Black
Barnett Joseph Brickner
Lester B. Bronstein
Michael S. Datz

Beth D. Davidson
Billy Dreskin
Louis N. Feldstein
Jeffrey Loren Glickman
Stephen D. Gold
Jordan E. Goldson
Lynn Goldstein

Donald Goor
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David R. Levy

Education Alumni – Doctor of Jewish Religious Education, *honoris causa*

Lisa Lieberman Barzilai, RJE
Elliot Fein, RJE

Melanie Cole Goldberg, RJE
Chani Oppenheim

Harriet Vogel

Graduate Studies Alumnus – Graduate Medallion

C. Hassell Bullock, Ph.D.

Honoring our Alumni



Doctor of Divinity, *honoris causa*, at Founders' Day, Cincinnati - March 28, 2012



Doctor of Jewish Nonprofit Management, *honoris causa*, Los Angeles - May 14, 2012



Doctor of Jewish Religious Education, *honoris causa*, Los Angeles - May 14, 2012



left: Graduate Medallion, Cincinnati - June 3, 2012

right: Doctor of Jewish Religious Education, *honoris causa*, New York - May 3, 2012



Doctor of Music, *honoris causa*, New York - May 3, 2012



Doctor of Divinity, *honoris causa*, Los Angeles - May 14, 2012



Doctor of Divinity, *honoris causa*, New York - May 3, 2012

Prizes

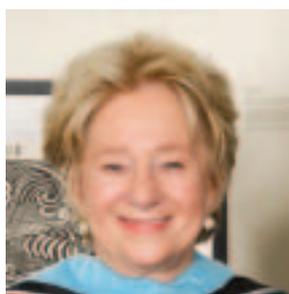


The 2012 **Dr. Bernard Heller Prize** was awarded by Ruth O. Freedlander, Co-Trustee of the Dr. Bernard Heller Foundation, to **Stumbling Stones** and its co-creator **Gunter Demnig** at Graduation in New York, May 3, 2012. Stumbling Stones memorializes the Jewish victims of the Holocaust and sustains awareness of the consequences of Nazism's genocide.

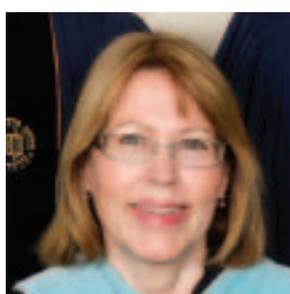
Ruth O. Freedlander: Sculptor Gunter Demnig came up with an ingenious way to compel contemporary Germans to remember the past. Small bronze cobblestones would be inscribed with the names, birthdates, and places and dates of death for Jews, and situated in front of the buildings where Jews had once lived. These *stolpersteine* – stumbling stones – would literally stop people in their tracks and confront them with the erased history of the Jewish victims of mass murder. Today, over 25,000 of these memorial cobblestones can be found on the sidewalks of 600 cities in Germany and across Europe. Each individual stone – symbolic of each single life – restores the identity of some of the Jews who were reduced to anonymity among the six million victims of the Nazis' Final Solution. Each stone teaches all of us today of the ultimate consequences of intolerance, injustice, and indifference.

The 2012 **Roger E. Joseph Prize** was presented to **Edesia Global Nutrition Solutions** and accepted by **Navyn Salem**, Executive Director (center), by the daughters of Roger E. Joseph: (from left) Ellen Joseph, Roxanne Leopold, and Linda Karshan at Ordination in New York, May 6, 2012:

Ellen Joseph: Navyn Salem has a sacred mission: to eradicate the malnutrition that is afflicting those most vulnerable in the developing world. Her vision has brought forth Edesia Global Nutrition Solutions, a non-profit producer of ready-to-use foods that is based in Providence, Rhode Island. Through the production and distribution of these life-giving, nutritional resources, Edesia is giving children and other vulnerable populations the life-saving tools to survive and thrive.



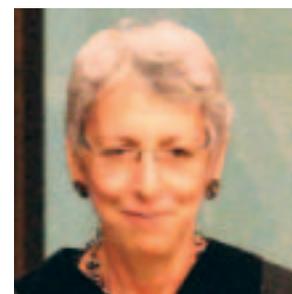
The **American Jewish Distinguished Service Award** was presented to **Metuka Benjamin**, Director of Education, Stephen S. Wise Temple & Schools and Milken Community High School, Los Angeles, at Graduation in Los Angeles, May 14, 2012.



The **Sherut La-Am Award** was presented to **Rivka Dori, MAHE**, Director Emerita of Hebrew Studies, HUC-JIR/Jack H. Skirball Campus/Los Angeles, at Graduation in Los Angeles, May 14, 2012.



The **American Jewish Distinguished Service Award** was presented to **Larry Moses**, Senior Philanthropic Advisor and President Emeritus, The Wexner Foundation, at Graduation in Cincinnati, June 3, 2012.



The **American Jewish Distinguished Service Award** was presented to **Gail Twersky Reimer, Ph.D.**, Executive Director, Jewish Women's Archive at Graduation in New York, May 3, 2012.

Rabbi David Ellenson, Ph.D., *President*

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The Sexuality Spectrum

On view through June 28, 2013

HUC-JIR Museum, One West Fourth Street, New York, NY 10012

Admission: Free; Photo ID required for security

Group Tours and Information: 212-824-2298;

hucjirmuseum@huc.edu

huc.edu/museums/ny/sexualityspectrum

"The works in this exhibition – disturbing, profound, enlightening, provocative, and beautiful — self-consciously point to and capture the connection between aesthetics and morality that the great German Jewish neo-Kantian philosopher Hermann Cohen defined as the essence of great art. Cohen believed that art at its highest represents a human attempt of ethical aspiration — to construct and represent the world as it ought to be. The common thread that unites all these works is a principled intent on the part of these artists to employ art as a tool to create a messianic world of justice for all regardless of sexual orientation, family status, gender, or age. Indeed, it is this self-evident ethical aspiration that marks this exhibition as so powerful, inspirational, and unique."

— Rabbi David Ellenson, Ph.D., HUC-JIR President

The Sexuality Spectrum

at the HUC-JIR Museum in New York offers a groundbreaking exploration of sexual orientation through the creativity of over fifty contemporary artists. This exhibition explores a broad range of subjects, including the evolving social and religious attitudes toward sexuality; issues of alienation, marginalization, and inclusion; the impact on the family, child-rearing, and life stages; violence and persecution; AIDS/HIV; and the influence of the LGBTQI community on the Jewish and larger world. HUC-JIR's Institute for Judaism and Sexual Orientation and the Blaustein Center for Pastoral Counseling have guided the development of this collaborative project. Faculty and students have contributed essays reflective of their academic disciplines for the catalog and are integrating the exhibition into their teaching and research. Dr. Nancy Wiener, Director of the Blaustein Center, is incorporating the show into professional development programs in the area of pastoral care. This exhibition exemplifies the College-Institute's and the Reform Movement's shared commitment to free and open inquiry, inclusivity and outreach, and advocacy on behalf of human rights and the eradication of sexual discrimination.

Clockwise from top left:

Alfred J. Winn, *Akedah*, black-and-white silver gelatin print, 1995; Archie Rand, *David's Sorrow*, acrylic on canvas, 2002; Dorit Jordan Dotan, *Ruth & Naomi*, photograph, 2012; Linda Soberman, *Empty Chairs*, mixed media installation, 2012; David Wander, *Come My Beloved*, acrylic and ink on paper, 2010

Presented by the Irma L. and Abram S. Croll Center for Jewish Learning and Culture, with the support of George, z"l, and Mildred Weissman.

