



The Center for Jewish Studies Silver Anniversary 25 Years of Education

It has been 25 years since the Center for Jewish Studies was established at the University of Florida. During the 1998-99 school year, the Center will celebrate its 25th anniversary with festivities, including music, a film festival, and renowned guest lecturers. As we look forward to the anniversary events we thought it worthwhile to take a look back. – Editor

Since 1973, the Center for Jewish Studies has offered UF students the opportunity to study Judaism, Jewish history and culture, and Hebrew. Created in response to the increasing number of Jewish students on the UF campus, the Center was born as the result of an informal meeting that included UF professors Sam Proctor and Barry Mesch.

For the first ten-years, under the direction of both Dr. Barry Mesch and Professor Shaya Isenberg, the Center served to promote Jewish Studies and to work with the UF library to acquire Judaica. As a result of their hard work, the Mishkin collection of Judaica and Hebraica was acquired, the Price Library of Judaica was established and Robert Singerman was hired as the Jewish Studies Bibliographer.

Sea changes in both the Center's academic and cultural programming occurred in 1985, when Dr. Warren Bargad, a highly regarded Brandeis Ph.D. and former Dean of the

Spertus College of Judaica in Chicago, was appointed Director of the Center for Jewish Studies. Support staff was arranged enabling Dr. Bargad to focus on developing the Center and Jewish Studies at UF.

On the academic front, the Center expanded its course offerings for the 1986-87 academic year and managed to interest a good number of students. More importantly, a Minor (or Certificate) in Jewish Studies was offered. Since 1986, the number of students working toward a Minor in Jewish Studies has ranged from 20 to 50 annually.

Additions to the Jewish Studies faculty occurred in 1988, with the appointment of two adjunct lecturers, Rabbi Howard Greenstein and Rabbi Allen Lehmann. The Hebrew language faculty gained two new members in 1990 with the hiring of Professors Shlomo Lederman and Avraham Balaban. The Hebrew program was subsequently expanded to include Hebrew literature courses.

Professor Yaacov Bar-Siman-Tov, an eminent Political Scientist from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, became the first of several Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence during the 1988-89 academic year.

During these few years the Jewish Studies faculty grew to eighteen members—five core members, and 13 affiliated and adjunct members. *(continued on page 2)*

The History of Jewish Studies at the University of Florida – An Interview with Dr. Samuel Proctor

There has been a Jewish presence on this campus almost from the very beginnings of the University. As early as 1913, President Murphree said in a report that he knew



Dr. Proctor,
Distinguished Service
Professor of History
Emeritus, was
fundamental to the
creation of the
Center for Jewish
Studies.

that there were at least three Jewish students on campus. By the 1920's there were about 100 Jewish students and the first fraternities emerged. Pi Lambda Phi and Tau Epsilon Phi were both organized in 1925.

As the University continues to grow we go from less than 1000 students on this campus in 1920 to about 3200 on the eve of W.W.II, the number of Jewish students increases proportionately—around 12% of the total student population. After the war, as a result of the G.I. bill, huge numbers of students come to the University. By around 1950, some 20-plus years before a formal center for Jewish Studies is organized, there were 800-900 Jewish students at the University.

In the meantime, Hillel had come to the University of Florida. It came in 1935. After the war, for the first time *(continued on page 9)*

(25th Anniversary cont'd)

During the 1986-87 academic year, the idea of offering a bachelor of arts degree in Jewish studies was discussed with the Dean's office. Interested students enrolled for the B.A. through Inter-Disciplinary Studies while the Board of Regents considered the proposal.

May of 1987 marked a turning point in the Center's history when the first B.A. in Jewish studies was awarded. Final approval for the B.A. degree came in 1989 making it possible for UF undergraduates to choose Jewish studies as a major or minor. From 1986 to 1998 there have been 46 majors and 74 minors in Jewish studies. Currently, graduate students can earn an M.A. in Jewish studies in conjunction with a master's in history or religion.

Regarding cultural contributions, the generosity of several donors has enabled the Center to sponsor and cosponsor many talented artists and well-known scholars for the benefit of both the UF and Gainesville communities. With the donors' support, the Center established an annual lecture series.

Monies were also donated to create the Kolko Memorial Scholarship and the Norman Shulevitz Foundation Scholarship. These endowments provide scholarship money to students wishing to study at an

Israeli university. Encouraging and facilitating overseas study in Israel has become a primary function of the Center. Since 1986, the Center has helped nearly 50 students realize their desire to study abroad in Israel.

Some highlights from the many outstanding programs of the past include; the 1988 visit of Elie Wiesel; the Spring 1989 "Colloquium of Women Writers" cosponsored with the Department of English and featuring authors Esther Broner, Francine Prose, Marjorie Sandor (Ms. Sandor later joined the UF creative writing program as an Assistant Professor of English) and Lynne Sharon Schwartz; the Jewish Arts Festival in 1990; and the 1996 visit of acclaimed Israeli poet Yehuda Amichai. Lecturers have included; Arthur Green, Yehuda Bauer, Benny Morris, Carol Meyers and many more. In twenty-five years the Center for Jewish studies has evolved from a loosely coordinated program into a real *Center* for Jewish studies, both in the literal and academic sense. After two location moves, the Center now has its own offices that serve the needs of Jewish studies majors, minors, and faculty. Most importantly, the Center for Jewish Studies has become a vital part of both the UF and Gainesville community, recognized for its academic and cultural contributions.

Fall 1998 Silver Anniversary Lecture Series

Linda Zisquit

Sept. 8, 1998



Poet, author and translator. The author of numerous essays and four books of poetry (two of original work and two of Israeli poets in translation), her work has appeared in several anthologies and journals in the US, UK, France and Israel. She is currently a Literary Editor for Tikkun Magazine.

Dr. Vojtech Blodig

Nov. 3, 1998



Eminent Holocaust Scholar. He has published several papers on the themes of fascism and anti-fascism, and the political persecution and genocide of the Jews. Educated at the Faculty of Philosophy of Charles University in Prague, he currently works as the Senior Historian at the Theresienstadt Ghetto Museum in Terezin, Czech Republic.

Yael Dayan

Nov. 4, 1998



Daughter of General Moshe Dayan, politician, peace activist, journalist, and feminist. She writes political commentary for Israeli and international newspapers, was elected a Labor Party Member of Knesset in 1996, and was awarded the Bruno Kreisky Human Rights Award in 1991.

Spring 1998 Lecture Series

Sybil Milton



Historian Dr. Sybil Milton

The Center for Jewish Studies was honored to host Dr. Sybil Milton, the Vice President of Independent Experts Commission: Switzerland-World War II for a lecture on the "*Photography of the Holocaust*," on January 22, 1998.

Dr. Milton received her B.A. at Barnard College (1962), her M.A. (1963) and Ph.D. (1971) in modern German history at Stanford University. After teaching at Stanford, she was affiliated with the Commission for the History of Parliamentary Parties in Bonn and HIKO (Historical Commission) in Berlin. She has been affiliated with the United States Memorial Museum since 1986 and served as Senior Historian of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. until 1997.

Dr. Milton, among her many books, co-authored *Art of the Holocaust* (1981) which received the National Jewish Book Award in Visual Arts, 1982. She also wrote "Women and the Holocaust," in *When Biology Became Destiny: Women in Weimar and Nazi Germany* (1984). Her most recent book is *In Fitting Memory: The Art and Politics of Holocaust Memorials*, published by Wayne State University, November, 1991. She is currently preparing a volume for University of North Carolina Press on photography of Nazi Germany and the Holocaust as historical evidence.

Katya Gibel Azoulay

The Center for Jewish Studies was pleased to present Dr. Gibel Azoulay, Chair of the Africana Studies Concentration and Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Grinnel College, for a lecture entitled, "*Jewishness after Mount Sinai: Jews, Blacks and the (Multi)Racial Category*."

Dr. Gibel Azoulay is the author of *Black, Jewish and Interracial: It's Not the Color of Your Skin but the Race of Your Kin and Other Myths of Identity*. She speaks nationally on Black, Jewish and Multiracial Identities.

Gibel Azoulay holds a Ph.D. in Cultural Anthropology from Duke University (the first Black person to have completed the graduate studies program in Cultural Anthropology at Duke.) She received her B.A. and M.A. in African Studies from Hebrew University of Jerusalem and holds dual Israeli and American citizenship.



Cultural Anthropologist Katya Gibel Azoulay

Spring 1998 Co-Sponsored Events

Rabbi Shefa Gold

The Center for Jewish Studies, Hillel Foundation and the Ruach Chayim Institute were honored to present a public teaching with Rabbi Shefa Gold, *"The Exodus as a Model for Spiritual Growth,"* on February 19, 1998.

Rabbi Gold is a leader in Aleph: Alliance for Jewish Renewal. She received her ordination from both the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College and from Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi. She is a composer and performer of spiritually-oriented music and has produced six albums.

Her liturgy has been published in several new prayer books and in addition to her musical contribution, Rabbi Gold has been developing the theory and art of chanting and the practice of silence in the context of Jewish Tradition. She has been serving as a consultant to congregations across the country teaching leadership and community-building skills, spiritual practice, and an experiential and personal approach to Torah and liturgy.



Rabbi Shefa Gold

Dr. Xu Xin

The Department of African & Asian Languages & Literatures and the Center for Jewish Studies welcomed Dr. Xu Xin, Director of the Center for Judaic Studies at Nanjing University, China, for a lecture entitled, *"China's Attitude Toward Israel and the Jews"* on April 3, 1998.

Renee-Marie Croose Parry

The Center for Women's Studies and Gender Research and the Center for Jewish Studies were pleased to present Croose Parry on April 2, 1998 for a lecture entitled, *"Persecution, Exile and Emancipation: Transcendence and the Human Condition."*

Croose Parry settled in Gainesville in 1985 after a 23 year stay in London. She was born in Munich where she studied art history and German literature. Her mother's Jewish ancestry forced her to flee to Brazil to avoid Nazi persecution.

In 1946 she settled in Washington, D.C. and then studied in Berkeley, California before moving to New York at the end of 1948 to work for War Relief Services in the resettlement of displaced persons in the US. Since then she has published several articles and lectured internationally. She continues to participate in voluntary organizations involved in ecological, peace and justice movements.

She is currently engaged in writing her autobiography, which will include a wide-ranging analysis of the contemporary world predicament in relation to scientific, socio-political and philosophical criteria, and an outline of her perception of imperatives for human survival. The first two chapters on her youth in Hitler's Germany and her life as an exile in Brazil were published in an anthology titled *Odyssey of Exile*.

Mimi Feigelson & Rabbi David Zeller

The Center, Hillel Foundation and the Ruach Chayim Institute co-sponsored a Public Teaching with Mimi Feigelson & Rabbi David Zeller entitled, *"Passover: Liberating The Body and the Spirit,"* on April 2, 1998.

Mimi Feigelson is a teacher of the texts and practices of Hassidism, and Head of Women's Studies at Yakar Institute in Jerusalem.

Rabbi David Zeller, Executive Director of Yakar Institute in Jerusalem, is a teacher and performer of Hassidic songs and melodies, an enchanting storyteller and guide to Jewish mysticism.

Fall 1997 Lecture Series

Maurice Friedman



Religious studies scholar Maurice Friedman

The Center for Jewish Studies welcomed Maurice Friedman, Professor Emeritus of Religious Studies, Philosophy and Comparative Literature at San Diego State University on September 15, for a discussion of Jewish philosopher Martin Buber entitled, "*Dialogue and consciousness: The Legacy of Martin Buber.*" In addition to his academic work, Professor Friedman is also co-director of the Institute for Dialogical Psychotherapy in San Diego.

With an impressive range of expertise encompassing several academic disciplines, Dr. Friedman has taught religion, literature, psychology and philosophy at Temple University, Sarah Lawrence College, the Washington (D.C.) School of Psychiatry and the New School for Social Research in New York City. In 1987-88 Friedman was a Senior Fulbright Lecturer at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in Israel. He is the author of 20 books.

Yehuda Bauer

Jewish Studies faculty and staff were proud to welcome Yehuda Bauer, Professor Emeritus of Holocaust Studies at the Hebrew University on October 21, 1997. He spoke about Holocaust remembrance in a lecture entitled, "*Will the Holocaust be Remembered in the 21st Century?*"

Professor Bauer is Founding Chairman of the Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of anti-Semitism. He was born in Prague, Czechoslovakia, and immigrated to Palestine in 1939. He interrupted his studies at Cardiff College in Wales to participate in the Israeli War of Independence.

Books written by Professor Bauer include *The Holocaust in Historical Perspective*, *American Jewry and the Holocaust*, and most recently, *Jews For Sale? Nazi Jewish Negotiations 1939-1945*.



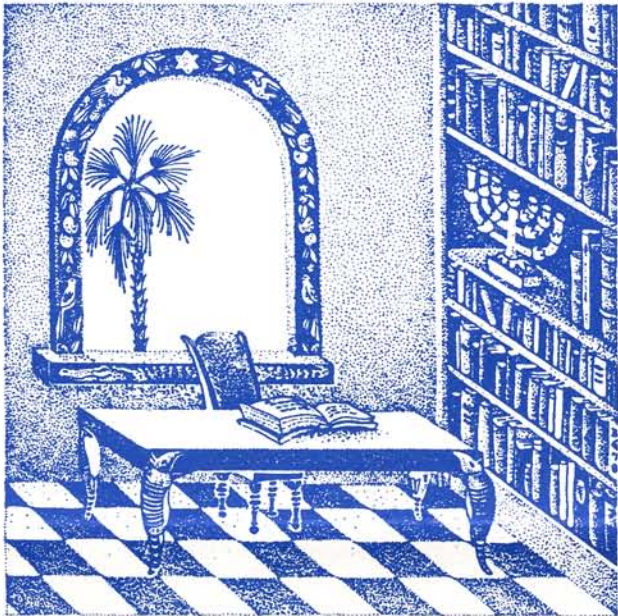
Holocaust Historian Yehuda Bauer

PRICE LIBRARY OF JUDAICA NEWS

Location Update—

Dale Canelas, Director of University Libraries

It was reported in the 1997 edition of Amudim that the Price Library of Judaica, temporarily moved into the Education Library during the renovation of Smathers Library, would be returning to Smathers upon completion of the renovation. – Editor



The library administration has extended the Judaica Library's "temporary" location assignment in the Education Library for at least the next five-years because adequate space is not available in either Smathers Library or Library West.

The renovation of Smathers Library resulted in some additional stack space on levels three, four and five, where the Latin American and Judaica collections would be located but it was clear that the additional space would not be sufficient to provide growth space for both collections. There were several alternatives for dealing with the situation. Both collections could have been returned to Smathers Library, but neither collection would have had any growth space. Both collections could have selected a substantial number of volumes to place in storage, but the number of volumes removed initially and thereafter on an annual basis threatened the collections' integrity. Both collections contain a large number of volumes printed in languages other than English. This makes browsing more important and the removal of a large number of volumes into storage would seriously decrease the collections' utility.

The objective was to find a solution that would allow most of the material in both collections to remain on campus in active collections.

The Latin American collection had to be returned from Marston Science Library because it was preventing the science collections from expanding.

The Judaica Library, however, had sufficient space to continue to grow at a reasonable rate for at least five-years in the Education Library.

Price Librarian Honored

Only two librarians in the State University System of Florida received Professorial Excellence Program awards this year, and both work at the University of Florida.

Carol Drum and **Robert Singerman** were honored by faculty members in December, 1997, for their excellent contributions since achieving the highest rank of University Librarian.

Robert Singerman, bibliographer and librarian for the Isser and Rae Price Library of Judaica, was recognized for outstanding accomplishments in professional development and scholarship.

Singerman has published five full-length books since 1986 and is regarded as the most distinguished active Judaica bibliographer in the world!

Dale Canelas, director of university libraries said, "He is a gifted collection manager whose contributions to developing and interpreting the collections at UF are highly respected by his peers and by the faculty. He is a leader in working through the problems inherent in developing collections."

Over the years, the Florida Legislature has sought ways to recognize and reward the contributions of those state employees who put forth extra effort in carrying out their duties. The PEP awards were developed to recognize and reward individuals who are highly respected by their peers for the quality and scope of their contributions to their disciplines.



Price Librarian Robert Singerman

REMEMBERING BEN GREENBAUM

Binyamin ben Mordekhai Y'chi-eil Hakohein v'Sarah

1917-1997

In 1986 Mr. Benjamin Greenbaum and the Greenbaum Family of Tampa gave a gift of \$1,000,000 to the Center for Jewish Studies.

There are two different stories about how Ben Greenbaum came to the United States in 1938 or 1939. One of them is a story that Ben told his family for years and is definitely not true. The other story he told his family only within the last few years and it is just incredible.

Ben's life was full of incredible stories. He did things most of us would never dream of. But then again, Ben saw things that most of us never see and they left a permanent impression on him.

The story that is not true is that a wealthy man put \$250,000 into an account in different people's names and that allowed them, Ben included, to get into this country. That never happened.

What probably did happen was that Ben was recruited by the OSS, which was the precursor to the CIA, to go behind the German lines. Ben was brought to the States from Belgium, trained at Fort Richey, and sent back to Europe with a Nazi uniform. His job was to map out the rail routes of the French underground. Ben gave this information both to the Allies and, on his own, to the Jewish underground.

When Ben was in the south of France he saw his sister and her husband being loaded into a boxcar for deportation. Since he was masquerading as a Nazi soldier, he could do nothing about it. This experience scarred him for the rest of his life. Ben tried to make up for not being able to save his sister. Ben gave his children everything. He said that he wanted to leave them a great *y'rushah*, (inheritance) so that they wouldn't see the things that he saw. Ben was instrumental in bringing a boxcar to the Tampa Bay Holocaust Museum as a permanent reminder of his sister being taken away.

While the events are not clear, Ben must have shown

the strains of his work after this event for he was discovered by the Nazis, interrogated and tortured. Ben spent at least one Passover in a detention camp. After that, he made sure his family was together every year for the seder.

Ben was born in Dinov, Poland, in 1917. He came from a large family that was in the egg business. Ben left home at a young age and went to Austria with some friends. When the Nazis marched into Austria, Ben went to Belgium and hooked up with a kosher butcher who helped him find jobs. It was in Belgium that Ben was recruited by the OSS.

After the war, Ben went back to Europe with the United Nations Relief Agency. While he was there, Ben

looked for hidden Jewish children and paid off their protectors with fake diamonds. Ben helped them to reach Palestine. He also traveled around Europe and to Siberia where he found his parents. Ben carried his father on his back to the train. His mother died in his arms. Ben managed to find 39 members of his family and bring them to the United States.

Ben came to Tampa in 1958 and went into the cold storage business. In the 1960's, much of the meat that was imported into this country came on Israeli ships. At the time of the Six-Day War, Ben was part of a plan to load weapons onto those ships after they unloaded their cargo at the port of Tampa.

Ben's life focused on his family and being Jewish. Ben and his wife Helen had a very traditional home. Ben was a

President of Knesses Israel synagogue and leader of the JCC and the Federation, as well as being a major donor to both organizations. He was one of three original sponsors of the Hillel Day School.

Ben kept his family close. Together with the Jewish community, family was the bedrock after all the turmoil.

He leaves a legacy of courage, commitment and strength that his family and community will draw on for many years to come.



Lecture Highlights 1986-1998

1998: **Dr. Sybil Milton**, Holocaust Historian, "Photography of the Holocaust." **Dr. Katya Gibel Azoulay**, Grinnell College, "Jewishness after Mount Sinai: Jews, Blacks and the (Multi)Racial Category." **Rabbi Shefa Gold**, "The Exodus as a Model for Spiritual Growth." **Dr. Xu Xin**, Nanjing University, China, "China's Attitude Toward Israel and the Jews." **Mimi Feigelson & Rabbi David Zeller**, Yakar Institute, Israel, "Passover: Liberating the Body and the Spirit." **Renee-Marie Croose Parry**, independent Author, "Persecution, Exile and Emancipation: Transcendence and the Human Condition."

1997: **Maurice Friedman**, San Diego State University, "Dialogue and Consciousness: The Legacy of Martin Buber." **Yehuda Bauer**, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, "Will the Holocaust be Remembered in the 21st Century?" **Nehemia Polen**, Hebrew College, "Sacred Time, Sacred Space, Sacred Person." **Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett**, New York University, "New Formations in Jewish Cultural Studies."

1996: **Dr. Benny Morris**, "New Perspectives on Modern Israeli History." **Yehuda Amichai**, Israeli Poet.

1995: **Dr. Daphna Sharfman**, human rights activist and chairperson of the Israeli Labor Party's Civil Rights Committee, "Israeli Society and Civil Rights." **Dr. Alvin Rosenfeld**, Professor of English and director of Jewish Studies at Indiana University, "The Last Song of the Last Jew." **Dr. Itamar Singer**, Tel Aviv University, "The Conflict Between Philistines and Israelites in the Ancient World." **Irena Klepfisz**, independent Author, "Yiddish and Jewish Secular Culture." **Rafael Rosenzweig**, independent Author, "From German Nationalism to Jewish Identity."

1994: **Dr. James Young**, University of Massachusetts, "The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials in History." **Dr. Ian Lustick**, University of Pennsylvania, "Jewish Fundamentalism in Israel." **Professor Steven Katz**, Cornell University, "The Uniqueness of the Holocaust." **Professor Laura Levitt**, Temple University, "Jewish Feminism(s): Towards the 21st Century." **Professor Aharon Appelfeld**, Ben Gurion University, "Illusions and Wishful Thinking—A Jewish Motif." **Dr. Jonathan Boyarin**, New School of Social Research, "A Storyteller's World."

1993: **Deborah Lipstadt**, Emory University, "Denying the Holocaust: The Secret Assault on Truth and Memory." **Marcia Falk**, Stanford University, "Sensuality and Spirituality: Women's Voices in Jewish Literary Tradition."

1992: **Professor Norman Stillman**, SUNY, "The Impact of 1492 on Jewish History and Culture." **Professor Kay Kaufman Shelemay**, Harvard University, "Song and Remembrance in the Sephardi Tradition."

1991: **Professor Leonard Dinnerstein**, University of Arizona Department of History, "Anti-Semitism in America." **Professor Raul Hilberg**, University of Vermont, "The Origins of the Final Solution." **Dr. Ellen Umansky**, Hebrew Union College, "Modern Jewish Women's Spirituality." **Dr. Anton Shammas**, University of Michigan, "The Bilingual Solution: A Vindication of the Mediterranean Poetics." **Dr. Jacob Neusner**, "The Future of the Judeo-Christian Dialogue." **Jewish Arts Series:** **Professor Joseph Gutmann**, Wayne State University, lectured on the History of Jewish Art. **Professor Patricia Erens**, Rosary College, Chicago, "Jewish Comic Figures in Movie History." **Yehuda Amichai**, Israeli poet. **Jaimie Bronzstein and his Klezmer Musicians.**

1990: **Professor Steven M. Cohen**, Queens College, "American Judaism and the Crisis of Modernity." **Professor Deborah Dash Moore**, Vassar College, "The Making of Jewish Miami: Jewish Migration in the Post-War Decades." **Professor Jonathan Sarna**, Brandeis University, "The Struggle to Preserve American Judaism: 19th Century Strategies and Their 20th Century Implications." **Charles Silberman**, independent Author, "Will Our Grandchildren be Jewish?—The Future of the American Jewish Community."

1989: **Professor Mark Cohen**, Princeton University, "Jews and Arabs in History." **Professor Yaacov Bar-Siman-Tov**, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, "Current Political Views on the Arab-Israeli Conflict." **Professor Emmanuel Sivan**, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, "Jewish and Islamic Fundamentalism in the Middle East Today."

1988: **Elie Wiesel**, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, "Legends of Our Time." **A.B. Yehoshua**, Israeli novelist and essayist, "The Israeli Writer Confronts His Society." **Eli Evans**, Southern Jewish historian and President of the Charles H. Revson Foundation, NY, "Judah P. Benjamin: The Jewish Confederate." **Colloquium of Jewish Women Writers**, including, **Marjorie Sandor**, **Francine Prose**, **Esther Broner**, and **Lynne Sharon Schwartz**. **Professor Paula Hyman**, Yale University, "Was there a 'World of our Mothers'? The Experience of Jewish Women in America." **Professor Yedida K. Stillman**, State University of NY, "Traditional Costumes of Moroccan Jewish Women."

1987: Film Series: “Israeli Films of Israeli Novels” and four Holocaust films.

1986: Kenneth Stein, Emory University, “The Dual Obligation and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1917-1986.” **Robert Alter**, University of California at Berkeley, “The Invention of Hebrew Prose.” **Aida Bamia and Warren Bargad**, UF, “The Image of the Israeli in Arabic Literature; The Image of the Arab in Israeli Literature.” **Amos Oz**, Israeli Novelist, “To Be An Israeli Writer Today.” **Barry Mesch**, UF, “Jewish Philosophy in the Fourteenth Century:

The Union of Torah, Philosophy, and Politics.” **Susan Handelman**, UF, “Humor, Heresy, Hermeneutics: How the Rabbis Reread the Bible.” **Sheldon Isenberg**, UF, “Reflections of the Human Image in Traditional and Modern Judaism.” **Harold Stahmer**, UF, “Franz Rosenzweig (1886-1929) and Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy (1888-1973): Friends in Time, Foes in Space.” **Arthur Green**, Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, “Typologies of Leadership in the Hasidic Movement.” **Theodor Gaster**, UF, “Jewish Custom and Legend in the Light of Comparative Folklore.”

Thank You!!!

The Center for Jewish Studies would like to thank the following Donors for their continuing support:

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Ron Y. Schramm
Robert Russell Memorial Foundation
David and Nancy Rich
Norman Shulevitz

And thanks to the many others who have supported the Center for Jewish Studies with their generous donations.

(Proctor interview cont'd from page 1)

there is a Hillel Director who is also an ordained Rabbi. So now you have a place for Jewish students to go and there are services held on Friday evening. Rabbi Gerald Engel, the Hillel Director, begins to think in terms of offering something more to the Jewish students on campus.

One of the areas he focused on was the library. Even before the Mishkin collection came, which of course was the giant collection that came in the 1970's, we had begun to get a variety of books relating to a variety of Jewish topics. With the help of the B'nai B'rith Women in Florida and Rabbi Sydney Lefkowitz, the Reform Rabbi in Jacksonville, we were able to get the Jewish Chataqua Society to begin offering books to the University of Florida on an annual basis. The library director also allocated some funds to bring books for the Judaica collection.

So, we had in place a number of things—we had Jewish students, an active Hillel, a Rabbi, and the beginnings of a library collection. It became obvious, however,

with the growth of the Jewish student involvement that more was needed and we had to take some very positive action. Some discussion began to occur in the early 1970's, particularly after Dr. Barry Mesch arrived.

Dr. Mesch was the first Jew to be appointed into the Department of Religion and that came after some delay. At first the religion department had only Protestants as faculty and then Michael Gannon, a Catholic Priest, was appointed quietly because no one wanted any negative reaction against Catholics. Anti-Catholicism has been an underlying current in southern history. After he began teaching without any problem, the Chairman of the religion department talked to me about the need to add someone who was Jewish to the faculty and Barry Mesch turned out to be that person. And he was an excellent choice because he was a good scholar and teacher.

And that is when we began to give some serious thought to setting up a Center for Jewish Studies. The University was not opposed to it. During the latter part of

the 1950's, President Reitz had appointed a committee to examine the status of religion on campus. I was on the committee.

We looked at everything. For example, should we have a chapel on campus? Should we offer a Ph.D. program in religion, and what should be done to meet the religious needs of the various denominations on campus? What role should the University of Florida play and what responsibility did UF have from a religious point of view as far as the students were concerned? The committee and the University administration were aware of "separation of Church and State" so we knew we had to tread very lightly. On the other hand, when it came to an academic program like a Center for Jewish Studies, the University was not at all opposed. I will say that the University was not very enthusiastic, and nobody offered any monetary support.

Those interested in establishing Jewish studies decided to hold an informal discussion group. I was there, Barry was there, and if I am not mistaken, about a half-dozen local business people in town. I do not know who else from the faculty was there—we did not have a large number of Jewish faculty. I remember we all agreed that it would be worthwhile to set up a Center for Jewish Studies and we also believed that the University would cooperate. And so from that meeting, a group of us went to talk to President Steve O'Connell, and we got a positive response.

The Department of Religion and the College of Arts and Sciences agreed that it would not cost the University anything and that it would be good PR and that is how we got started in 1973.

Barry took the responsibility of being the director, and he organized the curriculum, most of which he taught himself. One of the goals was to offer Hebrew as one of the foreign languages—just like German, French and Spanish—to satisfy the undergraduate language requirement.

Then, the outstanding Mishkin collection became available. Dr. Mesch was Rabbi Mishkin's nephew. Rabbi Mishkin was a Chicago Rabbi who had been collecting Judaica and Hebraica for a long time, including many periodicals in a variety of languages from Central and Eastern Europe and the Middle East. Many of these publications were never printed in large numbers so they were very rare. Many of these, of course, had disappeared during the war as a result of the destruction of libraries and archives.

Rabbi Mishkin's interests were very wide spread. So you not only got things in religion but also philosophy and literature and many other areas. And he had bound the volumes so the periodicals were not lost. In addition to periodicals, he had collected many books and monographs. I think it was about 40,000 volumes. Since Barry

was his nephew, he offered it to the University of Florida first for the very small sum of \$200,000. The University was very interested because I and Barry and the other Jewish faculty and students were interested.

The administration sent Charles Berlin, who was the Judaica librarian at Harvard, to Chicago to look at the collection. He sent back a very positive and enthusiastic report, in which he urged the University to acquire it. He said there are things in the collection that were not in Brandeis or in the Columbia University collection. Berlin said it would be a rare thing to have and would bring a lot of prestige to the University.

We needed to raise the \$200,000. And so Bill Stone from the UF Foundation and I began to travel around the state but we really had no success. It was really a great disappointment to find Jews who were not willing to give us money for the library. You know the thought always is that Jews are interested in every aspect of learning. The point is, we did not raise the \$200,000. But the University was determined not to lose that collection. Dr. Harold Hanson, the Vice President of the University said, "we will take money from the regular library accounts and we'll buy that collection." And that is exactly what happened. The University bought the collection.

In the meantime, Jack and Sam Price of the Price family of Jacksonville had given a valuable tract of land in Gainesville to the University, and they had no objections to using the income from the sale of that land to fund the library. The idea was that we would name the library for the Price family and the money from the sale of the land would create an endowment for the library.

In the meantime, the Center continued to grow under the leadership of Dr. Mesch. The academic program was growing, more courses were being offered, and more students were coming aboard. And then Barry decided that he did not want to be the administrator any longer and that created a vacuum. The Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Charles Sidman, talked to me about filling that gap. His first statement was, "well, we don't have any money to do that." Jewish studies was never a high priority at this University even though the number of Jewish students continued to increase.

So we set out to raise the money to hire a new director. And I was amazed, absolutely amazed, at the response. Within weeks we had gotten about \$80,000 or \$90,000. It was just unbelievable! I went to Dean Sidman, and he was pretty overwhelmed by it. He said, "I will make available a line-item for the position, and the money that you have raised will be the program money for the Center for Jewish Studies." Immediately following, he created a search committee with me as the chairman. And we began to go through the regular procedure of advertising the position, interviewing candidates until we finally selected

Dr. Warren Bargad from Spertus College in Chicago. He was a recognized scholar and had a lot of administrative experience.

I am very pleased with the way (the Center) has evolved and I am very pleased to find that not only Jewish students are enrolling, but non-Jewish students are also enrolling in courses. I think that we have a very active center. As always, you can say, 'we could have been this much

better,' but on the other hand, we started off being the strongest Center for Jewish Studies in the South and we are counted among the best today. We have attracted a great deal of support. There has been a lot of statewide financial support for Jewish studies and there are a lot of students taking courses. I think the Center has a very bright future. – *Interview was conducted on 6/16/98 by the Editor*

Who's Who In Jewish Studies Faculty and Alumni Update

Melissa Aubin was an area supervisor for the Duke-in-Israel excavations at Sepphoris, Israel during the summer of 1997, and was awarded a Dorot Grant for her work on the project. She is publishing materials dating to the Hellenistic era on the Sepphoris acropolis and, in November 1997, presented a related paper, "*Two Sepphoris Mikvaot*" at the Society for Biblical Literature Conference in San Francisco, California. In addition, Ms. Aubin presented a paper entitled "*Gendering Magic in Late Antique Judaism*" in March, 1998, at the Society for Biblical Literature Regional Conference in Knoxville, Tennessee. In spring of '97, she was awarded the Ernestine Friedl Award for Research in Gender Studies from Duke University.

In April 1997, **Geoffrey Giles** gave the Rabin Memorial Lecture for the Jewish Studies Program at Michigan State University. The lecture was entitled, "*Confirming Their Prejudices: German University Students in the Nazi Period.*" Also in April, Professor Giles was a guest speaker at a public forum on Daniel Goldhagen's controversial views, which took place at the College of Charleston. In June, he acted as Director of the Holocaust Educational Foundation's second Eastern European Study Seminar, leading a group of scholars and, for the first time, graduate students to some of the important sites of the Holocaust in Poland, as well as Terezin and Berlin. During the two-week visit, the study group met with museum directors and researchers in each location, to discuss recent developments concerning interpretation and problems of conservation.

Also in 1997, *Congressional Quarterly* published **Kenneth Wald's** co-authored study, "*Private Lives, Public Conflicts: The Politics of Gay Rights In American Communities.*" Together with his co-authors, he continues to write and conduct research on this topic. During the summer, he gave a week-long series of lectures on the gen-

eral theme of religion in American politics at the summer meetings of the Chatauqua Society in upstate New York. During the fall semester, Professor Wald was busy incorporating the World Wide Web as an instructional tool in his undergraduate course, "Religion and Politics in the United States." He is also serving on the Board of Editors for the forthcoming volumes of *Congressional Quarterly's Encyclopedia of Politics and Religion*. In November, he was one of only two North American scholars invited to address an international conference in Jerusalem. The conference covered "*The Impact of Religion on Politics at the End of the Twentieth Century,*" and was co-sponsored by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation and the B'nai B'rith World Center.

Mel New was named one of 32 inaugural University of Florida Research Foundation Professors for 1997-98, "for excellence in research and scholarly achievements." His Penguin edition of Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* should be out by the end of the year, and a collection of essays on Sterne by various scholars, edited by Professor New, was published this past winter. He taught Modern Jewish Fiction during the Spring '98 semester, emphasizing the work of Franz Kafka, Cynthia Ozick, Bruno Schulz, and Shmuel Yosef Agnon.

Miriam Peskowitz returned to the University of Florida in the fall of 1997 after finishing a year as a Fellow with the American Council of Learned Societies. Her book, *Spinning Fantasies: Rabbis, Gender and History* was published in the spring by the University of California Press as volume 9 in the series "Contraversions: Critical Studies in Jewish Literature, Culture, and Society," joining last year's *Judaism Since Gender*, co-edited with Laura Levitt. Several other articles appeared this year including, "Identification Questions" in the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*; "The Burial of Gender and the Gendering of Burial: Notes from the Archaeology of

Roman Palestine” in *Jewish Studies Quarterly*; “*Tropes of Travel*” in *Semeia*; and “*Rabbis, Feminists, and Patriarchy’s Ordinarity*” in *The Feminist Companion to Reading the Bible*; and “*Empty Fields and the Romance of the Holy Land*” in *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion*. Dr. Peskowitz continues a busy conference and lecture schedule. In spring of 1997 she participated in conferences in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and Lehigh University, and gave lectures at Oxford University and the University of Amsterdam. During the fall of ‘97, she traveled to Peebles, Scotland, San Francisco and Boston. She received an invitation to speak this past March at a symposium on women and rabbinics at Smith College, and returned to the University of Amsterdam this past June. In addition, she has been involved with the National Center for Black-Jewish Relations at Dillard University, a historically black university in New Orleans. She was asked to collaborate with Dr. Beverly-Guy Sheftall of Spelman College and to organize this year’s conference on Black-Jewish Relations around the theme “*What Might Race Mean in the Twenty-First Century? Perspectives by African-American and Jewish-American Women.*”

Michael Birnholz, graduate of UF in May of 1996, with a B.A. in Sociology and a Jewish Studies Minor is entering his third-year of Rabbinical School in Fall of ‘98 at Hebrew Union College and was recently married. He and his wife spent a year in Israel with the “Year in Israel” program sponsored by Hebrew Union College. In a letter he sent to the Center he had this to say about the experience— “In classes we were exposed to an intense Hebrew program while we studied Bible, Rabbinic Literature and Israeli society and politics...our class traveled the breadth and length of the country, everything from an archeological dig at Tel Dan to hiking in the south near Eilat. Lastly, we experienced a full year of Israeli society. We saw the Jewish holiday cycle, we shopped in Israeli markets, and we watched and listened to the political process. Now we are back in the United States. We are readjusting to the American Jewish community and getting to know Cincinnati, taking classes and working.”

Introducing The Center Staff

Sheldon Isenberg has been serving as Acting Director of the Center since Spring 1998. In addition, this fall he also began his duties as chair of the Department of Religion. During this past year a book which he co-edited appeared, entitled *The Ideal in the World’s Religions* (Paragon House, 1998). It includes his chapter, “Ideals, Pseudo-Ideals and the Evolution of Consciousness.” He also serves as chair of the board of directors of ALEPH: Alliance for Jewish Renewal.

Kayla Sosnow, daughter of Rhoda and Bob Goldstein and Nathan Sosnow, was raised in Danvers, Massachusetts, 20 miles north of Boston, and attended Temple Ner Tamid in Peabody. She excelled in hula-hooping, violin and academics. At Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, she became politicized, and in 1988 earned a degree in Industrial and Labor Relations, going on to work for four different labor unions. Kayla later decided to turn her attention to homelessness, and worked in the streets and residential facilities. As Supervisor/Case Manager of the Supportive Apartment Program for homeless teens, she took 16-20 year-olds off the streets, placed them in an apartment, then taught them how to survive and excel. This experience shaped her desire to enter high school guidance counseling, so she can have access to a generation of teenagers and help them move successfully through life. She spent a year at Florida Atlantic University studying toward her Masters in Education before moving to Gainesville, being blessed with the Program Assistant position at the Center for Jewish Studies, and being accepted into the University of Florida’s Counselor Education department, rated number one in the country. She is concurrently pursuing a Graduate Certificate in Women’s Studies. In her position as Program Assistant, Kayla enjoys improving the performance and efficiency of the Center, as well as interacting with scholars. Kayla lives with three other roommates on their “urban kibbutz.” She can be reached through the Center for Jewish Studies or at ksosnow@jst.ufl.edu.



Kayla Sosnow

Mara Benjamin, graduate assistant for the Center for Jewish Studies is in her second-year of a four-year degree program combining a master's degree in journalism and a juris doctor in law. She graduated from University of Michigan with a bachelor's degree in Middle Eastern Studies in 1994. She appreciates her job at the Center for many reasons, but most specifically, because it gives her the pleasure of working in a Jewish environment surrounded by Jewish ideas and traditions. She is the editor of *Amudim*.

Hi, my name is **Elissa Jacoby** and I am a student assistant at the Center for Jewish Studies. I graduated with honors in 1995 from Piper High School in Sunrise, Florida. During high school I was active in the Exchangettes, a community service club and the drill team. I volunteered at a local hospital and I was vice-president of Young Judea, a Zionist youth movement. In my senior year of high school I decided that I wanted to go to Israel. After hearing so much about Israel from Hebrew school and my youth group, I wanted to experience Israel for myself. So on Sept. 5, 1995, I boarded an El-Al plane as part of the

“Young Judea’s Year Course in Israel” program and began my ten-month adventure. I spent the first two-and-a-half months at the Merkaz Klitah (absorption center) in Ma’alot, located in northern Israel near the Lebanon border. I worked in an elementary school tutoring children in English and I took Ulpan classes in the afternoon. I spent three-weeks in the army. I learned to shoot an M-16 and got a little taste of basic training. After the army, I returned to Jerusalem to attend classes on Mt. Scopus at Hebrew University. After my studies, I went to live with a modern-Orthodox family in the northern town of Karmiel for three weeks. I experienced life with an Israeli family and worked in an after-school program for children. The last six-weeks of the program, I lived in the desert-town of Arad. During the day, I worked on Masada at an archeological dig. My experience in Israel was very valuable because it allowed me to grow and discover more about myself before I had to decide on a major at the University of Florida. Currently I am a speech pathology senior at UF and am treasurer of the NSSLHA, the National Student’s Speech, Language, and Hearing Association.

UF Jewish Studies Instructional Staff

Melissa Aubin *Introduction to Judaism*

Warren Bargad, Director

Modern Hebrew Language and Literature

Avraham Balaban *Modern Hebrew Language and Literature*

Dora Friedman *Hebrew*

Geoffrey Giles *History of the Holocaust*

Andrew Gordon *American Jewish Literature*

Galia Hatav *Hebrew, Hebrew Linguistics*

Sheldon Isenberg, Acting Director

Jewish Mysticism, Classical and Modern Judaism,

Women in Judaism

Allan Lehmann *Hasidism*

James Mueller *Hebrew Scriptures, Judaism and Christianity*

Melvin New *The Modern Jewish Novel*

Miriam Peskowitz *Rabbinic Judaism, Gender and Judaism*

Stefanie Siegmund *History of the Jewish Family, The Jews of Florence, modern Jewish History*

Maureen Turim *Jews and Cinema*

Kenneth Wald *Religion and Politics*

Yossi Yariv *Modern Hebrew Language and Literature*

Jewish Studies Majors

FRESHMEN: Charna Gail Berry, Lisa Rachel Polakoff.

SOPHOMORES: Jason Seth Gallow, Adam Lee Kaplan, Emily R. Schoenfeld, Melissa Ann Shenkman

JUNIORS: Melissa Sheryl Fand, Joshua Howard Kaye, Beth Aleece Rosenberg, Michael L. Rothenberg, Joshua Eli Schwartz.

SENIORS: David Joseph Ackerman, Jennifer A. Buchholtz, Shana R. Goldstein, Alan Charles Haspel, Laura Hollander.

Jewish Studies Minors

JUNIORS: Samantha Joy Grey, Audra E. Latham, Hilit Surowitz.

SENIORS: Rotem Adar, Jonathan G. Goldberg, Dara Whitney Saltzman, Susan Lee Stowe.

Student Achievements

The following students received support for academic study in Israel.

Kolko Memorial Scholarship Fund: Rinat Hadas & Pamela Mandell.

Norman Shulevitz Foundation: Jason Ellis, Moshe Feldman, Jay Gorfinkel, Elliot Hen-Tov, Justine Herz, Jamie Kiderman, Dawn Morris, Joseph Panoff, Isaiah Shapiro, Lonny Wilk.

B’nai Zion Award

Each year the Center awards outstanding students for their accomplishment in Hebrew language study. The 1998 awards were given to Pamela Mandell and Karen B. Weinschelbaum

Congratulations to Our '98 Graduates!

Majors: David Ackerman, Jennifer Buchholtz, Shana Goldstein, Alan Haspel

Minors: Sandra Bass, Michelle Chepenik, Shelley Levine, Gary Slossberg, Susan Stowe

The Center wishes you the best of luck and success with your future endeavors.

**Web Page
Address: www.jst.ufl.edu**

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the website for the Center for Jewish Studies at the University of Florida. The browser's address bar shows the URL <http://www.jst.ufl.edu/>. The website features a navigation menu on the left with links to 'Fall '98 courses', 'Jewish Studies Major', 'Jewish Studies Minor', 'Study Abroad In Israel', 'Price Library of Judaica', 'Gainesville Jewish Community', 'Jewish Studies Faculty & Staff', 'Home', 'College of Liberal Arts and Science', and 'University of Florida'. The main content area includes the University of Florida logo, the Center for Jewish Studies logo, and contact information: 'Center for Jewish Studies, University of Florida, 105 Walker Hall, PO Box 118020, Gainesville, FL 32611-8020, www@jst.ufl.edu'. Below this, there are three paragraphs of text describing the Bachelor of Arts in Jewish Studies, the minor certificate, and study abroad programs. A large black box with white text reads 'The Jewish Studies Program' and 'התוכנית ללמודי היהדות'. At the bottom, there is a link to 'Send us your comments or questions!'.

Jewish Education in the University: Who's Learning What?

Dr. Sheldon R. Isenberg, Acting Director

The markers in our lives which signal the passage of time sometimes sneak up on us. It is a shock to me to realize that this coming academic year the Center for Jewish studies will be celebrating its Silver Anniversary. The sense of millennium, although not according to the Jewish calendar, is hard to resist. The approach of a New Year's day that signifies the turn of a millennium activates in us a far more intense Janus-like focus on past and future.

Dr. Sam Proctor, in his interview, gives us a fascinating history of Jewish Studies and the Center at the University of Florida. The continued blossoming of the Center has been due to the devotion not only of faculty and administrators, but also to the generosity of donors who understand the incalculable importance, especially to Jews, of having Judaism as part of a university curriculum. When something becomes the topic of courses and Ph.D. dissertations, it seems to acquire a different sense of substantiality in the collective consciousness of a culture.

Judaism, an ancient civilization and spiritual path, is nearly four millennia old. It has by no means traveled a straight path. We have continually spiraled on our journey from the Biblical period through the Rabbinic/Medieval into the modern and post-modern ages. It is memory that gives us a sense of continuity, for any people's sense of unity and identity is dependent on its corporate memory. Martin Buber described the Bible as a record of the people's memories of their collective experiences of God. The word "re-member" gives a sense of reconnecting all the "members" of the corporate body. As we remember, we put it back together again, re-creating ourselves, creating identity, a sense of belonging to the same extended family.

We live in a time when a unique responsibility for collecting, transmitting, and re-organizing those memories has fallen on what is inherently a secular institution, the university. For many Jewish students, what they learn in university Jewish Studies courses will furnish most of their corporate Jewish memories, the intellectual part of their Jewish education. So while University courses cannot, should not and will not follow a "religious school" model, they are a prime resource for those collective memories and the continuing conversation of this ancient culture. To compare, it is likely that university courses in Islam and Hinduism are primary sources for the education of the children of the rapidly growing Muslim and Hindu populations in America.

To give an example, for centuries Jews studied Bible, i.e., written Torah, with the help of a medieval exegete, Rashi, who read Bible through the eyes of Rabbinic interpretation and law. In a university Bible course, on the other hand, students are far more likely to read Bible through the eyes of historical criticism, meeting the texts as much as possible in the context of the surrounding ancient near eastern culture. From that perspective, it turns out to be a very different text. For the first time in nearly two thousand years, Jews are reading Bible within its own historical context and not only through the screen of rabbinic legend that comes from centuries earlier. Nevertheless, Jewish identified students will often take in and assimilate what they learn in their Judaica courses as sacred memory which locates them within the Jewish people.

Those for whom Judaism is another's tradition, rather than their own, take in Jewish Studies courses without that layer of identification. That is why the function that Jewish Studies courses play in the education of non-Jewish-identified students should be equally important in the eyes of the Jewish community. Anti-Semitism, so much a part of the culture of the West, feeds on ignorance. While non-Jewish students take Jewish Studies courses from a multitude of motivations, their immersion in the course work of a semester, in my experience, usually precipitates a transformation of perspective. Time and time again non-Jewish, as well as Jewish, students have told me of waking up to the anti-Semitism of their cultural conditioning. That awareness is the first, indispensable step to the inner healing from the all too human sickness of groundless prejudice. In addition, Jewish and non-Jewish students learn that they can share a common, academic perspective on Judaism, a very important sharing of the minds where no one is inside or outside.

In the Florida university system, Centers are not departments. They do not have their own faculty and have minimal financial support from institutional budgets. All our faculty members are drawn from departments or are temporary adjunct appointments. The success of Centers, therefore, is largely a matter of successful fund-raising. Our ability to bring onto the campus of the University of Florida teachers, poets, artists, musicians, movies--all the programming listed elsewhere in this issue--is essentially dependent on your support. Help us grow to meet the needs of the next 25 years.

Spring '98 Semester Courses

Beginning Modern Hebrew 2
2nd-Year Modern Hebrew 2
3rd-Year Modern Hebrew 2
2nd-Year Intensive Hebrew 2
Biblical Hebrew 1
Modern Jewish Fiction
Jewish American Fiction
Fiction of Saul Bellow
Introduction to Hasidism
Biblical Archaeology
Dead Sea Scrolls
Politics of Israel
20th Century Germany
Modern Jewish Philosophy
Readings in Modern Hebrew Literature 2
Intro to Modern Hebrew Literature 2

Fall '98 Semester Courses

Beginning Modern Hebrew 1
Honors Beginning Modern Hebrew 1
2nd-Year Modern Hebrew 1
3rd-Year Modern Hebrew 1
Individual Work
Intro to Modern Hebrew Literature
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The Holocaust

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