



From the Director's Desk



A Look Back...and Ahead

Although Five Year Plans went out of fashion with the fall of communism, they are still useful devices for measuring progress. As I hand over the directorship of the Center for Jewish Studies to new leadership, let me reflect on the past five years and the decades ahead.

When I was appointed to the directorship, I was given the familiar academic mandate to move the Center "to the next level." After consultation with UF students, faculty, staff and administration, I developed a set of priorities that were steps toward that goal.

Moving up is much easier when you start from a sturdy foundation. Fortunately, I found that my predecessors had built a firm base in the form of a strong and committed faculty, a solid undergraduate curriculum, a wonderful research library, and a set of endowments that supported a speaker series, visiting scholars, student scholarships for study abroad, and other resources. Defying the laws of physics, our base was both rock solid and as flexible as a trampoline.

In my interviews, I heard from students who were frustrated by the limited number of courses available each semester and who wanted a broader array of classes from which to choose. By virtue of new faculty lines from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and recruitment of interested faculty from various departments, we have

significantly expanded both the faculty and the course offerings in Jewish Studies. Our students are now faced with a choice among about twenty courses each semester as we've augmented the curriculum across both time and space. We've also increased their opportunities for a capstone experience be it a senior thesis, a Jewish communal services internship or an undergraduate colloquium.

The UF administration expressed a wish for the Center to become more a part of the campus conversation. With the Balkanization of the contemporary university, that is no small task. Understanding our field of study as the whole of the Jewish experience, a formative element of world culture, the goal was to infuse the campus with more awareness of Judaism writ large. Accordingly, we now routinely work with a range of academic units to explore Judaism in its various manifestations, sponsoring programs with law, music, art, linguistics, philosophy and other disciplines.

(continued on page 2)

In this edition:

Center News.....	2
Holocaust Institute.....	4
Outreach.....	6
Study Abroad.....	7
Faculty News.....	8
Feature Presentation.....	10
A Student's Journey.....	12
New Faculty.....	14
Alumni Profile.....	16
Graduates.....	17
A Remembrance.....	18
Programing.....	22
Courses.....	22

(Director.....con't)

As last year's *Amudim* emphasized, the Center has also stressed outreach beyond the campus. This goal reflected my own understanding of the responsibility of public universities and the wishes of our supporters throughout the state. The Center has gone on the road to sponsor lectures around Florida, including a year-long series of talks in Jacksonville, brought teachers to campus for a summer Holocaust institute, and sent our students out into the community as interns with Jewish organizations.

These priorities were relatively easy to achieve because the resources were readily available and could be deployed on short notice. But the other major priority has been harder to implement because so many pieces have to fall into place. If the Center for Jewish Studies was to reach the next level, we realized, it had to improve the quality of the academic research program and build a program of graduate study. We need to become a Center that holds conferences, publishes edited volumes, and contributes intellectual leadership to our field. In academia, that's what "moving up" means.

While we are not as far along that road as I hoped to be at the end of five years, the news is nonetheless very encouraging. Thanks to the generosity of Alexander Grass, we now have an Eminent Scholar Chair that will become the hub of the graduate program while enhancing undergraduate education in many ways. Several new scholarships have enabled us to fund graduate student research in several disciplines. With a greatly augmented and energetic faculty, we are developing a graduate program in Jewish Studies that will offer an MA with multiple tracks and provide a curriculum for doctoral students pursuing the Ph.D. in various disciplines.

The mandate of the next director is to raise the caliber of the research and graduate program without forgetting the other components of our mission. If the new director receives the same support I've enjoyed from faculty, students, staff, administrators and donors, the next five years should witness the emergence of the Center as one of the top national programs in Jewish Studies. It will be a daunting task, but as Theodore Herzl once famously commented in a not altogether unrelated context, "If you will it, it is no dream." ❖

Center News

Balaban Serves as Futernick Family Visiting Professor of Jewish Studies



Balaban

Dr. Oded Balaban, Associate Professor of Philosophy and director of the Honors Program at Haifa University in Israel, spent the 2003-2004 academic year as the **Futernick Family Visiting Professor of Jewish Studies**. He arrived in Gainesville prior to the fall semester with his wife Osnat and has enjoyed the relatively slower pace of life they have found here. "Gainesville is a very beautiful place. People are friendly and cooperative" and have made a very favorable impression on both he and Osnat. The couple enjoys that Gainesville because it is not too big - like the major metropolis they are used to - yet not so small like many of the villages they visit in Israel. They also enjoy the opportunities to research at UF's "wonderful library" and the commitment to learning they have found in the students they have encountered.

Although the pace of life at UF seems less intense, Balaban has remained busy, teaching a course on the Middle East Peace Process, another course on Spinoza and completing his book on the Camp David Summit II which involved Ehud Barak, Yassir Arafat and President Bill Clinton. According to Balaban, "an analysis of the Camp David II summit shows that the alternatives open to the Middle East are two opposing approaches: an isolationist and exclusionist approach, or an integrative and inclusionist approach. Both are attainable, and have many supporters, both past and present, representing both sides of the conflict, or more precisely, from all sides concerned with this region." The text will be published by Peter Lang this summer and is entitled *Between Fear and Hope -The Peace Process in the Middle East Through the Mirror of Camp David II*.

While Dr. Balaban completes his



Oded and Osnat Balaban

teaching and research, his wife Osnat is completing her PhD in Philosophy. The couple will return to Israel this summer, but will not soon forget their positive experience at the University of Florida.

Shaina Rachel Goldstein Ordained



Goldstein

Shana Goldstein, a 1998 graduate of the Jewish Studies program, has completed rabbinical studies at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, OH. Upon ordination, she will join Congregation Ohabai Sholom in Nashville, TN as Assistant Rabbi.

Shana was an honors graduate of UF and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa.

"The Jewish Studies program at UF was instrumental in my decision not only to further my studies, but to make Judaism my focus," Goldstein commented. Integrating history, political science, world religions and women's studies, she took classes about politics in Israel and the Arab-Israeli conflict, Hebrew, Mysticism and Hasidism, and gender issues in Judaism.

Center Director Kenneth Wald, who taught Goldstein at UF, remembers her as a thorough, engaged and passionate student of Judaism. "Given the outstanding quality of her performance at UF," he observed, "I am not surprised at her extraordinary success in rabbinical studies."

While at UF, Shana was a regular participant in lectures and programs sponsored by the Center. "I'm grateful for the opportunities for intellectual and spiritual pursuits at UF," she said.

Prior to entering HUC, Shana was a Hebrew and Judaica teacher at the Hebrew Day School of Greater Orlando. As part of her rabbinic studies, Shana served as Rabbinic Intern for two summers at the Congregation of Liberal Judaism in Orlando, FL. She also served as Student Rabbi in Ishpeming, MI, Fort Walton Beach, FL and Natchez, MS.

Summer Holocaust Institute



graphic by Jane Dominguez

Sensitively introducing the atrocities of the Holocaust to young students might seem like an impossible task. Since Florida's 1994 mandate to educate public school students about the Holocaust, many teachers feel at a loss.

At the University of Florida's Summer Holocaust Institute for Teachers (SHIFT), begun in 2002, dozens of committed teachers have learned a variety of ways to accurately yet compassionately communicate the seriousness of the experience.

"The week at SHIFT provided a wealth of information to share with my students and fellow educators," said Greta Brewer, a high school teacher from Broward County. Brewer used what she learned to teach a two week Holocaust course to high schoolers and believes it made a difference in her students' lives.

Gainesville teacher Bryan Harris also believes the material he learned at SHIFT made a huge impact on students. "(The students) did group projects based on Holocaust literature where each group was responsible for a 5-page paper and oral presentations with visuals. The students were very interested in the topic and some wanted to do more because it fascinated them."

Some students in Jeanne Fuch's elementary school class in Waldo were so interested in the material that they also read additional literature even though it was not required for their grade.

During the five days of SHIFT, participants study the history of the Jews in Germany, the rise of the Nazi party and they strategize ways of incorporating related themes into their profession as teachers. As a result of his SHIFT experience,

Harris incorporated the topic of hatred, including myths about Jews, Columbine, Stalin, and racism in his curriculum. "SHIFT was a great opportunity to learn how hatred can do such horrible things" and Harris hopes his teaching "will make a lasting impression on our youth."

For many participants, the most moving part was listening to the testimony of actual survivors. "We are the last generation able to have this direct contact with victims who actually lived through the terror of the Third Reich, all of whom



Dr. Giles with Holocaust rescuer

are now elderly," observes Institute co-director and History professor Dr. Geoffrey Giles, "and this gives an immediacy to our study and our understanding of the Holocaust that can never be replicated in the future."

Participants are also given the opportunity to survey the host of child-friendly Holocaust literature available. Dr. Linda Lamme, one of the directors of the Institute, is a children's literature specialist from the College of Education. Lamme familiarizes teachers with pertinent literature ranging from picture books for elementary students to novels for high schoolers. Teachers learn about resources like *One Candle* by Even Bunking and K. Wendy Popp which depicts a family remembering their grandmother who while living in a concentration camp lit a candle at Hanukkah

to secretly celebrate her faith. Giles adds, "There is a vast pool of books about the Holocaust written in English for American children, often picture books for the quite young...these can be a lot more effective for certain age groups than simply watching a documentary movie."

Throughout SHIFT, teachers participate in discussions on how to address students' questions about the Holocaust. One teacher recalls that her students had a difficult time understanding the powerful dynamics between the victims and members of the Third Reich. They wondered why the people in the camp



SHIFT literature review

didn't overpower the guards and take their freedom. SHIFT empowers teachers to address questions like these with their students.

As a result of the 2003 week-long institute, one high school teacher sums up the experience this way: "Wow, I will no longer avoid these incredibly important issues," noting that she now feels prepared and motivated to do a thorough job.

Funding for SHIFT is provided by the Commissioner's Task Force on Holocaust Education and the Harry Rich Endowment for Holocaust Studies. Many participants were also funded by their school districts and parent-teacher associations. For information about SHIFT 2004, please call the Center for Jewish Studies at 392-9247.

Comments from SHIFT 2003



SHIFT 2003 participants

"Because these are human issues, I wish every teacher in every discipline could attend this workshop. ~Diane Ried, Alachua County, 9-12

"I really enjoyed hearing the stories of the survivors. I think that their stories have made me see how important it is to teach children co-existence and tolerance at a young age." ~Sarah Lauer, UF Student

"As someone who thought he knew quite a bit about the Holocaust, I still learned an enormous amount of useful classroom information and application." ~Thom Anderson, Alachua County, 9-12

"The Institute was an eye-opening experience. Just knowing about the incident on a survey level is so different than being exposed to in-depth information." ~Michael Swartz, Alachua County, 6-7

"The Institute was an excellent experience for traveling into the past and coming forward to the present with ideas for teaching about the Holocaust" ~Stephen Davis, Pasco County, 7-8

"I love the materials in the K-3 manual. The ideas, literature selections, etc. can easily be integrated in many areas of the curriculum." ~Tammy Adams, Union County, K

Outreach

As part of its outreach efforts, the Center for Jewish Studies has long encouraged faculty to share their expertise with the community beyond the UF campus. In a tangible example of that outreach, the Center offered a new lecture series in Jacksonville during the 2003-2004 academic year.



Woods

Under the program, four UF faculty from the Center for Jewish Studies—Patricia Woods (Political Science), James Mueller (Religion), Andrew Gordon (English) and Leah Hochman (Religion)—spoke to Jacksonville audiences on topics as diverse as their fields of study. The lectures drew audiences from one hundred to nearly three hundred.

“The program gives us an opportunity to show off the skills of our faculty to a very appreciative audience,” commented Center director Kenneth Wald. “We know we have a wonderful program and we want to share those riches with the rest of the state.”

The Bess K. Shorstein Lecture Series was funded by the Shorstein Family Foundation. According to UF alumnus and Foundation board member Bud Shorstein, the program is an



Mueller

appropriate way to honor the memory of his mother. Although she never attended UF, he noted, her three sons “have three graduate and two post graduate degrees from the university” and two met their wives in Gainesville.”

The UF connection goes deeper than that, Bud Shorstein observed. “Bess had five grandsons, four of whom attended the University and earned four graduate and one post graduate degree. Two daughters-in-law have two graduate and one post graduate University of Florida degrees. Her oldest great grand grandson has completed three years toward his degree. Since September, 1947, 56 years ago when Jack started, a son, daughter-in-law, grandson or great grandson has matriculated at the University for 38 of those years.”

In addition to the Shorstein Family, the individual lectures were sponsored by UF alumni Ronald and Joan Levin, the Dubow Family Foundation, the Seymour Marco Family Foundation, and the Anspacher Family Foundation. Additional sponsors were the Jewish Community Center and Jewish Federation of Jacksonville and the synagogues in that community.

“This program represents a wonderful coalition among the Center, the UF Foundation and Alumni Association as well as numerous institutions in Jacksonville,” commented Wald.

The lectures were held at the Jacksonville Jewish Center with the assistance of the Jewish Community Alliance, a programming organization.



David Marco, Leah Hochman and Bud Shorstein

Study Abroad Program

For the second year in a row, the Center sponsored its "Bridges of Understanding" study-abroad program in Germany.

Under the direction of Professor Leah Hochman, eight UF undergraduates spent eleven days in May, 2003 touring Jewish sites and meeting with various experts on the Jewish experience in Germany.

The tour was only part of the course on the troubled Jewish experience in Germany. The students were prepared for the trip by extensive background reading and an intensive three-day orientation in Gainesville under Dr. Hochman's direction.

The final project, an academic journal, required students to integrate their classroom learning with their personal observations of Germany and Germans. Students found the combination of classroom training and personal encounters uniquely effective. In the words of Sarah Byrd, a participant, "everyone felt the in-depth and hands-on nature of the course to be particularly fascinating, powerful, and culturally-edifying."

The tour began with a week in Berlin that included bus tours of the city, a day at the *Reichstag*, trips to the Jewish Museum, and a tour of the Ravensbrück concentration camp. The students met legislators, their peers from the Berlin Jewish Students Association, and high school students taking advanced English courses.

Experiencing the rebirth of Jewish life in the German capital city, the students also enjoyed an outdoor barbeque in honor of the Lag B'Omer holiday and the chance to attend Sabbath evening services at the Liberal synagogue.

All told, one student commented, "The program challenged many of my preconceived

notions of the relationship between Germans and Jews, as well as the complex situation of Jewish communities throughout Germany."

The purpose of the program, Hochman emphasizes, is not simply to see the sites as a tourist but to reflect on them and their larger historical meaning. Toward that end, she noted, "the students and I talked openly and often about what we were visiting, why we were visiting it, and how it fit into the overall narrative of German Jewish history."

Hochman also tries to balance attention to the Holocaust, the overwhelming fact of Jewish history in Germany, with the re-emergence of Jewish life in the German Republic. Thus she welcomed opportunities for the students to witness "a living growing, friendly Jewish community who memorialized their dead, and who looked forward to their future."

The tour also included stays in Frankfurt and Cologne and day visits to such important medieval cities as

Worms and

Speyer. In Co-

logne, students

visited both a

Jewish cemetery

and the National

Socialist Docu-

mentation Center.

Apart from their

serious academic

pursuits, students

had a chance to take in a vaudeville show, canoe in Potsdam, hike the *Königswinter*, ferry up the Rhine and visit local cafes and clubs.

Hochman also stresses dialogue, bringing the students into conversations with Germans as a way of processing their experiences. "I was incredibly impressed with their graciousness and their continual engagement with the many new people with whom they interacted." Admission to this highly selective program required a preapplication

(continued on p 19)



in Berlin



Rashi Haus in Worms

Faculty News

Nora Alter has spent the 2003-2004 academic year researching and living in Berlin.

Andrew Gordon chaired a panel on the writings of Jonathan Rosen at the Jewish-American and Holocaust Literature Symposium in October 2003. At the same conference, he also delivered a paper titled "Jewish Memories: 'Radio Days,' 'Brighton Beach Memoirs,' and 'Avalon'." In December 2003, he spoke on "Images of Florida in Jewish-American Literature" at the Jewish Community Alliance in Jacksonville and again in February 2004 at the DeBroodt Library in Palm Bay. In addition, Dr. Gordon delivered a paper on "Jewish Fathers and Sons in Philip Roth's *Patrimony* and Art Spiegelman's *Maus*" at the Conference on Psychoanalysis and Narrative Medicine at UF. Gordon also co-authored a book entitled *Screen Savors: Hollywood Fictions of Whiteness* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2003), which includes discussions of over 50 American films, including "Gentleman's Agreement" and "Zelig," both of which treat Jewish assimilation in America.

Mitchell Hart published three articles: "Towards Abnormality: Assimilation and Degeneration in German-Jewish Social Thought." in *Towards Normality? Acculturation and Modern German Jewry*, (Tbingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003)

"...Perioden des Glucks sind leere Blätter." Die jüdisch Geschichtsschreibung in England und das Problem der Gravitas" in *Judentum and Historismus. Zur Entstehung der jüdischen Geschichtswissenschaft in Europa*, ed. Ulrich Wyrwa (Frankfurt/M and New York: Campus-Verlag, 2003).

and

"Franz Boas as German, American Jew." in *German-Jewish Identities in America*, (Madi-

son: Max Kade Institute, 2003).

Todd Hasak-Lowy delivered a paper, "Post-Zionism and its Aftermath: The Fiction of Orly Castel-Bloom," at this year's conference of the Association for Jewish Studies. A longer version of this paper was discussed at the conference's annual Works in Progress session. Hasak-Lowy's short story collection, tentatively titled *The Task of This Translator*, will be published in late 2004. In addition, he recently had an article on S.Y. Agnon's novel *Only Yesterday* accepted at the journal *Prooftexts*.



Galia Hatar organized a conference entitled "Semitic Linguistics within Contemporary Approaches," funded in part by the Center for Jewish Studies. She also wrote an article on "Anchoring World and Time in Biblical Hebrew," which will be published in late 2004. She was invited to Emory University to present a paper on "The Interpretation of Tense in Biblical Hebrew," and spoke on "The Deictic Nature of the Directives in Biblical Hebrew" at the annual meeting of The Society of Biblical Literature.

Gerald Murray taught a UF summer course in Rome on the Anthropology of Religion. In addition to ancient Greco-Roman and contemporary Catholic holy sites, he took his students to four synagogues where they were exposed to history and contemporary liturgies of Roman Jewry, arguably the oldest continuously settled Jewish community in the world, dating back to the Maccabee period.

Richard Hiers is due to publish the article "The Death Penalty and Due Process in Biblical Law" in the *Mercy Law Review*. He also delivered a lecture at Eckerd College on the topic, "Justice and Compassion in Biblical Law."

Center Faculty

Nora Alter

German Cinema

Avraham Balaban

Modern Hebrew Literature

Joshua Comenetz

Jewish Population

Geography

Nina Caputo

Shephardi History

Malka Dagan

Hebrew

Alice Freifeld

Eastern European Jewry

Geoffrey Giles

Holocaust and

German History

Andrew Gordon

American Jewish Literature

Mitchell Hart

History of European History

Todd Hasak-Lowy

Hebrew Language and

Literature

Galia Hatav

Hebrew and

Hebrew Linguistics

Richard Hiers

Hebrew Scriptures and

Biblical Law

Leah Hochman

German Jewry

Sheldon Isenberg

Jewish Mysticism, Classical

and Modern Judaism

Hanna Katz

Hebrew

Gwynn Kessler

Classical Judaism

Eric Kligerman

German Jewish Literature

David Kushner

Jewish Music

James Mueller

Hebrew Scriptures, Judaism

and Christianity

Gerald Murray

Anthropology of Judaism

and Monotheism

Melvyn New

Modern Jewish Literature

Judith Page

British Romanticism,

Jews and Judaism

Howard Rothman

Jewish Music

Robert Singerman

Librarian,

Price Library of Judaica

Leo Sandgren

Early Judaism

Maureen Turim

Jews in Cinema

Kenneth Wald

Judaism and Politics

Patricia Woods

Middle East Politics

David Kushner spoke on "The Jewish Works of Ernest Bloch" at the Hebrew American Congregation in Joplin, MO in November 2003. He spoke on "Music in the Bible" at Gainesville's Temple Shir Shalom and Congregation B'nai Israel and "Religious Ambiguity in the Life and Works of Ernest Bloch" at the College Music Society conference at the University of Southern Mississippi. His paper on this subject is published in the January issue of *Min-ad*, the online journal of the Israel Musicological Society. Dr. Kushner's article on "Ernest Bloch in Cleveland," is in press at *Orbis Musicae*, a musicology journal published at Tel-Aviv University. Dr. Kushner has also received a commission from the *Encyclopedia of American Jewish Culture* to write articles on the Jewish works

of Marc Blitzstein, Ernest Bloch and Steve Reich.

Judith Page returned to UF last fall after spending the spring semester (2003) at the Oxford Centre of Hebrew and Jewish Studies. The book that she completed there, *Imperfect Sympathies: Jews and Judaism in British Romantic Literature and Culture*, is forthcoming from Palgrave Publishers in 2004. Professor Page attended the Association of Jewish Studies Meeting in Boston last December and presented a paper entitled "Jewish Scholars and Romantic Texts." She also taught courses in Romanticism and Judaism last fall, and will teach a new course, "Representing Jews in Victorian Literature and Culture," next fall.

Leo Sandgren completed his text, *The Shadow of God* (Hendrickson Publishers, 2003) which covers six centuries of Jewish history, from the Babylonian exile to the destruction of the Second Temple.

Patricia Woods, is currently on research leave as the Visiting Scholar at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at Harvard University. She was Program Chair for the 2003 Association for Israel Studies' international conference in San Diego, California. She presented papers to the Law and Society Association, the Association for Israel Studies, and the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at Harvard University. In addition, she presented her work on the competing social visions of left-wing social movements and religious constituencies in Israel as part of the Bess Shorstein Lecture Series in Jacksonville. She published new articles in *Israel Studies Forum*, *Droit et Societe*, and has a forthcoming piece in an ed-



(continued on page 19)

Images of Miami Beach in Jewish-American Literature

by Andrew Gordon
Center for Jewish Studies
Department of English

(Excerpted from *Studies in American Jewish Literature* 18 [1999]: 52-58.)

Miami Beach is rarely portrayed in Jewish-American literature as a tropical paradise or New Zion. Surprisingly, it is most often seen as a tropical hell or even as a death camp! Consider some examples from the works of Norman Mailer, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Saul Bellow, Thane Rosenbaum, and Cynthia Ozick.

For Mailer in *Miami and the Siege of Chicago* (1968), Miami Beach is haunted by the ghosts of the jungle.

....large areas of the original coastal strip were first covered over altogether with macadam, white condominium, white luxury hotel and white stucco flea-bag. Over hundreds, then thousands of acres, white sidewalks, streets and white buildings covered the earth where the jungle had been. Is it so dissimilar from covering your poor pubic hair with adhesive tape for fifty years? The vegetal memories of that excised jungle haunted Miami Beach in a steam pot of miasmas. . . . That uprooted jungle had to be screaming beneath (Mailer 11-12).

In his stories, Isaac Bashevis Singer echoes Mailer's imagery of Miami Beach as a purgatory with the jungle "screaming beneath." "The inhabitants, building on a wasteland, had planted trees and flowering plants from all parts of the world. . . they had created architectural wonders and had worked out elaborate schemes for

pleasure. A planned hedonism. But the boredom of the desert remained. No loud music could dispel it, no garishness wipe it out. . . the swampland refused to give way" (Singer 143).

Singer's stories suggest that Miami Beach is a land of dreams where mysterious powers grant your wish, but it never turns out the way you wanted. The nameless narrator of "Alone," on vacation at a crowded hotel in Miami Beach, wishes he could have a hotel all to himself, and miraculously gets his wish when his hotel declares bankruptcy and closes. He checks into a nearby rundown hotel where he finds himself the only guest and soon feels

lonely. During a hurricane, the desk clerk, a Cuban woman, comes to his room, claiming to be frightened. He describes her as "a deformed creature. . . like a tubercular monkey" (146). He rejects her overtures, and the next morning she tells him to move out, that the hotel is closing. "Alone" transforms the tropical paradise into a feverish nightmare haunted by demons.

Singer's "Old Love" concerns a fleeting romance between senior citizens. Harry Bendiner is a rich but lonely 82-year-old man in a condominium on Miami Beach who has outlived three wives and become estranged from his children. He even wonders, "'Why go on living?' What flavor did his life possess? . . . This wasn't a building but a hospital. People died and he didn't find out about it until weeks or months afterward" (424). Then a neighbor knocks on his door and gives him a new lease on life: Ethel, a 57-year-old widow, friendly, good-looking, and rich like Harry. "Something within Harry exulted. It could be nothing else but that heaven had acceded to his secret desires. Only now, as he listened to her, did he realize how lonely he had been all these years" (427). Quickly, Harry and Ethel plan a life together. But in the morning, a neighbor tells him that Ethel has committed suicide. She left Harry a note saying "I must go where my husband is" (432). Harry is worse off than before.

Like Singer, Saul Bellow sees Miami Beach as a place of death. In *More Die of Heartbreak*,



Benn Crader goes to Miami Beach for his uncle's funeral and finds his uncle's house to be "a big elaborate Spanish-style white building on an inlet, a cabin cruiser right in front. Palms, orange trees. . . handsome and expensively furnished, obviously the home of a multimillionaire" (Bellow 321-22). The palatial setting cannot forestall the reality of death, and all that remains of his uncle is "a black box...no bigger than my binocular case" (425).

Thane Rosenbaum, in his 1996 story collection, *Elijah Visible*, shows Miami through the eyes of a young Jewish boy. Adam Posner recalls being nine years old in 1969 when his family moved from New York to Miami Beach, a city which at first strikes him as a wonderland:

Miami in those days was a tropical Oz, minus the dueling witches. . . . A dreamy paradise set adrift from all those urban obsessions that our parents had abandoned up north. . . . It didn't seem real, this Miami, this asylum for retirees, fleeing Cubans, and deep-sea Southerners. What was the catch? How could a city that luxuriated in short pants all year round possibly be hiding something? (Rosenbaum 161)

The initially sunny picture of Miami Beach soon darkens and deepens when young, athletic Mr. Isaacson, Adam's favorite grownup and father of Adam's best friend, gets stomach cancer and dies before the year is over. Miami Beach is no longer the island paradise of youth and sunshine: time and death have entered Eden.

Rosenbaum's "The Rabbi Double-Faults" casts the shadow of the Holocaust over Miami Beach. Rabbi Sheldon Vered is a controversial "Rabbi-about-town, dapper, handsome, with pressed silver hair" (129), a fierce tennis player who sports a deep tan, preaches sermons about the Miami Dolphins, admits he eats on Yom Kippur, and claims "'God is often impotent. Or maybe he's out breaking his own fast'" (135). But then

the congregation meets Sheldon's long-lost twinbrother, Rabbi Joseph Rose from Tel Aviv. Rabbi Sheldon turns out to be a survivor of Auschwitz whereas his brother Joseph spent the war in Israel. Ironically, the Holocaust made Joseph return to God but caused Sheldon to turn away from God.

The twins play doubles tennis; the stakes are that if Sheldon's side wins, then his brother "'will have to introduce a healthy dose of skepticism into your services. God can no longer be the Almighty-but rather at times you should refer to him as an absent God, or a vacationing God. . . ." (148-49). But if Joseph's side wins, then Sheldon must "'bring God back into the synagogue'" (149). The game is close until Sheldon's arm brace flies off, revealing "the rabbi's numeric tattoo-162014- his identity in the camps" (154). Joseph is so unnerved that he double faults and loses. Rabbi Sheldon, alone in the rain, dances a victory ceremony

which seems both to celebrate and to defy the deity.

Miami Beach is the setting for another Holocaust story in Cynthia Ozick's "Rosa," about a mother who saw her baby daughter killed in a concentration camp. Decades later, she still worships the baby's shawl and fantasizes that she is still alive. Rosa is sent from New York to Florida to recover from a nervous breakdown, but because she takes the Holocaust with her wherever she goes, her Miami Beach is a death camp: "The streets were a furnace, the sun an executioner. . ." (Ozick 14). She sees all the inhabitants of the city as inmates of a camp. "Everyone had left behind a real life. Here they had nothing. They were all scarecrows, blown about under the murdering sunball with empty rib cages" (16).

Like Harry in Singer's "Old Love," Rosa is given a second chance through a late-life romance. Simon Persky, a 71-year-old widower, picks her up in a laundromat and tells her she can't live in the past. Rosa angrily drives him away. In

(continued on page 15)



One Student's Journey

by Allison Simon

Last year, when I was a junior at University of Florida, I decided I wanted to see my family roots and religious/ethnic history first-hand. Because the Palestinian terrorist uprising made Israeli study problematic, I chose another option. In January, I left my home in Raleigh, NC and embarked on a five-month journey to study Jewish history and issues in Central and Eastern Europe through a program called CET Jewish Studies in Prague.

My mother's parents never spoke about their lives in Eastern Europe before the Holocaust. As my father's parents escaped Eastern Europe before the Holocaust, I could only learn about my roots by expanding my knowledge of Jewish history and culture beyond America and Israel.

When I first arrived in Prague, I took an intensive Czech language class. This was necessary because the Czech language is not at all similar to English. Some words use letters or characters unfamiliar to English-speakers and certain combinations of "normal" letters have a totally different sound in Czech. After the intensive language class was completed, I continued to take a class in the Czech language, plus other classes which focused on Central/Eastern European politics and culture and European Jewish history.

I loved all of my classes and I really loved living in Prague, which looks like a story-book city. One person who visited me there said Prague looked like a scene out of Disney World, except that it was real. The Czech people were warm and hospitable, and seemed to enjoy trying to understand my broken, rudimentary attempts to speak their language. During my time there I became comfortable riding on their

subway system, their world famous trolley car system and in taxis. My fellow students and I took weekend trips to other cities, both in the Czech Republic and the close-by countries of Germany, Italy and others. We developed favorite restaurants shops and clubs, made some local friends and watched lots of American movies with Czech subtitles.

Among the courses I took, one professor had a particular impact on me. Eighty-two year old Jan Weiner, an internationally renowned war hero, taught a class on the destruction of European Jewry. Weiner left Czechoslovakia in the 1930's to fight with the Royal Air Force in World War II and spent eight years as a prisoner of war. There is no better way to learn about history than hearing about such first-hand experience.



Allison with Jan Weiner

Weiner's lectures were full of factual information interspersed with stories of his personal experiences. My fellow students and I were often riveted to our seats and when class was over, we would plead for him to tell us more stories. We were like little children. In our other classes, our professors told us that several books and one movie had been made about Weiner's life. I have since read

them and viewed the movie. He is a truly remarkable human being.

Part of the curriculum involved making week-long trips to other Eastern European cities that were of importance to Judaism. We visited Warsaw and Krakow in Poland, Bratislava in the Slovak Republic and Budapest in Hungary. Before I went to visit these

places, my "typical" American view was that there were no real differences between these cultures. Now, I know that is like saying that the

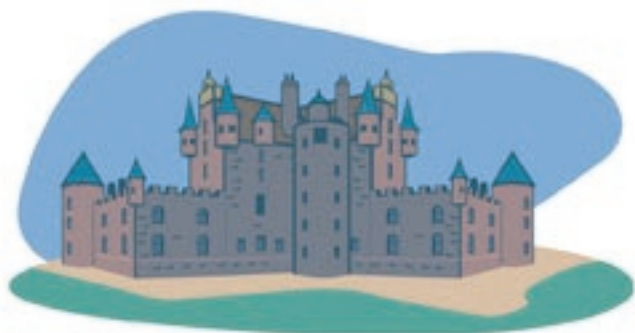
French, Italians and Spanish are all the same, too. Certainly, there are some cultural similarities. But these are very different peoples. To have learned that, not many years ago, the Czech and Slovak republics were forcibly joined as Czechoslovakia was incredible to me. The people have so little in common, not even

Allison Simon, a senior who graduated in May, received the Shulevitz and Gerson Scholarships to support her study in the Prague program. Allison plans to seek an advanced degree in Jewish communal services.

language, that I could not understand how anyone could have thought they needed to be forced to be a single nation.

Another unique experience was spending Jewish holidays in another country. I witnessed Shabbat, Purim, Pesach, and Israel Independence Day through Czech eyes. I had always been told that a Jewish person can go to a synagogue anywhere in the world and know the prayers that are being recited. While that is true, it is also true that melodies differ and that many traditions differ between Americans and Czechs. Czechs celebrate in traditional Jewish ways, but they have

My fellow students and I were riveted to our seats and when class was over, we would plead for him to tell us more stories.



their own customs that date as far back as the Middle Ages.

My family has been very involved with the Raleigh Jewish Federation, and I was amazed to discover that the small Jewish community in Prague, like the relatively small Jewish community in Raleigh, is a tight-knit group. There is a leader of the community, and he sets the tone for their various community projects. While I was there, they were repairing and renovating the old Jewish cemetery that had been partially destroyed by recent massive floods. My father, who was president of the Raleigh Jewish Federation at the time, asked about aid coming from American federations, and the leader of the Jewish community in Prague said that money from "the Joint" (the old term used to describe overseas aid sent by Jewish federations in the United States; short for "Joint Distribution Committee") had already restored one part of the cemetery and two of the old synagogues in Prague. He went on to say that the aid from the U.S. Jewish federations gives the Czech people hope

that their small Jewish community, which was so decimated by the Holocaust, will survive. Unfortunately, some other signs do not look as promising. For example, when I arrived in Prague, there were three kosher restaurants. By the time I left five months later, two had closed.

Prague is the largest city close to the small community of Terezin,

where Hitler and the Nazis set up a prison and "transit camp" for the Jews during the Holocaust. We made one trip with our class early during our time in the Czech Republic, but I found I was drawn there so strongly that I made many trips back on my own. I videotaped and photographed as many things as I could. Although I never learned whether my grandparents had actually spent time there (they had passed away years ago), I am certain I experienced Terezin as if they had been there at one time. I kept imagining what it must have been like to have been uprooted and shipped away from one's home and loved ones and held in this purgatory where virtually the only choices for most were death by gas chamber or death by disease and starvation. Terezin was the place where victims of the Holocaust were sorted out to determine who would be gassed and who would be put to work first.

It was through the visits to Terezin that I think I did find my roots. I recall that it was in a synagogue - one that the Jewish transients in Terezin fashioned and hid away from the view of the Nazis since the practice of Judaism was forbidden at Terezin - that I made a decision to devote my life's work to Jewish causes. That commitment has continued since my return to the U.S.

I encourage my fellow college students to, in the words of Robert Frost, "choose the road less traveled" and study in Central and Eastern Europe. Do not think that the only worthwhile Jewish studies can take place in Israel. Certainly, for those about to go to Israel, nothing compares to that. But, for those who, like me, have been to Israel many times, going to the ethnic home of your ancestors and studying there will give you a wholly different appreciation of your Judaism and heritage. It changes your entire college experience and teaches you a lot about yourself while learning about other peoples and cultures.

Welcome New Faculty

Center Expands with Two New Faculty Members

Expanding the staff from twenty-six full-time and part-time instructors, Mitchell Hart and Nina Caputo joined the Center for Jewish Studies in the Fall 2003 semester.

"We're delighted to welcome Mitchell Hart and Nina Caputo," commented Center Director, Dr. Kenneth Wald. "They are both considered rising stars in Jewish history. Their addition enables us to address significant gaps in our curriculum and to begin developing our long-awaited graduate program."



Hart

An accomplished historian and author, Dr. Hart published the award-winning book, *Social Science and the Politics of Modern Jewish Identity*. (Stanford University Press, 2000). The study focusses on the intricate conjunction of social science and Zionism in the period from 1880 to 1930.

"Anyone familiar with the current debates within the American Jewish community over intermarriage, population levels, and Jewish group survival is already familiar with the major themes of the book," says Hart. "I just talk about these issues in an earlier context: Jewish debates in Europe in the early twentieth century."

Dr. Hart, Associate Professor in the Departments of History and Jewish Studies, joined the UF faculty after having served as Associate Professor in History at Florida International University in Miami. He is the department's designee for the Alexander Grass Eminent Scholar Chair in Jewish Studies.

Having grown up in Los Angeles, the move to Florida was a natural transition. It wasn't the beaches or sun, however, that drew him to Gainesville. He explains, "UF seems to me to be an ideal place to work. It is the flagship university

of a major public system that draws the best students in the state. And I was very attracted to the idea of working in a real Jewish Studies program, with one of the finest Judaica libraries in the country."

Dr. Hart completed his Ph.D. in History at the University of California in Los Angeles and has been a Skirball Fellow at the Oxford Centre for Jewish and Hebrew Studies in England.



Caputo

Dr. Nina Caputo, Assistant Professor in the Departments of Religion and History, came to UF from her role as Visiting Assistant Professor at the Department of History and Frankel Center for Judaic Studies at the University of Michigan. She has also served as Adjunct Fellow at the University of Pennsylvania's Center for Advanced Judaic Studies and Assistant Professor of Medieval and Jewish History at Florida International University. Receiving her Ph.D. in History from the University of California, Berkeley, Dr. Caputo completed the Mellon Post-Doctoral Fellowship in the Humanities at the University of Pennsylvania.

Dr. Caputo specializes in the history of Sephardi Jewry during the Middle Ages, a critical time when what is today recognized as "classical Judaism" was largely crystallized. Her recent publications include *Prophecy and Redemption: Messianic Expectation in Nahmanides' Sefer ha-Ge'ulah* and *To Kill the Thorns in the Vineyard: A Medieval Rabbi's Argument for Diversity within Unity*.

Since arriving at UF, Caputo has been teaching courses in Jewish history which both Jewish and Christian students are finding challenging. "It's been difficult, but the students are getting into it. Many of the Jewish students are finding out how little they knew (about their heritage)."

She says she has found Gainesville a pleasant place to live, noting "I am especially excited to be involved in an active and growing Jewish Studies program."

Thank You!

The following donors have contributed to the work of the Center for Jewish Studies during the 2003-2004 academic year. Their generosity has enabled us to host visiting scholars, provide scholarships for UF students, enhance the research of Center faculty, and meet our mission in various other ways. We appreciate your confidence and your willingness to help us.

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the ending, Rosa agrees to see Persky again, but we don't know if he will prevail against her desire to remain in perpetual mourning.

Rosa's pessimistic vision of Miami Beach as death camp is countered by Persky's more balanced vision. He tells Rosa, "'Be glad you're not up there [New York] anymore. On the other hand, here it's no paradise neither. Believe me, when it comes to muggers and stranglers, there's no utopia nowhere'" (18). He says to Rosa, "'In Miami, Florida. People are more friendly. . . . Nazis we ain't got. What kind of person are you, you're still afraid?'" (19). Persky, who did not experience the Holocaust, may not see Miami Beach as utopia, but neither does he see it as a jungle hell or a concentration camp.

Although there are more cheerful views of South Florida in Jewish-American literature, such as in Paula Marantz Cohen's delightful comedy of manners, *Jane Austen in Boca*, by and large Jewish-American authors view the Florida paradise with deep skepticism. Why should this be so? There are a number of possible explanations. First of all, as Tolstoy wrote, "Happy families are all alike." Great literature thrives on conflict, on troubled and unhappy people, and people with problems drag those with them wherever they go, even to sunny Florida. Second, as a haven for Jewish retirees, south Florida is associated with the end of life. My parents retired to Century Village in Deerfield Beach, a place my mother scathingly referred to as "Cemetery Village." Third and finally, even as the Jews throughout their long history have been seeking Zion, they also possess a healthy dose of skepticism about false messiahs and false utopias. Paradise, they notice, invariably comes with a catch, whether in the state of Israel or in the state of Florida.

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Alumni Profile



Jacoby

Joe Jacoby, a 1974 graduate of the Jewish Studies program at the University of Florida, was honored as an outstanding alumnus by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

During homecoming weekend in 2003, Jacoby and his family attended a banquet hosted by Dean Neil Sullivan and addressed by then-President Charles Young. He received a plaque in honor of his award.

Jacoby was honored for his outstanding contributions to Jewish life in Florida. After graduation from UF in 1974, Jacoby entered the insurance business and began to take a series of leadership positions in Jewish communal organizations. He is currently the President of Anderson & Jacoby Insurance Consultants. As a resident of Coral Gables, Florida, he is heavily involved in the Jewish community in the Miami area. He has served on the board and is currently the immediate past president of the Greater Miami Jewish Federation, South Dade branch. He is also a past president of his synagogue, Temple Beth Am in Miami. Because of his passion for sports and athletics, he co-chaired the Maccabiah Games, held in Miami during the summer of 2001.

Center Director Kenneth Wald, who nominated Jacoby for the award, noted that he is one of the very first graduates of the program. "When Joe Jacoby studied at UF in the early 1970s, the faculty was small but remarkably high quality. That quality is reflected in Joe's expression of appreciation" (see box).

Jacoby also remarked with some astonishment on the growth of Jewish Studies at UF. Noting that he took almost all his courses from one professor, he was impressed to learn that the program today draws on nearly 30 faculty from a wide variety of academic disciplines.

Naturally, Joe is a die-hard Gator fan, and puts a great deal of time and effort into his support for the Hillel at the University of Florida. He and his wife Shelley M. Jacoby have two daughters, Stephanie Jacoby, a sophomore at Syracuse University and Julie Jacoby, a senior at Ransom Everglades High School in Coconut Grove, Florida.

From the Desk of Joe Jacoby...

I am very proud to say that I attended the University of Florida and received the Outstanding Alumni Award in Jewish Studies. When I first went to the University of Florida way back in the 1970's, the thought of being an active member of the Jewish community never crossed my mind.

Today, there is a different story in that I have taken numerous leadership roles in the Jewish community of Miami. As past president of Temple Beth Am and immediate past president of the Greater Miami Jewish Federation of South Dade, my life has changed.

Community has become a priority for me and I believe that one person can make a difference. While serving on the executive board of Hillel, we were able to go forward on the new Hillel building on the University of Florida campus, a much-needed facility for the thousands of Jewish students attending school there. These projects give me the energy to go on and I receive so much in return.

While attending the University of Florida, I took every Jewish Studies course available. Professor Barry Mesch, who became one of my life mentors, taught these courses. Professor Mesch would invite me to his home for Shabbat and of course he provided the leadership for the High Holiday services on the campus. We have remained in touch to this day. He and the other wonderful professors of Judaic Studies at the University of Florida are the reason why this program has become nationally recognized. I am sure the Jewish education I received at the University of Florida as a young man helped to make me who I am today.

Congratulations Spring Graduates!

Springtime is often a happy time for many of us. For nine Jewish Studies graduates, it has been an especially rewarding season. At commencement ceremonies on May 2nd **Rachel Berney, Jan Bragdon, Matthew Glick, David Kram, Allison Simon, Michele Supraski, and Alexis Wolfson** all turned their tassels and celebrated their achievements in Jewish Studies.

In addition to these seven students who received their degrees in person, the BA in Jewish Studies was also awarded to **Brady Boynton** of Vero Beach and **Elaina Zeller** of Plantation. **Carly Mann** of Coral Springs graduated in December, 2003 and with several more expected to graduate in August, this will be the single largest graduating class in the program's thirty year history.

What's next for these accomplished graduates? Here is what some of them had to say about their plans for the future:

Jan Bragdon:

I'm planning to be back at UF in the fall to continue my education by working on a Master's in Linguistics. During the summer I plan to do some volunteer work for Wycliffe Bible Translators headquartered in Orlando, Florida. In the long run, I am interested in writing and continuing to work in some area of literacy and translation.

Alexis Wolfson:

In the Fall of 2004 I will be attending the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies at the University of Judaism in Los Angeles, California. This summer I will be a participant in the Jewish Leadership Institute, a month

long program in Israel geared towards building strong Jewish leaders. Also, my article for the University Scholars Program will be published in the summer edition of the *Journal of Undergraduate Research*: "A History of Disagreement: A Brief Overview of Early Conservative Judaism in America"

Matt Glick:

I have been accepted to the Masters of Arts in International Business at the University of Florida. I hope to study somewhere in Israel and then pursue a career in international business

between the United States and Israel. As part of the major I have taken relevant courses including Politics of Israel, Politics of the Middle East and Judaism and Politics, which will really help me in my career goals. Likewise, as a religious Jew, I will carry all that I have learned these past four years for the rest of my life.

David Kram plans to spend two years in the "Teach for America" program on assignment in Phoenix, Arizona. **Rachel Berney** will be in the cantorial program at Hebrew Union College, spending the first year at the Jerusalem campus.



Berney, Kram and Wolfson



Congratulations!

With Fond Remembrance
Dr. Warren Bargad
1940-2003

We offer this tribute to Dr. Warren Bargad, Director of the Center for Jewish Studies from 1985-1999.

By Adena Bargad

My father's father was a cantor, his mother, a trained pharmacist and Jewish cook extraordinaire. They wanted him to be a doctor. Instead, he completed a dual Jewish/secular education at Boston's Latin and Hebrew High Schools, and then graduated from both Harvard and Boston Hebrew College,

where he received a Master's degree in Hebrew Literature. He received his Ph.D from Brandeis in Near Eastern/Judaic Studies and then held faculty positions at a rabbinic college and a college of Judaica where he also served as Dean. He directed the Center for Jewish Studies at UF-Gainesville for fourteen years. He authored books and articles on Israeli poets and poetry and received awards for excellence in teaching and leadership in Jewish education. At Congregation B'nai Israel, he read Torah regularly and served as morning service cantor on several High Holidays. In short, my father's public contributions to the Jewish community, and Jewish education in particular, are apparent. But what follows recounts the more personal contribution my father made to maintaining Jewish tradition as I reflect on how he transmitted the culture of Judaism to me.

Looking back, I realize that my fondest childhood memories are distinctly Jewish, and directly linked to the Jewish traditions of my father

and my father's family. One of my earliest childhood memories is of going around our dark house just before Passover with only a candle to light the way, sweeping up all of the symbolic *chametz* my mother and father had hidden around the house. There were hilarious Purim *shpeils*, my family dressed in bathrobes with fake beards and triangular hats. My father himself tutored my brother and me for our Bar and Bat Mitzvah, and I can still see us in his study, our cat Mutzy spread out over all of our books. My memories of the High Holidays with my father are most vivid and,

perhaps, most cherished: the smells, of crisp fall air and turning leaves, of my mother's cooking filling the kitchen; the feelings, of hunger pangs, of the slowed pace of a whole day at temple with my father; and the

textures, of soft, old siddur pages, the smooth, worn velveteen of my father's tallis bag, the fluidity of the tzitzits pouring through my fingers as I played with them.

This past Yom Kippur, I watched and cried as a girl in front of me at temple twisted the tzitzits of her own father's tallis into a braid. At that moment, I realized that, despite my own tenuous connection to religious Judaism, the most significant elements of the close father-daughter relationship my dad and I shared were, unequivocally, Jewish. Indeed, in the year prior to my father's death, when his activities were severely limited to those requiring little or no expressive or

(continued)

I took a translation class from Warren at Spertus College about 20 years ago. I was a computer programmer searching for a new career. I was astounded to have Warren ask me to work on several projects together with him, including an anthology that would have replaced the old "Israeli Stories". One of the projects actually got published, a play by A. B. Yehoshua—quite heady stuff for me. I did not end up, as I thought for a while that I might, as a translator of modern Hebrew literature. But I'm now engaged in creating an English-language version of the traditional "Miqra'ot Gedolot" Bible commentaries for the Jewish Publication Society — a massive work of editing, annotating, and translating. So Warren's encouragement played its part after all, in setting me on the path to my life's work. I can still hear his voice and picture his face (always with a smile). Thanks, Warren!

Michael Carasik, former student

receptive language, we continued to do Jewish things together. We baked the “moon kichel” (poppyseed cookies) of his youth, and we listened to Jewish music, the melodic prayers of the siddur becoming lullabies to sing him to sleep. In these activities, our parent-child roles were poignantly reversed, oddly harkening back to the foundations of my father’s own Jewish childhood, being in the kitchen watching his mother cook and listening to his father sing the liturgy. All of the Jewish things

I feel so proud that I could comfort my father with the Jewish elements of his life that were part of his essence and part of the essence of our relationship.

we did together in his last years and even his last days, clearly remained familiar to him and, in turn, comforting.

I feel so proud that I could comfort my father with the Jewish elements of his life that were part of his essence and part of the essence of our relationship. I have often thought that Alzheimer’s distilled my father down to his basic elements and being Jewish was so clearly one of them. At the Passover seder this year, I sang the Kiddush in the Bargad family melody and in doing so, served the memory of my father while my dear memories of him were also served. So now, it is I who take comfort in Jewish tradition, because I know that I will always be able to feel and see and smell and taste and hear a memory of my father in all things Jewish. His very personal legacy of Judaism is that it lived in our relationship, and now it lives in me.

Adena Bargad moved to Gainesville from New Haven Connecticut four years ago. In her time here, she has served in many community health care capacities. She currently works in private practice as a Nurse Practitioner. Her most precious memories made in Gainesville involve time spent with her father.

(Abroad, continued from page 7)

form, personal interviews with the instructor, recommendations from faculty and specified prior coursework. This careful screening process produced a group of students whom Hochman characterized as deep, compassionate, wholly engaged, and committed. “This class was truly a privilege to teach,” she reported.

The course was cosponsored by the Department of Religion and the “Bridges of Understanding,” a German educational institution supported by the German government. The UF program is one of only three in the country, joining Brandeis and UCLA in offering this unique study tour. Student participation was underwritten by scholarships from the Gary Gerson Discretionary Scholarship Fund and the Norman Shulevitz Scholarship Fund.



(Woods, continued from page 9)

ited volume on cause lawyering (Stanford University Press).

Two previously written, longer term projects were published in *Field Methods* and Joel Migdal’s edited volume on *Boundaries and Belonging* (Cambridge University Press, March 2004). Woods will be a Visiting International Researcher at the Group d’Analyse de Politiques Publiques, Ecole Supérieur Normale de Cachan, France, which is part of the Centre National de la recherche Scientifique; and an Honorary Research Fellow at the Birkbeck College of Law at the University of London.

Programming 2003-2004

The breadth of the Center's mission, the study of Jewish Civilization in all its forms, was apparent from the remarkable range of speakers in the annual Gary Gerson Lecture Series for 2003-2004.

A dozen scholars and writers addressed campus audiences on topics that spanned space, time and the many dimensions of Judaism.



Raphael

This breadth was something of a happy accident, noted Center director Kenneth Wald. "We put a real emphasis on working with other campus departments and programs this year," he noted, "as part of our continuing effort to raise the salience of Jewish themes across the curriculum."

The series was inaugurated by **Frederic Raphael**, a noted British novelist, essayist and screenwriter. In what he described as a "discursive intellectual parable," Raphael explored the challenges of finding a reasonable language to employ when talking about the Divinity, an acute problem for a "secular Jew" like himself. He argued for a skepticism that neither denies the existence of God nor grants such metaphysical concepts any authoritative status in society. "Only a fool can fail to recognize the limitations of a secular society, based on a system of interpenetrating uncertainties," he acknowledged. Yet "only a villain can propose that there is anything better in prospect for so systematically duplicitous a creature as man."



Shelamay

Kay Shelamay, the G. Gordon Watts Professor of Music at Harvard, explored the "silent voices" of women in the Syrian Jewish musical tradition. The lecture was cosponsored by the Center for World Music. Despite a ban on public singing, Shelamay pointed out that Syrian Jewish women appeared in the lyrics of Jewish musical forms and were its cultural custodians.



Green

The Futernick Family Visiting Professor for 2003, **Oded Balaban** of Haifa University, brought a philosopher's eye to his lecture about the peace process in the Middle East. During his semester in residence, Balaban taught courses about Spinoza and the Middle East. The lecture was attended by Andy and Mitch Sklawer, UF students who are the grandsons of Morris and Miriam Futernick (see story on p. 3).



Greene

The first speaker in the spring, **Arthur Green**, delivered the Jewish Council of North Central Florida lecture. A professor at both Hebrew College and Brandeis University and one of the world's foremost experts on Jewish spirituality, Green offered "A Kabbalah for the Future" to a packed house at the Emerson Alumni Hall.

He was followed by **Joshua Greene**, a writer/producer and the author of *Justice at Dachau*. In the Harry Rich Lecture in Holocaust Studies, Greene talked about the little-known trials that actually convicted far more Nazis and broke new legal ground compared to the better-known Nuremberg War Crimes Trials.



Walzer

Thanks to the support of the Department of Political Science, the Center was able to host at St. Patrick's day talk by **Michael Walzer**, one of the foremost public intellectuals in the United States and a professor at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton. For several years, Walzer has been part of a team of scholars recovering the "Jewish Political Tradition." He contends that although they lacked sovereignty, the Jews of the Middle Ages developed a political tradition as they governed their communal affairs. Often derided as mere housekeeping by scholars of "high politics," the activities and challenges of self-government produced a coherent tradition that continues to operate in Jewish communities today.

The series concluded with **Dr. Benjamin Hary** from the Near Eastern Studies Program at Emory University. In "The Languages of the Jews," Hary explored the nature of Judeo-Arabic, the language of Jews in Arab lands and an important realm where Judaism intersected Arab culture and Islam.

The Center also hosted public talks by Gila Naveh of the University of Cincinnati, Fred Lazin of Ben Gurion University, Richard Friedman from the University of California-San Diego, Jack Kugelmass at Arizona State University, and Steven Carr, a fellow at the Institute for Advanced Holocaust Studies of the United States Holocaust Museum.

Our thanks to the sponsors listed here and to other donors who made these programs possible.

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Course Offerings 2003-2004

Fall 2003

Beginning Modern Hebrew 1
2nd Year Modern Hebrew 1
3rd Year Modern Hebrew 1
Introduction to Judaism
Hebrew Scriptures
Performing Judaism: Feast/Fast
British Romanticism and Judaism
History of Jewish Music
Feminist Biblical Criticism
A Philosophical Perspective on the Middle East
Literature and Art of the Holocaust
Spinoza
Jewish Mysticism
European Enlightenment and the Jews
Images of Women in Hebrew Literature
Introduction to Modern Hebrew Literature
Judaism and Politics
American Jewish History
Early Judaism and Christianity
Internship in Jewish Communal Services

Spring 2004

Beginning Modern Hebrew 2
2nd Year Modern Hebrew 2
3rd Year Modern Hebrew 2
Jewish Art Music in Western Culture
Anthropology of Religion
Jesus/Judaism in Fiction
Modern Judaism (Honors)
Modern European Jewish History
Geography of Jewish Population
Gendering God
Modern Jewish Thought
Jewish History: 1492 - The Enlightenment
Judaism, Ecology and Nature
Writing the Jewish Middle Ages
Comparative Mysticism
Post Zionism: Ideology and Literature
Internship in Jewish Communal Services

The Center Staff



Marianne Jones, Marty Swilley and David Etzkin

As the Program Assistant for the Center, **Marty Swilley** is responsible for the daily office management of the Center, including preparing the budget, coordinating arrangements for guest lecturers, maintaining the course schedule, student advisement, and website development. She has been with the Center for three years.

Graduate Assistant **David Etzkin** is actively involved as Coordinator for the Summer Holocaust Institute for Florida Teachers (SHIFT). His special emphasis is on outreach and recruitment for SHIFT, attending area schools to promote teacher awareness of the Holocaust institute. He graduated in May 2004 with an EDS in Counselor Education and will be moving on from the Center to pursue his next adventure.

Marianne Jones, also a graduate assistant, has been primarily responsible for designing and distributing all publicity for the Center.

She is currently the editor of *Amudim*.



Kanitria Ponder

Student Assistant **Kanitria Ponder** assists Marty with the daily operations of the Center, filling in wherever she is needed.

Your gift to the Center for Jewish Studies at the University of Florida will help support student and community programming. Donations will enable a greater number of students to study abroad, and spur the continued academic growth of the Center. We welcome and appreciate gifts of any amount.

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