Director’s Report: From Generation to Generation

Digging with the Badgers

Student Profiles

Zionism Symposium

Greenfield Summer Institute

A Biselle KlezKamp
As I write this, the Center for Jewish Studies has just hosted its thirteenth annual Greenfield Summer Institute, a gathering of nearly one hundred fifty adults who come to UW–Madison to learn about Jewish life and culture. This year’s theme, “Jewish Memory and Nostalgia,” is especially interesting to me because my scholarly work and teaching have lately focused on issues of Jewish memory. One of the things I’ve learned is that memory is crucially important to Jewish culture: it’s a connection to the past, it provides a sense of cultural continuity, and it justifies an ethical sense of responsibility for the future.

The Center’s immediate past is, I think, a significant achievement. In twenty years we’ve gathered together an outstanding group of teachers and scholars of Jewish studies, created a robust major course of study and a certificate program for undergraduates, and established excellent public programming, including the Greenfield Institute, the Conney Project on Jewish Arts, and the Mayrent Institute for Yiddish Culture. And as you’ll see from the content of this newsletter, we continue to provide a rich educational experience for our students and community members.

But memory is also oriented to the future, and the work of the Center for Jewish Studies makes this orientation clear. The Mayrent Institute is a repository for music and culture, but it provides a cultural space for Yiddish as a living tradition. Our courses—such as “Food in Rabbinic Judaism” or “Holocaust: History, Memory, and Education”—make clear the presence of the Jewish past in our contemporary lives. Ambassador John Hirsch’s Spring 2012 lecture explored how the memories of postwar Germany have direct effects upon how we come to terms with violence in places like post-Apartheid South Africa. In these ways and in countless others, the memory of the past compels us to create the future.

In my first year as the Center’s director, I have been continually impressed by the intellectual energy and vitality of our faculty and staff and by the exceptional goodwill of our friends and supporters around the country. It’s this energy and goodwill, as much as the memory of the past—the Jewish past, and the work of those who have preceded us at the Center—that provide the urgency to move forward. I’m excited to build a bridge from our past to the future.

Michael Bernard-Donals, Director
Mosse/Weinstein Center for Jewish Studies
Nancy Hoefs Professor of English

108 Ingraham Hall
1155 Observatory Drive
Madison, WI 53706

(608) 265-4763
jewishstudies@cjs.wisc.edu
jewishstudies.wisc.edu
Raiders of the Lost Ark began with Indiana Jones barely escaping death in multiple ways while seeking archaeological treasures in Peru. Next he was back at Marshall College teaching to a class of largely somnambulant students, except for the lovestruck girl in the front row. Here, the most exciting archaeologist in the world cannot make his students focus on his course. If such a character cannot hold the attention of his class, how can I hope to do this in the Biblical Archaeology class at the University of Wisconsin? I fully appreciate the irony of the comparison.

Archaeology is a discipline that pushes the mental and physical limits of the practitioner as truly fascinating things are being discovered. It is exhilarating, and rarely life threatening, but in an academic situation it is hardly exciting. If you teach a rigorous academic course it is virtually impossible to impart excitement and wonder as you show images of ruined things in a darkened room. Unfortunately, showing Indiana Jones movies or videos of Zahi Hawass exploring the pyramids does not withstand academic scrutiny.

One obvious way to resolve this teaching conundrum is to take interested students to the biblical world and let them experience the excitement and exhilaration first hand by doing archaeology in a field school. Or, in the case at hand, take students on an excavation in Israel. I am the co-director of the Hesi Regional Project’s Excavation at Khirbet Summeily, a biblical site located south-southeast of Ashkelon. I successfully applied to the William and Marjorie Coleman Fund for support so that six students could join me at the field school for the dig season.

For five weeks in June and July, 2012, we excavated at Khirbet Summeily, a village located on the border between the Philistines and the Kingdom of Judah from about 1025 to 750 BCE. We found walls, floors, and occupational debris that included pottery, animal bones, seeds, and even a few Egyptian scarabs. The students actually touched artifacts of daily life that were in use at the time of David and Solomon. During the excavation we lived at Ruhama, experiencing life on a kibbutz, and on the weekends we took educational tours to Jerusalem and archaeological and religious sites in the north and south of Israel. It was a full five weeks, and I have to believe that the students learned far more archaeology and history than they ever would learn in a regular course on the UW campus. But in addition, they undoubtedly learned a lot about themselves, as well as a great deal about modern Israel and its many cultures. It was an experience they will treasure for the rest of their lives.
The Global Impact of Jewish Studies Scholarships

BUENOS AIRES Ezequiel Gómez Caride, a PhD candidate in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, received the Weinstein Distinguished Graduate Fellowship in Jewish Studies and Education. His dissertation examines religious discourse and the formation of national identity in Argentine public schools during the twentieth century, with a specific focus on Jewish education, Jewish-Catholic relations, and the role of anti-Semitism in Argentina. In the process, he aims to address the following question: Why, in the first decade of the twentieth century, did Jewish schools start to be perceived as a threat to Argentine national identity? While Caride’s research focuses on periods of crisis in twentieth-century Argentina, he is quick to point out that the problem of religion’s role in public schools continues to have relevance today—and not only in Argentina. “I could enumerate examples from all around the world, such as the use of the hijab in French schools, in which religious controversies around schooling arise as heated and unsettled issues. In fact, every day the scope and depth of religious controversies at schools all around the world seems to grow.” After finishing his dissertation, Caride will continue to develop his research on the often-overlooked role of religion in the formation of identity through education. “Religion is still a crucial element in contemporary society and it seems most likely to continue being relevant,” he observes. “It still shapes in important ways how we think about the world, others, and ourselves.”

DETROIT Deirdre Hirschtritt ’12, winner of the Lipton Major/Certificate Award, is teaching in Detroit through Teach for America.

MARYLAND / AFRICA Thanks to the David Sorkin Scholarship and Mazursky Student Support fund, History graduate student Aaron Dowdall conducted archival research on Jewish-American and Israeli labor activities in sub-Saharan Africa at the George Meany Memorial Archives in Silver Spring, Maryland.

CHICAGO Emmylou Grosser, a graduate student in Hebrew & Semitic Studies, presented a paper at the Society of Biblical Literature conference in Chicago with support from the Mazursky Student Support fund.

LOS ANGELES Hebrew & Semitic Studies graduate student Nathaniel Greene received digital epigraphic training with the West Semitic Research Project at the University of Southern California, thanks to a Lipton Domestic Study award. There, he benefited from hands-on instruction in photographing and documenting ancient Semitic texts found on papyrus, stone, leather, and other artifacts. As Greene notes, “study of epigraphy, paleography, and the decipherment of ancient Semitic texts are vital to the preservation of Jewish history and, therefore, Jewish Studies.”

HAIFA Alainya Kavaloski, recipient of the Berman Award, presented at the Association of Israel Studies conference in Haifa. She also received the Lipton Essay Award for her essay “Exploring Homeland in Israel-Palestine through Miriam Libicki’s Jobnik!”
The highlight of my experience as a Jewish Studies student was…

“Taking a wide range of classes, from history through language.”

“Meeting a broad range of professors from the cross-listed departments... it really added to my conception of what Jewish Studies could lead to.”

“Taking courses on Israel.”

“The great guest lecturers.”
Sifting and Winnowing: Zionism and the Left Symposium

BY LAURIE SILVERBERG

Through course offerings and public lectures, the Center for Jewish Studies has long worked to instill in students and community members a rich understanding of Jewish history, languages, literature, and culture. But in the University of Wisconsin’s great tradition of “sifting and winnowing,” merely imparting information is not enough. Rather, a key strength of the Center is its ability to foster dialogue and provide an open forum for informed discourse on issues often mired in acrimony.

This aspect of the Center’s mission was showcased on April 19 in “Zionism and the Left: A Symposium on the Left and its Relation to Israel.” Organized by George L. Mosse Associate Professor of American Jewish History, Tony Michels, the symposium addressed the rising hostility toward Israel among leftists in the United States and Europe. Over the course of the day, professors Mitchell Cohen (City University of New York), Moishe Postone (University of Chicago), and Barbara Epstein (University of California, Santa Cruz) grappled with the following questions: does the political Left have a Zionism problem? What is the relationship—is there a relationship—between anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism? And how can we account for the Left’s shift from enthusiastic support for Israel in the years following its birth to its rising ambivalence, if not downright hostility, today?

While all three speakers openly acknowledged their leftist political views, each addressed these questions from a different scholarly perspective. Cohen, a political scientist and author of Zion and State: Nation, Class, and the Shaping of Modern Israel, argued that the Left does, indeed, have a Zionist problem, and he drew attention to often-uncomfortable similarities between older language of anti-Semitism and more recent anti-Zionist rhetoric. Postone approached the subject as a historian, tracing the roots of anti-Zionism back to nineteenth-century critiques of capitalism and imperialism. And Epstein, also a historian, described the political discourse regarding Israel-Palestine on her own university campus, where the boycott-divestment-sanctions movement has been especially strong in voice (if not necessarily in numbers). Chad Goldberg, a professor of sociology at UW-Madison, moderated a final roundtable with the three speakers.

Over seventy students, faculty, and community members attended the symposium and contributed to a discussion that was frank, animated, and well informed. Podcasts of the symposium are available for download through iTunes U. For more information, visit jewishstudies.wisc.edu/symposium.
For many attendees of the Greenfield Summer Institute, the opportunity to be immersed in memories of attending college classes is chief among the pleasures of this annual gathering. Some participants are UW–Madison alumni and enjoy returning to a beloved campus; other participants remember the thrill of hearing an expert lecturer illuminate a difficult subject; and everyone enjoys creating new memories with a community of like-minded individuals. The Greenfield Summer Institute’s longevity is due, in part, to the strong pull of these memories.

This year’s theme, “Jewish Memory and Nostalgia,” was therefore especially appropriate as the Institute presented its thirteenth year of programming from 8–12 July 2012. Originally proposed by UW alumnus Larry Greenfield and now underwritten by the generosity of Larry and Ros Greenfield, the Institute has grown from around a dozen participants the first year to a sold-out crowd of 150 in 2012. The Institute continues to showcase the work of professors at UW–Madison and acclaimed Jewish Studies scholars from around the world, whose engaging lectures address the yearly topic from a wide variety of disciplines and perspectives.

The “Memory and Nostalgia” theme offered participants a chance to explore how memory continually shapes Jewish culture. The Institute began with an explanation of memory’s function in the brain by UW–Madison neuroscientist Bradley Postle, and it ended with a panel discussion of the ways Jewish memories can be passed down to the next generation through education, led by Center director Michael Bernard-Donals and Professor Simone Schweber. Ancient and Biblical manifestations of memory and nostalgia, the impact of nostalgia on Jewish religious and ethnic identity, the role of memory in Holocaust education, and memories of unique Jewish places and communities such as the Lower East Side, Brooklyn, and the Midwest, were among the subjects covered during the week. Additional highlights included dinners at the Fluno Center and Hillel, screenings of the films Ladies’ Tailor and Four Seasons Lodge, and a sunset concert by famed Madison klezmer band Yid Vicious at the quintessential UW–Madison summer recreation spot, the Memorial Union Terrace.

Consider joining us next year to create even more memories. Next summer’s Greenfield Institute is scheduled for July 7–11, 2013.
July 22 saw the launch of **A Biselle KlezKamp** (A Bit of KlezKamp), a free full-day program presented by the Center for Jewish Studies’ Mayrent Institute for Yiddish Culture and held at the Pyle Center and the Great Hall in Memorial Union. The event drew a multigenerational group of over 175 participants, who hailed not only from Madison, but also from around the state of Wisconsin and from Illinois, Minnesota, and Iowa.

Fashioned after the multi-day KlezKamp: The Yiddish Folk Arts Program held in the Catskills every December, A Biselle KlezKamp (ABKK) gave attendees a chance to take part in a fast-paced but intensive twelve-hour exploration of the diversity of Yiddish culture. Classes were offered on music performance, dance, Yiddish language, visual arts, song, and popular culture, plus KlezKids programming for children ages 5–12. By mixing workshops and hands-on programming with scholarly lectures, ABKK framed Yiddish culture in a dynamic intellectual and cultural environment in which participants had the opportunity to learn about the importance of Yiddish history within the greater world of Jewish history, as well as about the many contributions Yiddish culture and music made to American culture more generally.

The ABKK faculty consisted of both local and nationally renowned teachers: Cookie Segelstein (fiddle), Kurt Bjorling (clarinet), Lauren Brody (accordion), David Spies (tuba), Miriam Isaacs (Yiddish), Michael Wex (Yiddish), Susan Leviton (Art/Yiddish Song), Steve Weintraub (dance), and Sarah Cooper Gordon (children’s program). Both Sherry Mayrent, long-time KlezKamp co-director and Mayrent Institute co-underwriter, and Henry Sapoznik, KlezKamp founder and Mayrent Institute Director, also taught classes. Together, this great faculty created a unique, memorable, and deeply moving program.

The success of ABKK was palpable at the evening concert and dance party. There, a group of about twenty student musicians wowed dancers and audience members with tight, compelling performances of tunes they had learned for the first time just that day. Here, then, was an example of the best of what KlezKamp can offer: intense, in-depth instruction combined with joyful community building. Even as people were filing out of the Great Hall at the end of an exciting (though exhausting) day, many were already saying, “See you next year.”

**Upcoming Mayrent Institute Events**

- November 7, 2012: World Languages Day
- December 23–28, 2012: 28th Annual KlezKamp (Kerhonkson, NY)
- March 2013: Sound Salon: “Jews and Jazz” (with Mills Music Library)
- April 2013: “Der Yiddisher Ayn-tinkn,” Yiddish Language Weekend
- May 2013: Sound Salon: “Yiddish Theater: The Secular Synagogue” (with Mills Music Library)
- July 2013: A Biselle KlezKamp
Sarah Wobick-Segev is the Weinstein Post-Doctoral Fellow in Modern European Jewish History. She received her PhD in History from the University of Wisconsin–Madison in 2010 and held a two-year Jim Joseph postdoctoral teaching fellowship in Judaic Studies at Syracuse University before her return to Madison. Wobick-Segev’s research examines the self-construction and articulation of Jewish identity in European cities from the mid-nineteenth through mid-twentieth century. Fluent in French, German, and Hebrew and proficient in Russian and Yiddish, she focused in her dissertation on Jewish life in the cities of Paris, Leipzig, and St. Petersburg. Wobick-Segev is the author of numerous articles and co-editor (with Gideon Reuveni) of The Economy in Jewish History: New Perspectives on the Interrelationship between Ethnicity and Economic Life (Berghahn 2010). In addition to revising her dissertation for publication, she is pursuing a new research project on the lives of German-Jewish psychologist William Stern and his wife, Clara. While at UW–Madison, she will teach courses on Jewish history, including Introduction to Modern Jewish History this fall.

Jonathan Z. S. Pollack joined the Center for Jewish Studies as an Honorary Fellow in Spring 2012. He has been a full-time History instructor at Madison Area Technical College since 1998. Pollack’s research focuses on American Jews in academia, business, and popular culture. He has published articles in the journal American Jewish History and in several anthologies and reference works. Although he formally joined the Center for Jewish Studies only recently, Pollack has been part of the Center’s activities for the past fifteen years. While earning his PhD in History, he taught an undergraduate survey in American Jewish History. From 1997 to 2002, he played drums for Madison klezmer band Yid Vicious, performing at the first three Greenfield Summer Institutes—and making a special guest appearance at the most recent Institute in 2012. Greenfield participants in 2005 will also remember Pollack’s lecture on the early Jewish presence at UW and bus tour of Jewish sites in Madison. In 2008, the Jewish Heritage Lecture Series premiered his short film, “Built on Scrap.” A year later, he spoke at the “What’s a Coastie?” symposium. Pollack is active in Jewish life in Madison, serving on the board of the Jewish Federation of from 2002 to 2009. He currently serves on the Ritual Committee of Beth Israel Center.

Jessica Courtier, Assistant Director of the Mayrent Institute for Yiddish Culture, received her PhD in musicology from the University of Wisconsin–Madison. Having studied historical American vernacular musics in various media, she brings to the Mayrent Institute and the Mayrent Collection a great interest in the history of Yiddish music as part of the broader history of American music and popular culture. In 2009, she worked at the KlezKamp Road Show in Madison and attended winter KlezKamp in the Catskills. She is an aspiring accordionist and looks forward to the great instruction she’ll receive at future KlezKamps in Madison.
This past year has seen the publication of three new books by Jewish Studies faculty Ronald Troxel, Tony Michels, and Douglas Rosenberg.

Troxel, an associate professor and chair of the Department of Hebrew and Semitic Studies, is the author of *Prophetic Literature: From Oracles to Books* (Wiley-Blackwell). As the instructor of the popular undergraduate course Prophets of the Bible, Troxel is well positioned to write such a book. This introductory textbook examines the origins and development of the prophetic books of the Hebrew Bible, with particular attention to the literary structure, authorship, and editorial processes that produced each book. After providing an overview of the historical context and scholarly interpretations of prophetic literature, the book offers chronologically organized accounts of each prophetic book, from Hosea and Amos to Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Readers are also introduced to the most recent scholarly research into the formation of prophetic books and the ongoing task of the scribes in updating previous works to meet new situations.

Michels, the Mosse Associate Professor of American Jewish History, is the editor of *Jewish Radicals: A Documentary History* (NYU Press), a collection of primary-source documents that explores the history of Jews and the American Left. Written in English and Yiddish, these documents reflect the entire spectrum of radical opinion, from anarchism to social democracy, Communism to socialist-Zionism. Rank-and-file activists, organizational leaders, intellectuals, and commentators, from within the Jewish community and beyond, all have their say. Their stories crisscross the Atlantic, spanning from the United States to Europe and British-ruled Palestine. The documents illuminate the efforts of large numbers of Jews to refashion themselves as they confronted major problems of the twentieth century: poverty, anti-Semitism, the meaning of American national identity, war, and totalitarianism.

Rosenberg is a professor in the Department of Art and director of the Conney Project on Jewish Arts. His book, *Screendance: Inscribing the Ephemeral Image* (Oxford University Press), examines the practice of "screendance," the capturing of dance as a moving image on camera. As he reconstructs the history and influences of screendance, Rosenberg presents a theoretical guide to this inherently collaborative art form and explores the relationships between camera and subject, director and dancer, and the ephemeral nature of dance and the fixed nature of film. He also discusses the audiences and venues of screendance and the tensions between commercial and fine-art cultures that the form has confronted in recent years. The surge of screendance festivals and courses at universities around the world has exposed the friction that exists between art, which is generally curated, and dance, which is generally programmed. Rosenberg explores the cultural implications of both methods of reaching audiences, and ultimately calls for a radical new way of thinking of both dance and film.
Alumni News

Alumni: We want to hear from you! Send news and updated contact information to jewishstudies@cjs.wisc.edu.

Neil Goldsmith (’07) is an attorney at Franczek Radelet PC in Chicago. He practices labor/employment and higher education law.

Dana Levin (’03) has been working for the past year at JDRF San Diego as a Development Manager producing the chapter’s largest fundraising event (upwards of $700,000) to treat, prevent and cure type-1 diabetes. She previously lived in Los Angeles and worked at the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles as the Director of their Real Estate & Construction Division (REC), the largest-grossing affiliate division of the organization. She's personally training for a century bike ride (111 miles) in Tucson, AZ, in November.

Jeremy (Jakir) Manela (’04) was just promoted to Executive Director of the Pearlstone Center, an agency of the Associated Baltimore Jewish Federation. The Center hosts 12,000 retreat guests each year and impacts over 5,000 program participants through Kayam Farm, the most active Jewish educational farm in North America. He now manages a $2.5 million budget and over 25 year-round staff. Pearlstone was also selected to be part of the Slingshot Guide as one of the top 50 most innovative Jewish organizations in North America. Most importantly, he lives happily with his wife, Netsitsah, a student midwife, doula, and childbirth educator. Together, they are raising two boys: Lev, who just turned five, and Shama, who is two-and-a-half. They are working towards establishing a moshav outside of Baltimore.

Jacob Markey (’11) recently finished ten months in Israel on OTZMA, a volunteer and career development program.

Benjamin Mark Moss (’05) married his high school sweetheart and is living in Washington, D.C. He works as a trial attorney at the United States Department of Justice and handles cases in federal courts across the country.

Kathryn Nelson (’10) is currently working as a junior accountant for the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) in Washington, DC.

Moishe Steigmann (’98) is very excited to be moving with his wife and two children back to Milwaukee, his hometown. He will be the School Rabbi and Director of Jewish Life and Learning at the Milwaukee Jewish Day School.

Sami Stein (’08) recently graduated from the Hornstein Program in Jewish Professional Leadership at Brandeis University, receiving an MA in Jewish Professional Leadership and an MBA in Nonprofit Management. After moving to Los Angeles this summer, Sami began a new position as the Los Angeles Coordinator for the Diller Teen Fellows Program, a pluralistic leadership fellowship for teens in North America and Israel focused on Jewish learning, social action, and community involvement. She is engaged to Brian Avner (’07); they will be married in Spring 2013.
Upcoming Events

Complete and current information about Center for Jewish Studies events is available at jewishstudies.wisc.edu/events.

Tobias Lecture
Saul Olyan (Brown University)
Wednesday, October 10
4:00 p.m., Union South

Schrag Lecture
Udi Greenberg (Dartmouth University)
Tuesday, October 25
4:00 p.m., L160 Elvehjem Building

Kutler Lectures
Beth Wenger (University of Pennsylvania)
Monday, November 12, 7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, November 13, 4:00 p.m.
Union South

Conney Conference on Jewish Arts: Diasporas
Keynote Speaker: Josh Kun
(University of Southern California)
April 9–12, 2013
UW Hillel

Campaign for the Future

While our accomplishments to date link us to the vision that our founders mapped out for us over twenty years ago, we need to make good on their initial investment. For the next generation of students, we need to do more, by expanding our course offerings in areas such as Israel Studies in the context of the Middle East, contemporary Jewish-American culture, medieval Jewish history, and Yiddish culture. To do so, we will need to redouble our efforts to ensure the financial stability of the Center, and reach out to our friends in communities beyond the university and the city of Madison to serve as a resource for Jewish education. For more information on how to make the future of Jewish Studies at UW–Madison your legacy, please contact Ron Luskin, Director of Development, at 608-265-3526 or ron.luskin@supportuw.org.

Newsletter Editor: Laurie Silverberg
Editorial Assistant: Allison Bloom
Photography: Kesha Weber