Jewish Studies at the University of Pennsylvania

Penn, through its Jewish Studies Program and the Center for Advanced Judaic Studies, offers one of the most comprehensive programs in Jewish Studies in America. The Jewish Studies Program (JSP) is an interdisciplinary academic group with twenty-one faculty members from ten departments that coordinates all courses relating to Jewish Studies in the university, as well as undergraduate majors and minors and graduate programs in different departments. JSP also sponsors many events, including two endowed lecture series and the Kischin Faculty Seminars. The Center for Advanced Judaic Studies (CAJS) is a post-doctoral research institute that annually brings eighteen to twenty-five distinguished scholars to Penn as fellows to pursue scholarly research on selected themes. These fellows are selected from the finest and most prominent Judaic scholars in the world. Every year several CAJS fellows teach courses at Penn, and both graduate students and University faculty participate in the Center's weekly seminars. The Center is also home to one of America's greatest research libraries in Judaica and Hebraica and includes a Genizah collection, many manuscripts, and early printings. Together the Jewish Studies Program and the Center for Advanced Judaic Studies make Penn one of the most rich and exciting communities for Jewish scholarship and intellectual life in the world.

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Greetings from the Director,
Jewish Studies Program

My first year as Director of the Jewish Studies Program has been both productive and rewarding, as our program continues to flourish. It is a pleasure to be a part of such a dynamic group of faculty and students working in Jewish studies.

Our program defines itself as an integral part of the humanities at Penn, both in the courses we offer and in our extracurricular activities. A year in the life of Jewish Studies at Penn is punctuated by lectures delivered by distinguished visiting scholars, programs organized by students, and a host of seminars, colloquia and social occasions that bring different groups together across campus. Just last year, we offered courses in ten departments and also provided our students the opportunity for museum internships and other programs outside the classroom.

A few months ago, I was asked to write an article for the Association for Jewish Studies about Penn’s undergraduate major in Jewish Studies. Writing about our major provided me the opportunity to reflect on the uniqueness of our program and the many different options we offer our students. Most leading universities offer a Jewish Studies major, but at Penn, students who decide to specialize in Jewish Studies are able to choose from four different majors, each with a distinct emphasis. The interdisciplinary Jewish Studies major allows students to take an array of courses in Jewish history, literature, culture, and religion. At the same time, three other Penn departments offer majors that include a Jewish specialty: Within the history major, students may elect a concentration in Jewish history that focuses on the evolution of Jewish life in the various societies where Jews have lived. The Religious Studies department’s concentration in Judaism provides students the opportunity to explore Jewish religious within the context of other world religions. Finally, the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations sponsors a Hebrew and Judaica concentration that contains a specific focus on Hebrew language, literatures, and texts. Penn is distinct in offering students so many ways to specialize in Jewish studies. This means that our students are able to follow their particular interests and that they are taught to understand Jewish studies as a field that is diverse and multifaceted. It also demonstrates that Jewish Studies is part of the organic fabric of the liberal arts curriculum at Penn, situated in departments across the university. Our faculty takes pride in this unique model of teaching Jewish Studies that reflects our deep roots and integration within intellectual life at Penn.

I have enjoyed my first year as Director enormously, but I am taking a scholarly leave during the 2006–2007 academic year. A fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies has enabled me to spend the year working on my own scholarship. During this year, my colleague Jonathan Steinberg will serve as Acting Director of the Program. Jonathan is an expert in European history and has written extensively about Nazi Germany and the Holocaust. A former Chair of the History department, Jonathan will be an excellent leader for the program. I look forward to returning as Director in the fall of 2007.

This promises to be an exciting year for Jewish Studies on campus. In November, we will sponsor a conference on “Jews in France: Crisis and Community” that will explore contemporary Jewish life in France in its historical context. Our program will also be co-sponsoring a museum exhibition, titled “CHosen! Philadelphia’s Great Hebraica,” opening this spring at Philadelphia’s Rosenbach Museum. You will read more about these upcoming events inside this newsletter and we welcome you to join us.

As always, we thank the dedicated supporters of Jewish Studies at Penn whose generosity enables our program to flourish. I hope you will join our community and I welcome you to contact me and to become a part of our program in the coming year.

Let us know if there is anything you would like to see included in future issues of this newsletter. We welcome your feedback and suggestions.

Sincerely,

Robert Winger
Kate Family Chair in American Jewish History
Associate Professor of History
Director, Jewish Studies Program

Jewish Studies Program

Greetings from the Director,
Center for Advanced Judaic Studies

This has been another wonderful year of programming at the Center. Focusing on the theme of the Jewish book as a material text, we partnered with Professors Peter Stallybrass and Roger Chartier and their exciting history of the book seminar at Penn, with Arthur Kiron and Michael Ryan of the Penn library, and with Tony Grafton of Princeton, in trying to create a meaningful dialogue between scholars of Judaism and other historians of the book. The results were marvelous. The twenty fellows carefully chosen from around the world benefited from the regular attendance of these distinguished scholars and others at our weekly seminars. Our graduate students, many of them students of Chartier as well, participated eagerly in the seminars. In a graduate conference on the book held on campus half of the presenters were our own students who simultaneously studied with the fellows as well as with Professor Charter. I could not have imagined more integration and synergy than this! We have become a resource for the humanities in every sense of the word and many faculty and students at Penn visit us and interact with us regularly.

Our final Grass colloquium was also a major success attracting large audiences throughout its three days, along with board members and other community people who attended many of the sessions. Our publishing also continues to flourish. Our monograph series at Penn has published several new books. Three of our annual volumes produced by the fellows are now in press. Our journal, brilliantly-organized by Professor Natalie Dehmann, who also is a highly successful lecturer in the Religious Studies department, has become the leading journal of Jewish studies in this country.

As always, we thank the dedicated supporters of Jewish studies at Penn whose generosity enables our program to flourish. I hope you will join our community and I welcome you to contact me and to become a part of our program in the coming year.

The Jewish Studies @ Penn newsletter is produced annually by the Jewish Studies Program at Penn.

Editor: Christine Walsh
Assistant Editor: Jonathan Steinberg

Director, Jewish Studies Program

Center for Advanced Judaic Studies

Editor: David B. Ruderman
Joseph Meyerhoff Professor of Modern Jewish History
Eliza Dornoff Director of the Center for Advanced Judaic Studies

We are grateful to Ms. Miellie and Penn, CHJ/WE85, Roth for their ongoing sponsorship of this newsletter.
JS Graduate Student Colloquium

The newly revived Jewish Studies Graduate Student Colloquium has an exciting year! Co-coordinators Jennifer Glaser and Conny Atlant focused their restructuring of the Colloquium on creating a community for graduate students within Jewish studies and benefiting from the inherently interdisciplinary nature of the field by stimulating discussion between students across disciplines at Penn. Based on the approach taken by the Penn Ethnography workshop, each colloquium session featured a presenter and a respondent from a different discipline who stimulated discussion about the presenter’s work. The informal atmosphere of the meetings provided graduate students with a chance to showcase their dissertation work and conferent papers before a friendly crowd of participants from both inside and outside their field of inquiry. Last year’s program consisted of:

Karin Machtans from the German department presented a work entitled “Between Scholarship and Personal Text: Saul Friedländer’s Poetic College of Memory.”

Aharon A. Zelzer, W'76, 77, and Heinrich Zollot, Erd'52, Stanley Zollot and the Yenta Distinguished Charitable Trust.

If you, too, would like to support Jewish Studies at Penn, please contact the School of Arts and Sciences Office of External Affairs at (215) 898-5282.

The Jesselson Family

Martin D. Gruss, W'64

Michael J. Halpern, W'83

William H. Helfand, CHE'48

The Jeshwol Family


Eleanor Meyerhoff Katz, Herbert D. Katz, W'51, parents, and the Eleanor M. & Herbert D. Katz Foundation

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Lloyd F. Lampell, G'66, in honor of Dr. Thomas C. Cochran

Mr. and Mrs. Andrew S. Lohew in memory of Dalch Fecht

Annabel F. and Philip B. Linda, W'52, and the Lindy Family Trust

Myma Liesenberg in honor of Al Wood’s 95th birthday

Audrey Stein Merves, W'56, and Stanley Merves, parents, and the Louis and Besie Stein Foundation #2

Sue Mess, C'80

Richard P. Morgenstern, C'68

Albert M. Perlstein, W'37, GSS'96

Sandrea Trilling Pirov, CW'45, and Seymour Pirov, CW'54

Julie Benet Plant, C'79, and Marc E. Plant, C'79, parents

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The Joan and Jeicke Schottenstein Family

Alan A. Shuch, WG'75, and the Shuch Family Foundation

Florence L. Silvers

Irene Apoilsebaum Strauss, CW'54, parent

Suburban Jewish Community

Laura R. Swarts, CW'71

Estate of Louis Viderman

Andrew and Emma Finci Viterbi and the Viterbi Family Foundation

The late Albert J. Wood

Eric Zeller, C'88, L'01

Andrew E. Zolot, W’76, Janet Heidczen Zolot, EdD’52, Stanley Zolot and the Yenta Distinguished Charitable Trust

If you, too, would like to support Jewish Studies at Penn, please contact the School of Arts and Sciences Office of External Affairs at (215) 898-5282.

Ben Heilberman, Respondent

Francesca Bergoli from the History department presented a work entitled “Jewish Literacy and the Republican of Letters: Joseph Arias in Eighteenth-century Lisbon.”

Jennifer Glaser, Respondent

Francesca Bergoli (far right) delivering her paper at a JS Graduate Colloquium.

Shari Gottlieb from the Comparative Literature program presented a work entitled “The Told焊接 Dress: Narrative Formation in Modern-day Jewish Madrid.”

Joan Perez, Respondent

Naftali Cohen from the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations presented a work entitled “To Enter The Temple: Narrative, Rabbinic Authority, and the Passover Sacrifice.”

Alex Novicki, Respondent

Participation in the series was high and plans for the future of the Colloquium include not only more informal interdisciplinary meetings meant to give graduate students a chance to present their work, but also lectures and readings presented by outside scholars and a graduate student-organized conference. For more information about the colloquium, please contact Jennifer Glaser at jglast@as.upenn.edu or Conny Atlant at autoe@as.upenn.edu.

Jewish Studies Internships

In 2005-2006, JSP continued its Jewish Studies Internship Program. This program, supported by a gift from Emilio, C'75, and Reina, C'75/C'91, Basini, is designed to encourage students to explore aspects of Jewish studies outside the classroom. Under the direction of graduate student coordinator Kay Wallach, a number of students initiated, organized, and produced the following events during the year.

In November, 2005, Brian Cohen and Deena Feinman organized a panel discussion on the history and practices of the Jewish Renewal movement with Nachshon Mahanaimi (co-founder of Philadelphia Tikvah movement), and Chava Weingrad (Leibig University).

In November, 2005, Stephanie Gantman and Rachel Kosa organized a CPE certification and talk by Boredercian and Professor Paul Reiss Woler (University of Pennsylvania, Psychiatry) entitled “Bioethics & Judaism: The Importance of Saving a Life.”

In March, 2006, Cecilia Raber, Joc Schachman, and Rachel Sorek organized a talk by Joel Hecker (Reconstructionist Rabbinical College) on “Kissing Kabbalists: Mystical Perspectives on an Intimate Genre” to consider the role of the kiss in Jewish mysticism.

In March, 2006, Stephanie Gantman and Jenn Endewig, and organized a panel discussion with Paul Reiss (University of Pennsylvania, Psychology) and Adam Cohen (the University of Chicago University) on “Challah and Hummus and Lox – Oh My!” to explore the connection between Jewish culture and food.

In April, 2006, Ashley Steinberg and Jessica Karp organized a screening and discussion of the Port of Last Resort, a riveting documentary about Jewish refugees who fled to Shanghai during World War II.

In November, 2006, the current Postdoctoral fellow, Josh Perelman, did his graduate work at New York University and has worked with numerous historical organizations developing public programming, research agendas, and exhibitions.

This is an especially important time for deepening the connection between the Jewish Studies and Penn’s Jewish Studies Program. The Museum will break ground on its new building for historical scholarship and opens up exciting new opportunities for Penn students to explore the history of American Jews and...
participate in the life of a major public institution,” said Perelman.

Student interns from Penn have played a central role in the Museum’s life for more than ten years, increasingly so since the addition of the Pontoeker School fellowship. Penn interns work in the museum’s collection, conduct historical research, and help develop content for the new core exhibition. For example, during the 2005-2006 school year, interns helped the Museum sort, catalogue, and research literature that is newly received Peter H. Schwitwester Collection of Jewish American, the largest of its kind. Elizabeth Jefferon, Ariel Tichu, Uri Friedman, and Alana Winter helped the Museum’s curatorial staff sort and research the Schwitwester collection. Out of their work, they produced fascinating papers and a signature, reprints of early 20th century recordings of sambas, kahrits in the Cardkils, and the origins of the Bar Mittzvah in America. The students presented their research to a forum of their peers in the spring of 2006.

Beginning in the fall of 2007, a new group of students—Josh Diskin, Sarah Waxman, Elizabeth Jefferson, and Beth Wingersky—taught a semester at the Reconstructionist College of Jewish Education at the Jewish Theological Seminary. They helped the Museum’s curatorial staff develop parts of the new core exhibition, conduct historical research, and help develop content for the new core exhibition. For example, during the 2005-2006 school year, interns helped the Museum sort, catalogue, and research literature that is newly received Peter H. Schwitwester Collection of Jewish American, the largest of its kind. Elizabeth Jefferon, Ariel Tichu, Uri Friedman, and Alana Winter helped the Museum’s curatorial staff sort and research the Schwitwester collection. Out of their work, they produced fascinating papers and a signature, reprints of early 20th century recordings of sambas, kahrits in the Cardkils, and the origins of the Bar Mittzvah in America. The students presented their research to a forum of their peers in the spring of 2006.

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2004–5: MODERN JEWISH LITERATURE AT CAJS

2005–2006 was a groundbreaking year at CAJS. For the first time ever, scholars gathered from across a wide spectrum of disciplines to discuss, evaluate and in many cases, articulate for the first time, the history of the Jewish book. While the history of the book has become an increasingly important field in the humanities in general, it has received little focused attention in Jewish studies. It was this lack that led to the creation of last year’s fellowship that brought together scholars who study manifestations of the Jewish book from antiquity to modernity. These scholars researched how the production, sale, and use of Jewish books affect not only the history of Jewish literature, but of Jewish culture itself. During their time at CAJS, they shared their research and insights with other members of the academic community at weekly seminars and the annual Gruss Colloquium, with students on the Penn campus through semester-long courses and other informal presentations, with CAJS board and friends group, and with the hundreds of interested learners who attended our public lecture series.

12th Annual Gruss Colloquium in Jewish Studies

On May 1–3, CAJS hosted its culminating conference for the year on the Penn campus. The colloquium was organized around the leading figures in book production and use: the author, the printer, the censer, the scribe, and Christian and Jewish readers. By collectively exploring these roles, the colloquium participants made a unique contribution both to the history of the Jewish book and the history of the book at large. Two 2005–2006 fellows, Joseph Hacker and Adam Shear (GSAS ’04) have begun editing a volume of essays derived from papers delivered at the conference. The Gruss Colloquium is made possible through the generous support of Martin D. Gruss, W’64.

Meyerhoff Lecture in Jewish History

On February 1, Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin, CAJS fellow and senior lecturer at Ben Gurion University, was the featured speaker at the second annual Rebecca Meyerhoff Lecture in Jewish History. Dr. Raz-Krakotzkin is a scholar of early modern Jewish culture and community history; and appears frequently in the Israeli media as a commentator on current events. The Meyerhoff lecture centered around a lively conversation among Dr. Raz-Krakotzkin, Dr. Inan Lustick, Ben W. Hymon Professor of Modern Political Science at Penn and Dr. Jonathan Steinberg, Walter Annenberg Professor of Modern European History at Penn, and members of the audience on the subject of Dr. Raz-Krakotzkin’s paper, “Exile, History and the Nationalization of Jewish Memory.”

The annual Meyerhoff lecture was established by the Joseph Meyerhoff Memorial Trusts in 1997 to honor the appointment of Herbert D. Katz, W’54, as the chair of the Board of Overseers of CAJS and to honor the generosity and service of Herbert D. Katz and Eleanor Meyerhoff Katz to Penn History department and CAJS.

2006 Public Programs

The Penn Lectures in Judaic Studies continue to flourish throughout the Philadelphia area. The 2006 lecture series, “High Points and Highlights: Reflections on Jewish Culture,” was one of the most successful series ever. The series, which included lectures on topics as diverse as the history of Yiddish literature with Sarah Haggard and Jewish art and architecture, drew hundreds of people to programs in Philadelphia and the neighboring Pennsylvania and South Jersey suburbs. As always, the lecture series gives our fellows a chance to share their knowledge and insights with eager and enthusiastic audiences. CAJS also offered a mini-course, taught by Penn’s own Dr. Arthur Kiron, Scholem Centennial Joseph Curlant of Judaica, on the history of the Jewish book. This course offered participants a more comprehensive survey of the Jewish book from its origins in the Ancient Near East through early modern times. In addition to these Philadelphia area programs, CAJS fellows presented programs in Los Angeles and Madrid. Through these partnerships, synagogues will have the opportunity to host a lecture by a CAJS fellow each year.

2006–2007 at CAJS: JEWISH, CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM LIFE UNDER CALIPHS AND SULTANS

Especially in America, the history of Arab Muslim communities and their relationship to their Christian host countries has dominated the field of study, while the rich history of Jews under Islam has received far less attention. This year’s CAJS fellowship represents a step toward redressing this imbalance. This year, twenty-two scholars from the United States and Israel will convene at the Center to explore and re-evaluate the history of Jews and Christians under Islam in the period stretching from the 7th–19th centuries. As always, the individual projects of CAJS fellows are quite varied. Fellows will be working on aspects of the political, social and religious histories of Jewish communities spread throughout the Muslim world. Together, their investigations will serve to paint a fuller and more nuanced picture of this central aspect of the Jewish past. This year’s fellowship will also provide a very exciting opportunity for collaboration at Penn. The fellowship is being co-sponsored by Penn’s Middle East Center and two new Penn faculty members, Dr. Jessica Goldberg (History) and Dr. Jamal Elias (Religious Studies) will also be fellows at the Center.

Publications

2006–2007 will be an exciting year for CAJS’ partnership with the University of Pennsylvania Press. Two new books are coming out this fall in the Center’s series Jewish and Christians. They are A Cautionary Guide to Ancient Judaism and Christianity by Herbert D. Katz, W’54, and A Self-Jewish Dialogue: Philosophy and Mysticism in Babylonia by the Paquod’s Drama of the Heart by Diana Lobel.

Under the leadership of Elliott Horowitz, David Myers and Natalie Dohrman, the Jewish Quarterly Review continues to publish cutting-edge research that brings to the field of Jewish Studies into conversation with the hottest issues and methods in the wider humanities. The fall issue is a special issue on Judaism and Language, which draws together a wide range of thinkers, scholars Nicolas Del-Loog and Kristen Fuladman, musicologist Johoish Hirschfeld, novelists Cari Horn, and journalist, now translator, Leon Wieselchef. Next year is also in production, as we are assembling a special issue for Fall 2007 on the legacy of Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi’s seminal 1982 book Zikher, Jewish History and Jewish Memory. In between these special issues, JQR readers will find fascinating articles and stimulating discussions of major books on Jewish myth, philosophy, history and literature.

2007 Outreach Program

In the current political climate, there is a pressing interest and urgent need to understand the history and historic possibilities of the relationships among Jews, Christians and Muslims. CAJS is privileged to have a group of expert scholars who, through their scholarship and teaching can contribute to this effort. Our 2006–2007 fellows will be sharing their insights and research with the Penn community through formal undergraduate and graduate teaching, guest lectures in classes and departments, and formal and informal visits to Hillel. CAJS fellows, Dr. David Feidenreich, Miriam Goldstein, and Charles Mankein will be teaching undergraduate courses while Haggai Ben-Shamsi, Gad Freudenthal, David Lasker and Sarah Strauss will be team-teaching a course for graduate students. Through the Center’s public programs, fellows will also share their knowledge with audiences outside of the university. The 2007 Penn Lectures in Judaic Studies will run from February to May in Philadelphia and the surrounding Pennsylvania and South Jersey suburbs. We will also offer a three-session mini-course in May at CAJS on the topic of Jews under Islamic rule. The mini-course offers interested learners a chance to learn from current fellows in a more interactive and customized setting. In addition to programs in Philadelphia, the Center will also sponsor programs by current fellows at synagogues in the Los Angeles, Chicago, Dallas and Washington, D.C. areas. This year, the Center will also be launching a new initiative to provide programming opportunities for珠三角s and professional associations that would benefit from advanced studies in Jewish Studies. If you would like more information about our public programs, please contact Dr. Elise Stern at erstern@penn.udp.edu or consult our website at www.cajs.upenn.edu.
**Meyerhoff Lecture in Jewish History**

The Tenth Annual Joseph and Rebecca Meyerhoff Lecture in Jewish History was a lecture entitled, “Exile, History and the Nationalization of Jewish Memory,” with Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin (Tel Aviv University) and respondent Ian Lustick (University of Pennsylvania, Political Science) and Jonathan Steinberg (University of Pennsylvania, History). On February 1, 2006. The event was co-sponsored by CAS and the History Department. The Meyerhoff Lecture was established in 1997 through the generosity of a gift from the Joseph and Rebecca Meyerhoff Foundation to honor the appointment of Herb Katz, W’74, as a chair of the Board of CAS. Herb and Elle Katz have been among the most devoted supporters of Jewish Studies at Penn. Their gifts include the Joseph Meyerhoff Chair in Modern Jewish History, the Katz Family Term Chair in American Jewish History, and the Herbert D. Katz Distinguished Fellowship at the Center.

**Silvers Visiting Scholar in Jewish Studies**

Jeffrey Gurock addressing a student panel of JEW David, Lauren Weinstein, and Erica Dankoff

On February 22, 2006, Professor Jeffrey Gurock (Yeshiva University) gave a public lecture “American Judaism: Scared? Sappy and American Jewish Culture” and a student panel following the lecture included Jesse David, C’06, Erica Dankoff, C’06, and Lauren Weinstein, C’06. The Silvers Visiting Scholar program, endowed by Patricia, C’72, and David Silvers, C’79, was established to bring distinguished scholars to campus to interact with students and other members of the university community.

**Joseph Alexander Colloquium**

Israel Finkelstein with Helen Mackler, donor

On October 27, 2005, Professor Israel Finkelstein (Tel Aviv University) delivered a lecture to a packed audience on “In Search of the Bible’s Sacred Kings: David and Solomon in History and Myth.” The Joseph Alexander Colloquium, Penn’s oldest endowed lecture in Jewish Studies, is supported through the generosity of the Joseph Alexander Foundation and the Mackler Family.

**Kutchin Seminars in Jewish Studies**

The Kutchin seminars are supported by the generosity of Mel, C’70, and Mitzi Kutchin.


Walk on Water Israeli “Drive In,” co-sponsored with Penn Hillel’s Israel Cultural Committee on September 29, 2005.

“Halakhah, Aggadah, and the Limits of Law,” with Yair Lorberbaum (Bar Ilan University) giving the Grass Lectures in Talmudic Civil Law: Halakhah, Aggadah, and the Limits of Law, co-sponsored with the University of Pennsylvania Law School on October 11, 2005.

“A Modernist on Aggadah and the Limits of Law,” with Yair Lorberbaum (Bar Ilan University) giving the Grass Lectures in Talmudic Civil Law: Halakhah, Aggadah, and the Limits of Law, co-sponsored with the University of Pennsylvania Law School on October 20, 2005.


“A Good Place for the Night,” with author Sayson Liebrecht, co-sponsored with the Consulate General of Israel in Philadelphia, and the Middle East Center at Penn on November 15, 2005.

“An Economist Reads the Mishnah,” with Tamara Lemberg (Bar-Ilan University) and the Department of Economics and the Department of Mathematics on January 31, 2006.

Annual Meyerhoff lecture on “Exile, History and the Nationalization of Jewish Memory,” with Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin (Tel Aviv University) and respondent Ian Lustick (University of Pennsylvania, Political Science) and Jonathan Steinberg (University of Pennsylvania, History) and respondents Ian Lustick (University of Pennsylvania, Political Science) and Jonathan Steinberg (University of Pennsylvania, History) co-sponsored with the Center for Advanced Judaic Studies, the History Department on February 1, 2006.

“The Origins of the Ashkenasim: Priestly, Rabbinic and Magical Attitudes,” with Yehuda Harari (Ben Gurion University) co-sponsored with Folklore and Folklore and Religious Studies on February 6, 2006.

“Turbulent Times in the Middle East - Where to Next? A Journalist’s Perspective,” with Yaron Deckel (Israel Broadcasting Authority’s Washington Bureau Chief), co-sponsored with Annenberg School of Communication, Consulate General of Israel in Philadelphia, Middle East Center, Solomon Ax Certificate, Fox Leadership Programs, Wharton Global Consulting Practicum, Graduate and International Programs of Penn Law School, Penn Israel Coalition, and the Israel Pavilion on Philadelphia on February 27, 2006.

“A Memorial in Piano, Poetry, and Song: Dshiha Ravikovitch (1936-2005),” an Israel Prize Laureate and an internationally known and translated poet, co-sponsored with the Middle East Center, Hillel, and Department of Near Eastern Languages and Literatures on March 21, 2006.


“Computerized Leksikon: The Jewish Arabic Dictionaries of the First Millennium C.E.,” with Michael Solomonoff (Bar-Ilan University), co-sponsored with the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations on March 23, 2006.


**2005-2006 Special Events and Programs**

In spring 2007, Penn’s Jewish Studies Program will be co-sponsoring a major exhibition of rare Jewish books from Philadelphia public collections at the famous Rosenbach Library and Museum in Center City. Entitled “CHOSEN! Philadelphia’s Great Hebraica,” the exhibition is being curtailed by David Senn, Ruth Melzer Professor of Classical Hebrew Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, who has spent the last five years searching through various collections in the Philadelphia area for important and all but unknown Jewish books. The exhibit will include some fifty items—among them, handwritten manuscripts going back to the early Middle Ages, early printed books, and illustrated Esther scrolls—from the collections of the University of Pennsylvania libraries (including the Dropie College collection), the Free Library, Bryn Mawr College, Haverford College, Congregation Rodeph Shalom, Knesseth Israel, Congregation Mikveh Israel, and the Rosenbach Library and Museum. "Stars of the show include the earliest surviving nearly complete Passover haggadah, a 15th-century Spanish Bible, Jewish books censored by the Inquisition, the first printed prayerbook, and a 6’ by 4’ leaf of parchment containing the entire scroll of Esther with six illuminated medallions. By bringing these dispersed treasures together, the exhibit hopes to show the rich stories that these books tell about the Jewish historical and cultural experience as well as the tales of the collectors who brought these books to Philadelphia to their present homes. The exhibit is scheduled to open on March 28, 2007 through July 29, 2007, and will include regular tours and public programming. More information will be forthcoming.

**Comming Attractions**

Rosenbach Exhibition

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The Judaica collections at Penn—located at the Van Pelt Library, at the Center for Advanced Judaic Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, the Fine Arts Library and at the University Museum—continue to grow as an integral unit within the University Libraries. Under the direction of the Judaica collections staff, important, founding documents of American libraries and archives around the U.S. and internationally. The Penn Library implemented a successful grant proposal “Integrating Information Technologies with the Humanities, Study of Religion and Urban Context” (IIHRUC) for 2006, just three days shy of his 96th birthday. Mr. Wood continued success in his new position and extended his leadership in the industry of market research. He used his success in business for substantial philanthropic ends. Most notably, he led the transformation of the Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning, the first state-accredited doctoral program devoted to Jewish Studies, into a post-graduate research center. Mr. Wood served as founding chairman of the board of the newly established Moses Aaron Dropsie Research Institute in 1985. Through Mr. Wood’s efforts the honor Walter Annenberg and his wife, the late Isabel Annenberg, bestowed on him his largest donation to a Jewish-related institution. The Dropsie Institute’s name subsequently was changed to the Center for Advanced Judaic Studies (CAJS) at the University of Pennsylvania in 1993, as a member of the AJC’s board of trustees. Mr. Wood participated in the Center’s efforts to negotiate that brought the AJC to Penn. Today it is called the Center for Advanced Judaic Studies (CAJS) at the University of Pennsylvania. On the occasion of his 95th birthday on August 10, 2005, Mr. Wood endowed a fellowship at the CAJS and earlier that year he had endowed the Penn library’s first endowed Judaica book fund. We extend our heartfelt sympathies to the Wood family, his friends and many admirers.

Thank you! We are especially happy to acknowledge and thank the following individuals for their gifts and donations:

Jean S. Adelman; Aviva Astrinsky; Buki L. Babar; Adam Bar-El; Nira Baral; Miriam and Benn-Zion Barlev; Hakan Bengtsson; Stacey and Michael Bennett, Terri Binder and Joseph Ben-Zion; Israel Bartal; Malachi Beit-Arie; Dan Bennett, C’95; Marc Bennett, C’95; Ryan Bennett, C’95; Michael B. Bennett, W’95; Alan El-Kadi; Yosef Kasteli; Norman Krakowski; Judith Korman Langfeld CG’86; Eric Laupot; Judith Leifer; Martin Lessen; Walter A. Levy; G. Leroy Laughlin; Mr. John E. Link; Jack Lunez; Jane Markowitz McKill; Mona Magnin; Paul David Mandel; Eugene Mark; Yaakov Mark.

The following CAJS Fellows and guests have and contributed to the CAJS Library collection:

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About Our Students

Undergraduate News

Eight students graduated in May 2006 with majors or minors in the different Jewish Studies departmental tracks.

• Four seniors completed the Jewish Studies Program’s Interdisciplinary Minor.MODESSA Jacobs, Esther Lassman, Samuel Nathan, and Amanda Ring.

• Two seniors completed a major in the Hebrew/Judaic Concentration in the Department of Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations: Daniel Granowitz and Joshua Schainker.

• One senior completed a major in the Judaic Concentration in the Department of Religious Studies: Jay Solomon.

• One senior completed a minor in the Jewish History Concentration in the Department of History: Lauren Weinstein.

Prizes and Honors

The Philip E. Goldfinch Scholarship Award in Jewish Studies, which is sponsored by a generous gift from Robert, C'05, and Phillip, C’04, Goldfinch, is awarded to both undergraduates and graduate students to support research projects and unusual academic experiences. This past year’s awards went to undergraduates: Rachel Adler, Sarah Breger, Livia Levine, Yavari Mastroi, and Sharon Wolf, and to graduate students: Kerry Wallach and Barukh Boaz (Billy, for short).

The B’nai Zion Award for Excellence in Hebrew and Hebrew Studies was awarded to Daniel Granowitz. This award of a $1000 United States Savings Bond is sponsored by the B’nai Zion Foundation.

The Workmen’s Circle/Arbeiter Ring Prize in Yiddish Studies is awarded by a gift from the Philadelphia Branch of the Workmen’s Circle and the United Worker’s Educational Organization to reward excellence in Yiddish Studies. This year’s prize was awarded to Amanda Ring.

Graduate Studies in Jewish Studies at Penn

Thirty years ago, Jewish Studies at Penn was mainly geared towards training graduate students for doctorates, with a heavy focus upon the Ancient Near East, the Bible, and early Post-Biblical literature and Rabbinics. Since then, Jewish Studies—along with the university in general—has changed radically, with a massive shift towards undergraduate education. In the meantime, Penn’s Jewish Studies faculty and programs have become as strong in the modern period as in the ancient and medieval, and our courses and students have changed in corresponding ways as well.

Our graduate programs, though small and highly selective, nonetheless remain among the strongest in America in our various fields of specialization: Bible and the Ancient Near East, Rabbinics and Biblical Interpretation, Jewish Intellectual History from the Medieval through Modern periods, Early Modern and Modern Jewish History, Modern Jewish Literature, and American Jewish History. The Jewish Studies Program itself does not run graduate programs; these continue to be located in graduate groups run through departments, like History, Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, and Religious Studies—but JSP sponsors a student-run graduate student seminar. It also awards research stipends to every entering graduate student as well as special-needs and research grants to support graduate education and scholarship.

The Falk Fellowship

The JSP administers the Margaret Schoenfeld Falk Fellowship, the only graduate fellowship “owned” and controlled by Jewish Studies. Because the cost of graduate school has risen sharply, fellowship support has become virtually indispensable, both for supporting graduate students once they enter the program, and for recruiting the very best candidates and persuading them to come to Penn. The Falk Fellowship was endowed by Edward Falk, W’66, in memory of his mother, Margaret Schoenfeld Falk, to support a graduate student who works specifically in the area of Jewish Studies. Current Falk Fellows are third-year student Kerry Wallach (Germanic Languages), and second-year David Shayotev (History). Kerry is studying modern German-Jewish and Hebrew literatures, and Shayotev early modern Jewish history.

Through the years, Ed has been one of Jewish Studies’ most faithful and generous donors. Ed is known for his legendary annual gift of $10,000 since 1991, and from the beginning, he focused upon Jewish Studies, primarily because he wished to endowed a fellowship in memory of his mother, who had been a deeply observant and comradic, both. From the beginning, Ed has been committed upon graduate students because of their seriousness and commitment. This was the genius of the Falk Fellowship, which, over the years, turned from one to two fellowships. At present, JSP is able to award Falk Fellowships every two or three years.

The Falk Fellowship is one of the most valuable elements of the Jewish Studies Program at Penn. Because of Ed’s foresight in establishing the fellowships, Penn is able to ensure the future of Jewish Studies in America, including education and produce the scholars and teachers of tomorrow. As the following portraits of our graduate students will tell you, the Falk Fellowship has been a major boon for Jewish Studies at Penn. It owes an enormous debt of gratitude to Ed Falk for his generosity.

Life After Graduate School

Every year in this newsletter we include short updates from all our current grad students, and we do so in this issue as well. But our grad students do eventually finish our programs. Over the past five years, some eight of our graduate students have completed their doctorates, and left the comfortable halls of Penn for the “real world.” Here’s an update on what some of them have been doing.

Shawn Zelig Aster successfully defended his dissertation entitled “Divine and Halakhic Radicanders in the Hebrew Bible and in Mesoopotamian and Northwest Semitic Literature: A Philological and Comparative Study” in March. He is a freighter Post-Doctoral Fellow at Ben-Gurion University in Beer-Sheva.

Isaac Ben-Israel, currently teaching in a high school in Jerusalem, focused on Israelis on identity in response to the political situation of his time. He is also teaching a course on Isaiah at Bar-Ilan University in Ramat-Gan, Israel and another course on The Historical Background to Isaiah 1-39 at Ben-Gurion University.

End of Term Reports

In last March, Shalom Holtz defended his dissertation, “Neo-Babylonian Decision Records and Related Texts: Typological, Procedural and Comparative Approaches,” which he received his degree in May. Shortly after commencement, he and his wife, Leshia Mallin, welcomed the birth of their first child, Zev Bardish Boy (Billy, for short). During the summer, Shalom taught Biblical Hebrew at the Hebrew Union College Institute in Manhattan. In the fall, he assumed the position of Assistant Professor of Bible at Yeshiva University, where he is teaching Introduction to Bible and courses on biblical texts. He is currently revising his dissertation for publication as a book on biblical texts. He is also teaching in a seminar, “Women and Gender in Biblical Texts,” and on the interface between postbiblical Jewish literature and ancient Near Eastern studies.

Daniel Heilpern accepted a position at James Madison University and is a fellow at CASJ this fall. His topic at the Center is “Jews and Christians in Medieval Islamic Doctrine and Patristic Policy.”

Debra Kaplan is Assistant Professor of Jewish Studies at Yeshiva College. She has published work on Jewish autobiographies and on Jewish communal life during the early modern period in Jewish Quarterly Review, several German anthologies, and Leipziger Beiträge zur jüdischen Geschichte und Kultur. Prof. Kaplan is currently continuing her work on Jewish-Christian relations in Strasbourg during the Protestant Reformation. She is also teaching a seminar on medieval literary for a book on medieval literature. In 2005-2006 she was awarded a fellowship at the Austrian Academy of Sciences.

Rebecca Robin, a former Wenner fellow, completed her doctorate in Modern Jewish History in spring 2002. Since then, she has held a two-year post-doctoral fellowship at Yale in Judicai Studies, and served as the American Academy of Jewish Research post-doctoral fellow at Brandeis University. This fall she shall begin a tenure-track position at Columbia University in American Jewish History.

Sara Marks, Religious Studies 2003 P.D., is the Klingenstein Assistant Professor and Director of Undergraduate Studies at the University of Maryland and Yeshiva University. During the summer, she completed her first year of a three-year term as a fellow of the American Jewish Studies Program at the University of Pennsylvania. This fall she shall begin a two-year term as a fellow of the University of Pennsylvania. She was awarded a fellowship at the Austrian Academy of Sciences.

Kevin McGough works in ancient Near Eastern history and Biblical Studies. He is teaching ancient history and archaeology at University of Lethbridge in Canada.

Adam Shear (Ph.D., History, 2003) is an Assistant Professor and Director of Undergraduate Studies in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Pittsburgh. In the fall of 2005, he was back in Philadelphia for a semester as a Fellow at the Center for Advanced Judaic Studies working on a project on the transmission of medieval philosophical texts in Renaissance Italy and the impact of print. In 2005-2006, he lectured at conferences in Jerusalem, Philadelphia, Washington, San Francisco, and Leipzig. Since 2005, he has served as co-chair for the Modern Judaism Workshops in Progress at the annual meeting of the Association for Jewish Studies.

Moshe Simon-Shoshan graduated with his doctorate in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies in 2005. His dissertation, supervised by David Stern, was entitled “Mishnaic Narrative and Legal Discourse in the Mishnah.” Starting in fall of 2006, Moshe will be a Kretman Fellow at Ben-Gurion University in Beer-Sheva. He will teach rabbinic literature in the Department of Hebrew Literature and will continue his research on the relationship between law and narrative in rabbinic literature.
Mission and vol. 20, nos. 1-2 (2006), and attempts of a 17th-century Venetian rabbi to a 15th century kabbalistic dispute focusing on Hebrew Literature and Film in translation as a course on the Contemporary Israeli Short Fiction. She has received a Guggenheim Foundation, the American Society's National Council. Alan Filreis, Faculty Director of the Kelly Writers House, and Director of the Center for Programs in the Humanities, continues to teach one advanced seminar each term. During the current academic year he is a member of the editorial board of the University of Pennsylvania Press, the Director of the Center for Advanced Judaic Studies, and the University of Pennsylvania, teaches Jewish and modern Russian history at Berkeley, as well as talks at Stanford University. The "Art of Sex in Yiddish Poems: Celia Dreilin and Her Contemporaries" and "Tales on the Origins of Yiddish: Studies in the History of Yiddish" by Kathryn Helfferich published her translations and poems in Modern Language Studies, Common Wonders: Gender, Sex, and Religion in Jewish Studies, dedicating to this poet in the annual "Haggadah in History" in the Philadelphia Jewish Voice (PV), no. 10 (April 2006) he wrote a dissertation entitled "Choreographing Life, 1924-1954." He continues to teach one advanced seminar as well as talks at Stanford University. The "Art of Sex in Yiddish Poems: Celia Dreilin and Her Contemporaries" and "Tales on the Origins of Yiddish: Studies in the History of Yiddish" by Kathryn Helfferich published her translations and poems in Modern Language Studies, Common Wonders: Gender, Sex, and Religion in Jewish Studies, dedicating to this poet in the annual "Haggadah in History" in the Philadelphia Jewish Voice (PV), no. 10 (April 2006) he wrote a dissertation entitled "Choreographing Life, 1924-1954." He continues to teach one advanced seminar as well as talks at Stanford University. The "Art of Sex in Yiddish Poems: Celia Dreilin and Her Contemporaries" and "Tales on the Origins of Yiddish: Studies in the History of Yiddish" by Kathryn Helfferich published her translations and poems in Modern Language Studies, Common Wonders: Gender, Sex, and Religion in Jewish Studies, dedicating to this poet in the annual "Haggadah in History" in the Philadelphia Jewish Voice (PV), no. 10 (April 2006) he wrote a dissertation entitled "Choreographing Life, 1924-1954." He continues to teach one advanced seminar as well as talks at Stanford University. The "Art of Sex in Yiddish Poems: Celia Dreilin and Her Contemporaries" and "Tales on the Origins of Yiddish: Studies in the History of Yiddish" by Kathryn Helfferich published her translations and poems in Modern Language Studies, Common Wonders: Gender, Sex, and Religion in Jewish Studies, dedicating to this poet in the annual "Haggadah in History" in the Philadelphia Jewish Voice (PV), no. 10 (April 2006) he wrote a dissertation entitled "Choreographing Life, 1924-1954." He continues to teach one advanced seminar as well as talks at Stanford University. The "Art of Sex in Yiddish Poems: Celia Dreilin and Her Contemporaries" and "Tales on the Origins of Yiddish: Studies in the History of Yiddish" by Kathryn Helfferich published her translations and poems in Modern Language Studies, Common Wonders: Gender, Sex, and Religion in Jewish Studies, dedicating to this poet in the annual "Haggadah in History" in the Philadelphia Jewish Voice (PV), no. 10 (April 2006) he wrote a dissertation entitled "Choreographing Life, 1924-1954." He continues to teach one advanced seminar as well as talks at Stanford University.
Washington, D.C. Jeff’s article, “The Priestly Reminder Stones and Ancient Near Eastern Votive Practices,” will shortly be published in a festschrift for the Israeli scholar Sara Japhet, being published in Israel. His 1996 commentary on Deuteronomy is being translated into Hebrew for the Israeli commentary series Mekhati le-Yisrael. He is currently co-editing a Festschrift in honor of Prof. Shalom Paul (SAS ’64) of the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, to be published by Eisenbrauns (Winston Lake, Indiana) in 2006. He is also working on two multi-year projects: writing a full-length Hebrew commentary on Exodus for the same Israeli series and editing the first volume (on the Biblical period) of The Posen Library of Jewish Culture and Civilization: Anthology of Primary Sources, Documents, Texts, and Artifacts, a ten-volume series being published by Yale University Press.

Liliane Weissberg, the Christopher H. Browne Distinguished Professor in the School of Arts and Sciences and Professor of German and Comparative Literature, was on leave in fall 2006. She continued her Maria Sybilla Merian Fellowship in Gotha, Germany, in November. She lectured at Princeton, the University of Kentucky (Lexington), University College Cork (Ireland), Universitaet Potsdam, Justus Liebig Universitaet Giessen, and in Weimar (Germany), Washington, Milwaukee, Philadelphia, and New York on Friedrich Schiller, Sigmund Freud, Heinrich Heine, the history of women in German at the university in Berlin, and Jewish Studies in Germany. On the occasion of Freud’s 150th birthday, Weissberg presented papers at the psychoanalytical associations in Philadelphia and New York, and appeared, together with Jean-Michel Rabate (English) on National Public Radio’s “Radiotimes.” Weissberg has been graduate chair of the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures, and in 2005-2006, the topic director of the Penn Humanities Forum’s “Word and Image.” She was also Faculty Advisor of the Graduate Humanities Forum. Weissberg organized a forum on the opera “Margaret Garner” in January, and a symposium on photography and contemporary literature in February. She published essays on the Berlin Jewish salon, Walter Benjamin and Romanticism, Jewish Studies in Germany, Hannah Arendt, and recent German-Jewish autobiographies.

Beth S. Wenger, the Katz Family Term Chair and Associate Professor in American Jewish History, completed her first year as Director of the Jewish Studies Program and concluded a three-year term as Undergraduate Chair of Penn’s History department. Wenger’s article, “Making American Civilization Jewish: Mordecai Kaplan’s Civic Religion” appeared in the most recent issue of the journal Jewish Social Studies and her essay, “Performing Citizenship: Jewish Celebrations of the Nation” will be included in the forthcoming Columbia History of Judaism in America. Wenger is also serving as an advisor for the upcoming PBS documentary titled “The Jewish Americans” and will write the volume that accompanies the film. Wenger received a fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies and will be on scholarly leave during the 2006-2007 academic year. She will be researching and writing her forthcoming book, “History Lessons: The Invention of American Jewish Heritage,” under contract with Princeton University Press. Wenger delivered several lectures and participated in various panels during the past year, including at the Association of Jewish Studies conference, the American Council of Learned Societies/Association of American Universities convention, the American Jewish Historical Society’s Scholars conference, as well as many other venues. Wenger serves on the Academic Boards of the Association for Jewish Studies (AJS), the Center for Jewish History in New York, and the Women’s Caucus of the AJS. She is also a member of the Executive Committee of the American Jewish Historical Society’s Academic Council. She continues to serve as an historical consultant for the National Museum of American Jewish History in Philadelphia.

NEW WEBSITE
The Jewish Studies Program at Penn has redesigned its web site! Please visit us at http://ccat/sas.upenn.edu/jwst/