



HEBREW COLLEGE

TODAY

VOLUME 1

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המכללה העברית היום

No More Clock-Watching

Hebrew Schools that Work

Dean Sharon Cohen Anisfeld on
the Rabbinical School's Future

Visions of a Plausible God

Jewish Innovation

How do we make Hebrew School education inspiring and relevant to Jewish kids who would rather play soccer on Sunday?

How can we harness the Internet to build a sense of Jewish community?

How do we attract Jewish adults to pursue the quest for Jewish knowledge and identity throughout their lives?

How do we transform the synagogue into a dynamic, inclusive worship community that addresses the spiritual needs of contemporary American Jews?

How can we overcome fear and distrust of “the other” to create meaningful relationships with members of different faith traditions in a shared effort to heal the world?

At our best, we are an entrepreneurial incubator for some of the most exciting innovations in the Jewish world today.

These are just a few of the challenges facing the American Jewish community today—challenges that demand innovative solutions. And, as you’ll discover in this issue of *Hebrew College Today*, we’re at the forefront of efforts to confront those challenges. From our highly successful Prozdor High School, where 850 Jewish teens defy conventional wisdom about the inexorable drift of Jewish youth and enthusiastically embrace Jewish study and social action, to our transdenominational Rabbinical School and Cantor-Educator Program, where the next generation of spiritual leaders learn to create and direct dynamic, inclusive congregations—

Hebrew College anticipates needs and trends in the Jewish world and responds with powerful results.

It’s no accident that Hebrew College plays a significant role in this innovation and contributes its remarkable scholarship and communal resources to insuring the creative vitality of Jewish life.

More than a decade ago, we began to redefine Hebrew College’s role in the Jewish and larger community by studying and analyzing the Jewish condition in America. We examined the level of adult Jewish literacy, assessed shortcomings in how we engage Jewish teens and evaluated the needs of congregational schools and Jewish day schools. We reflected on changing patterns of denominational affiliation and the way the Jewish community was dealing with such issues as feminism, social action and their intersections with Jewish tradition. We also felt challenged to best utilize emerging technologies to contribute to Jewish life and culture.

Many of the programs and initiatives described in this issue are the fruit of that

labor: Prozdor’s successful response to the needs and sensibilities of Jewish teens, the Me’ah Graduate Institute’s unique Master of Jewish Liberal Studies, the wonderfully diverse Jewish cyber-community of Shamash, thought-provoking dialogue about the next wave of Jewish feminism, visions and realities of developing k’lal Yisrael religious communities and the spiritual leaders to guide them, what it takes to create a truly respectful interfaith collaboration.

This issue not only engages major ideas and examines creative problem-solving in the Jewish community, but also confirms our ongoing commitment to link scholarly enterprise of the academic world to the life of the community. Hebrew College is no ivory tower on a hilltop. At our best, we are an entrepreneurial incubator for some of the most exciting innovations in the Jewish world today. Read on and share our adventure.



Dr. David M. Gordis

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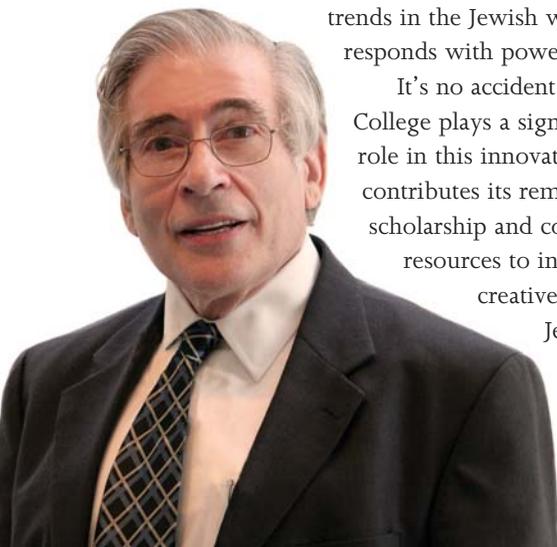
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On the Cover Hebrew College M.J.Ed. student Andrew Doxer engages his pupils at Keshet Newton community Hebrew school. Photo by Patrick O'Connor.

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War-Time Lessons for HC Rabbinical Students

For Hebrew College's first class of fourth-year rabbinical students, required study in Israel took on deeper significance just days after their arrival this summer. Seven students were participating in the University of Haifa's Ulpan program when the first *ketyusha* rocket struck the city on Thursday, July 13. The group spent much of that Shabbat weekend in "safe rooms" and shelters, then taxied to Jerusalem that Sunday. There, they quickly resumed their Hebrew studies—either with the University of Haifa Ulpan, which relocated to Hebrew University, or with other *ulpanim* in the city.

"The University of Haifa staff was extraordinary in its efforts on behalf of our students," says Sharon Cohen Anisfeld, Dean of the Rabbinical School. "Other institutions, including Pardes and Hebrew Union College, went above the call of duty in helping to resettle our students. There was a real sense of everyone pulling together."

The experience delivered a profound lesson in what it means to live in Israel today. For fourth-year rabbinical student Alison Adler, whose goal is to immerse herself in Hebrew and Israeli culture during her studies, the war brought home both harsh and poignant realities. Commenting in July, she said,

"When I watch the news, I feel helpless and hopeless about the situation. Then I go out into the streets of Jerusalem, where life goes on as usual. Or I find a park and sit there, listening to the voices of children playing with their parents. For me, that is what brings back some hope, some sense of normality and some sort of connection to the Divine."

In September, adjusting to the cease-fire tensions in everyday life in Israel, students began their Talmud and other classic Jewish text studies at Pardes. The semester included a course on *Bamidbar* (the Book of Numbers) with noted Bible scholar Aviva Zornberg, a seminar in contemporary Israeli society featuring guest authors and political figures, and elective courses at Jerusalem-based educational institutions. Meanwhile, the students are volunteering for public service organizations throughout the city.

Taking the summer's stressful experiences in stride, rabbinical student Chaim Koritzinsky is striving to use his time in Israel to boost his Hebrew language fluency, to become sufficiently integrated into Israeli society so he can appreciate the choices Israelis face on a daily basis, and to take advantage of studying in a uniquely meaningful setting.

For Koritzinsky, returning to Israel this summer served as a fresh reminder of the personal nature of national defense. "Both at the University of Haifa and at Hebrew University,

I was living with Israelis who were all personally connected to the war," he says. "One of my roommates was the first cousin of the kidnapped soldier, Gilad Shalit. For me, supporting the war effort wasn't something grandiose or involving large sums of money. For me, it meant being there for my roommates." —MD

HC President David M. Gordis to Retire in 2009

Since becoming President of Hebrew College in 1993, David M. Gordis has overseen a dramatic expansion in the College's academic programs and an increase in its student enrollment, as well as the building of a new campus. His legacy secure, Gordis, 66, has agreed to remain as president for two more years.

"The college is involved in some of the most important new initiatives in our 85-year history," said Ted Cutler, Chair of the Board. "Under David's direction, Hebrew College has evolved into a nationally-recognized leader in transdenominational Jewish education and has transformed Jewish life throughout New England."

Within the last few years, the College has created the first rabbinical school in New England, a cantor-educator program, the Interreligious Center on Public Life, and launched collaborations with Andover Newton Theological School and Nova Southeastern University in Florida. Meanwhile, the College's Me'ah adult education program has expanded its reach to more than 45 sites in six states.

Under Gordis's leadership, the student population has also expanded. College level student enrollment has more than tripled, from 177 students in 1993 to more than 600 today. And at Prozdor, the student body has grown four-fold, from 238 seven years ago to over 900 students today.

—ETR

Want Community? Press "Send"

SHAMASH: THE JEWISH NETWORK MARKS TEN YEARS AT HEBREW COLLEGE

Calling all young Jewish adults who enjoy long bike rides and social lunches in the D.C.-metro area: A social spin is only an email away. Bike and Brunch, a Jewish athletic club, circulates ride, carpool and safety information weekly on its mailing list, which is powered by Shamash: The Jewish Network. Log on to Shamash.org. Click "Mailing Lists" and then "Bike and Brunch," and you can instantly connect to like-minded folks. Presto, send, get instant community building.

Managing about 600 online mailing lists, Shamash connects diverse subsets of the worldwide Jewish community. Hebrew for "to serve," Shamash lives up to its name with approximately 190,000 individual subscribers and two to three new mailing lists added each week. "The same way the shamash in the Hanukkah menorah helps other candles light, Shamash enables other organizations to do the work they want to do online," says Shamash project coordinator David Rosenthal.

This summer, Shamash marked its tenth year at Hebrew College, and that's no accident. Shamash's broad-reaching and pluralistic mission—to serve "the full spectrum of Jewish organizations interested in utilizing new electronic technologies to share information and deliver services to the Jewish community worldwide"—aligns naturally with Hebrew College's mission as a leader of transdenominational Jewish learning. In 1996, under the vision and leadership of President David Gordis and Nathan Ehrlich, now Dean of Hebrew College Online (HCO), and with sponsorship from Internet entrepreneur David Solomont, Shamash was adopted by Hebrew College. Today Ehrlich continues to supervise Shamash as a project of HCO.

One of the oldest Jewish Internet resources, dating back to 1989, Shamash was responsible for the creation and hosting of many Jewish organizations' first websites. A notable outcome: When you search today for "Jewish" on Google, the fifth website listed out of 185 million is powered by Shamash. Having moved beyond the web hosting business, Shamash now focuses on managing mailing lists for national organizations, small community groups and grassroots initiatives. It also functions as a major referral site with an extensive list of links to online Jewish resources, powers a searchable (and mappable) kosher database with 2,500 restaurants in 50 countries and promotes newly published Jewish books each month.



With approximately 190,000 individual subscribers, Shamash connects diverse subsets of the worldwide Jewish community.

Shamash reinvented itself several times along the way to Hebrew College. It began in 1989 as an outgrowth of the Bulletin Board service JewishNet, created by Chaim Dworkin, Ari Davidow and Avrum Goodblatt. (Shamash was named in memory of Goodblatt's newborn son, Yochai, who died shortly after lighting Hanukkah candles with his parents.) In the early 1990s, Shamash morphed into the Jewish Electronic Information Exchange, which was part of the New York-Israel Project. By 1995, 30 key Shamash member organizations started a consortium to support the project's growth. Without a central foundation, however, this consortium lasted only a year. Hebrew College, the only transdenominational consortium member, emerged as the natural home for Shamash.

continued on next page

New Home for Bet Midrash

Light streams in from a wall of windows overlooking a thick grove of hardwood trees. Here on the top floor of the Gann Library, bracketed by two tall black bookcases filled with classic Jewish texts, dozens of mobile tables serve as platforms for intense, collaborative two- and four-person text study and spirited debate. First set up in mid-summer 2006, this space is the College's new Bet Midrash.

Users of the new learning space include the 47 students in the Rabbinical School, other graduate students taking Gateway Courses to advanced study of Bible and Rabbinics, adult learners from the Greater Boston Jewish community attending the College's Open Bet Midrash initiative and participants in an educator's Bet Midrash that has been around for two years.

The new Bet Midrash replaces the Rabbinical School's original study hall, formerly housed in cramped quarters at Andover Newton's Farwell Hall, accommodating at most about 30 learners. "The new Bet Midrash is a much more usable, inviting space for people to come and study together," says Dr. Barry Mesch, Provost of Academic Programs. "It's a centerpiece for the College."

The Bet Midrash's central, on-campus location also makes it much more accessible to the entire Hebrew College community. "We're thrilled for the Bet Midrash to be more physically integrated into the College," says Rabbi Sharon Cohen Anisfeld, Dean of the Rabbinical School. "It's very exciting to have the vibrancy of the Bet Midrash located here in this main building, so that other people can also share in the experience."

Robert Leikind, Senior Vice President at the College, agrees: "We want this to be a place where people can get comfortable with Jewish learning and feel the richness of that process."

—MD

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Since 1996, Hebrew College has provided Shamash with its administrative, technical and financial services infrastructure. In turn, Ehrlich says, a large number of HCO students first hear about the College from the "footer" of discussion forum emails. Each of the millions of emails sent on Shamash mailing lists identifies Shamash as a project of HCO.

The Union of Reform Judaism (URJ), also an original Shamash consortium member, remains Shamash's biggest mailing list user, with more than 100 lists. One list, called "Press Conference," was started in November 1995 and connects presidents of the Reform Movement's 900-plus congregations. "Shamash has enabled our presidents across the continent to develop community. They know each others' names, personalities and problems," says Emily Grotta, Director of Communications at URJ. "When they get together at our biennial conferences, it's like they're seeing old friends."

For \$50 a year per list, Shamash enables community members to send messages to each other instantaneously. The emails go to one address and Shamash takes care of the technical details behind transmitting them to hundreds, even thousands, of people. Each month, more than a million emails are sent through Shamash. Grotta illustrates the benefit on an institution-wide scale: "Without Shamash, we would need a full-time person in-house to host our lists," she says.

In addition to religious movements and large organizations, smaller, niche communities depend on Shamash to keep their constituencies in touch. Some examples are TACHLIS (the Jewish Agency for Israel's Aliyah support group), Second-Gen (descendants of Holocaust survivors) and JMNET: The Jewish Multiracial Network.

In the last decade, several dedicated volunteers and part-time staff have worked with Ehrlich to keep Shamash aflame. David Rosenthal, project coordinator since 1996 and a physician by day, runs the website, creates the mailing lists and handles day-to-day customer service requests. Louis Theran, who was Ehrlich's Talmud student in Prozdor, became Ehrlich's UNIX system teacher and helped enhance the security of Shamash's operating system.

As always, Shamash aims to stay current. "The Internet has changed, as have the needs of the Jewish community, or any community that wants to use technology to further its goals," Ehrlich says. In response, Ehrlich and Rosenthal recently updated Shamash to a more sophisticated mailing list platform. They also forecast adding new tools including podcasting and blogs. "As we harness new and emerging Internet technologies," Ehrlich says, "the goal is for Shamash to keep maintaining and growing community." **HCT**

Jodi Werner Greenwald is a freelance writer and Outreach Director for the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte in North Carolina.



Dynamic Duo

BARBARA AND LEO KARAS LEAD RECORD-BREAKING ANNUAL CAMPAIGN

If either Barbara or Leo Karas alone were to spearhead Hebrew College's Development Committee, the annual campaign would benefit from a smart, energetic leader devoted to Jewish education and experienced in raising millions of dollars. Lucky for the College, both husband and wife head up the committee and co-chair the campaign in their first formal collaboration.

Under the couple's leadership last year, the College completed its first large scale, person-to-person campaign, in which Development Committee volunteers initiated direct contact with hundreds of donors and prospective donors to discuss the future of Hebrew College. As a result, the College achieved unprecedented success: Annual Fund donations nearly tripled over the previous year.

Working in tandem has fueled many such victories for the Karases, who have frequently lent their support to each other's charitable endeavors throughout 55 years of marriage. Each has served as president of Congregation Mishkan Tefila in Chestnut Hill, where Barbara became the only female president, and both helped raise millions of dollars as general chairs of divisions of the Greater Boston Israel Bond Organization. At Hebrew College, where Barbara served on the President's Council and Strategic Planning Committee and is now a member of the Board of Trustees, the couple established the Barbara and Leo Karas Fellowship in Jewish Education in 2000. More recently, they pledged \$250,000 over five years for the annual fund.

In addition to these commitments, Leo has held top posts with the Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs, Ulpan Akiva in Israel, and the Greater Boston Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of America. Barbara is now a board member of the New England Region of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism and represents the organization on the Jewish Community Relations Council. But even these efforts have, in effect, been joint ones. "Everything we do, we end up doing together, because we are both so devoted to the causes we care about," says Barbara, seated on the couch in the sunroom of their Newton home. Petite, slim and effervescent, she has blue eyes that sparkle when she speaks.

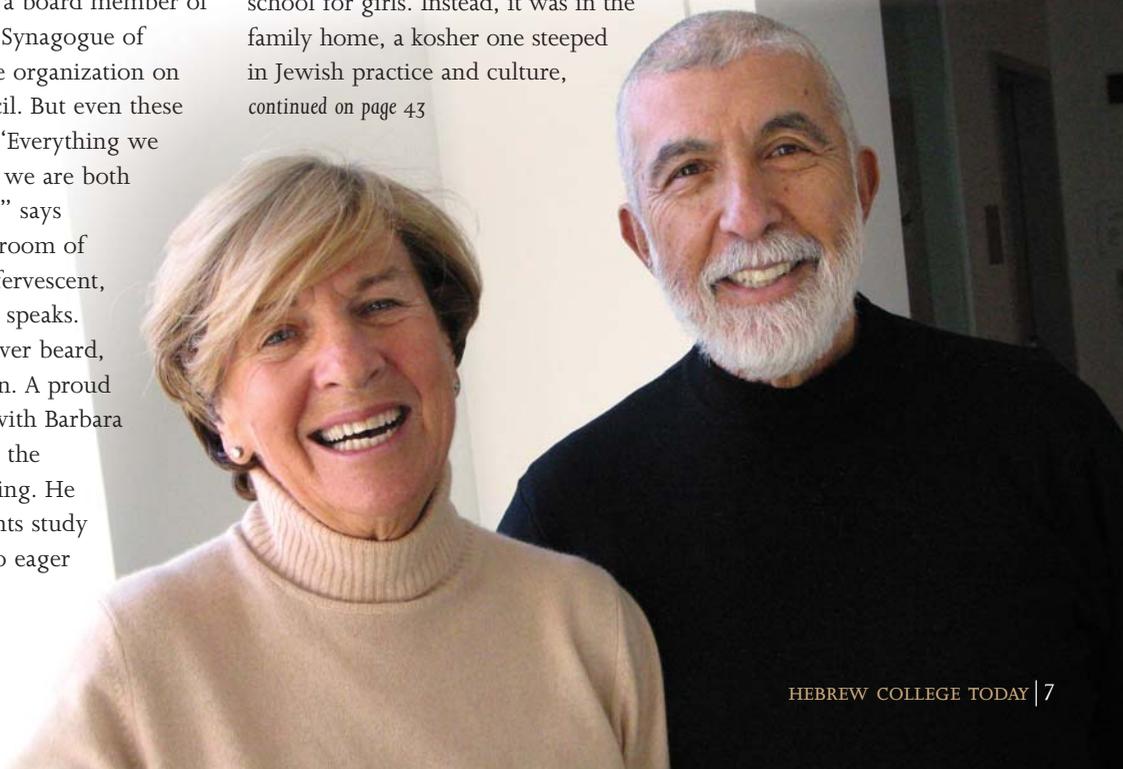
Leo, his kindly face framed by a silver beard, beams when discussing Jewish education. A proud Me'ah 2000 graduate, he takes classes with Barbara at the Me'ah Graduate Institute through the College's Center for Adult Jewish Learning. He explains that, although Me'ah participants study for 100 hours over two years, he was so eager

to learn that "I did 100 hours of reading in the first two months and then went on to read for several hundred more hours." Leo, a Harvard College graduate, completed Me'ah while working as treasurer of the family business, Karas & Karas Glass Co., Inc. Barbara, a Katherine Gibbs School graduate, acts as chair of the company, and their oldest son, Joseph, is president. "Leo is a very knowledgeable Jew," Barbara explains. "When our four children were growing up I told them, 'Some men play golf; Daddy likes to go to shul.'"

However, Leo recalls, he did not care much for attending temple as a child. Back then, his father, a former president of Kehillath Jacob in Mattapan, "dragged us by the ear" to services. Leo was a Prozdor dropout at age 13. At that time, he was too preoccupied with teenage antics and extensive homework from Boston Latin School to take Jewish studies seriously. Nonetheless, Leo continued to attend High Holiday services with his father at Mishkan Tefila, then in Roxbury, and, several years later, with Barbara as well, deepening his connection to the synagogue community. When the couple eventually moved to Newton and joined the congregation in its new Chestnut Hill location, Leo immediately joined the temple brotherhood. He later became brotherhood president, a steppingstone to larger roles at the synagogue and in the broader Jewish community.

As a young girl growing up in Chelsea and Winthrop, Barbara and her family attended a tiny Orthodox synagogue that left most kids hanging out in the parking lot during High Holiday services. As was often the custom at the time, the Orthodox community offered no Hebrew school for girls. Instead, it was in the family home, a kosher one steeped in Jewish practice and culture,

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HC Receives \$1.5 Million for Faculty Chair in Jewish Special Education

For Jewish education to be inclusive, educators need to reach out to students of all learning abilities. That's the mission driving the Shoolman Graduate School of Jewish Education's Special Education Program, which trains educators to integrate students with learning and developmental disabilities into mainstream Jewish classrooms.

Initiated in 2000 with a certificate and master's track, HC's Jewish Special Education Program received a \$1.5 million gift from Philadelphia philanthropist Bernard J. Korman in fall 2006 to endow a new professorship in Jewish Special Education. "We're hopeful that the creation of this faculty chair will ultimately lead to the development of a research and training center for Jewish Special Education at Hebrew College," says Korman, a Philadelphia philanthropist who has pledged an additional \$150,000 for the next three years to help build infrastructure for the enhanced program.

Korman's daughter, Paula MAJS'93, helped Hebrew College focus attention on special education and created the first special education concentration for her HC master's degree program in the early 1990s, under the tutelage of Rose Bronstein P'41, BJE'd'45, MHL'70. In 2005, she received the Sidney Hillson Memorial Award for her achievements in Jewish education.

Dr. Scott Sokol, Director of the Jewish Special Education Program, envisions that the new chair will not only guide curriculum development and research, but also serve as a liaison to local Jewish community programs. Jewish special education has become a priority in the Greater Boston area, evidenced by the evolution of several grassroots projects and professional training programs, including the recent merger of Etgar L'Noar and the Jewish Special Education Collaborative to form Gateways, with support from Combined Jewish Philanthropies.

As these initiatives and Hebrew College's professional development program gain momentum, Sokol predicts that the Greater Boston community will become a national focal point for Jewish special education, with Hebrew College in the lead: "We're becoming the center for academic training of Jewish special educators, as well as a force for advocacy for individuals with special needs." —EH

על חידושים בעברית

במכללה העברית

היא פרושה על פני שלוש יבשות, צפון אמריקה, אירופה, ואוסטרליה. הרביעית, אפריקה, כבר בדרך. בארצות הברית ובקנדה היא פורשת כנפיה על שמונים בתי ספר תיכוניים יהודיים, ברוסיה ובאוקראינה על שלושה עשר ובאוסטרליה על שבעה בתי ספר. כחמישה עשר אלף תלמידים לומדים עברית בתוכנית החדשה והמהפכנית נט"ע ולמעלה מארבע מאות מורים מלמדים בה. בשנת 2000 קיבלתי על עצמי את הפיקוח על הוראת העברית ב"פרוזדור" שלנו. המשימה הייתה לא קלה ובמסע חיפושי אחרי הטוב ביותר ובצר ליבי פניתי אל ידידתי הלה קובלינר. הלה הייתה אז מורה בכירה ביחידה להוראת עברית באוניברסיטה העברית בירושלים ובעלת נסיון רב בהוראת עברית, בבניית תוכניות לימוד ובכתיבת חומרי לימוד. היא סיפרה לי אז, בסוד כמוס, כי יש לה "רעיון" בעניין שחיפשתי וששמע עליו בעוד זמן מה. ה"רעיון" הפך די מהר להצעה שהוגשה ל"קרן אביחי". זו אישרה ותקצבה תוכנית נסויית קטנה ומצומצמת להוראת עברית בבתי ספר על יסודיים בצפון אמריקה. כך נולדה התוכנית נט"ע שראשי התיבות שלה הם (נוער לטובת העברית). וכך יצאה לדרכה תוכנית נסויית קטנה שכללה כעשרה בתי ספר ממקומות שונים בארצות הברית. ה"פרוזדור", בית הספר העל-יסודי המשלים של המכללה העברית, נבחר להיות בית הספר המשלים היחיד באותה קבוצת ראשונים. אני זוכר היטב את ההתלהבות שלי מהמפגש עם החוברות הראשונות שהוצגו באותה סדנה. כל חוברת מוקדשת לנושא מסויים האמור להיות קרוב לעולמו ולליבו של נוער יהודי בארה"ב. דגש מיוחד הושם על הזיקה של הנוער לתרבות יהודית וישראלית. ההבטים המגוונים של כל נושא במשלבים שונים של השפה. קטעי קריאה אחדים הם בעברית מדוברת, אחרים בעברית ספרותית וקטעי המקורות הם בלשונם המקורית חלקם בלשון מקראית, חלקם בלשון חכמים וכן הלאה. כל זאת בגישה רעננה, צעירה שוטפת ורלוונטית. בכל חוברת מספר שירי זמר ישראלים הקשורים לנושא ואת חוברות המתחילים, "אלפא נטע" מלווים סרטים שהופקו במיוחד עבורן. חגיגה לעיניים ולנשמה ובהחלט אתגר לתאים האפורים. טענתי בתחילת דברי כי תכנית נט"ע היא תכנית מהפכנית. אני מבקש להסביר את עמדתי. זו הפעם הראשונה שתכנית שלמה המתחילה כמעט ברמת הא-ב, ומגיעה עד רמה ילידית מקדישה עבודה רבה ומפורטת לבניית תשתית שתישא אותה תבסס ותרחיב אותה לזמן רב. כי במקביל לתכנית לימודים ברורה ולחומרי לימודים מהמוצלחים ביותר הקיימים כיום, הולכות ונוצרות שתי מערכות חשובות ביותר. האחת היא תכנית הכשרה והשתלמות למורים האמורים להעזר בתכנית. כל מורה המתעתד להעזר בחומרי ההוראה האלה, חייב להשתתף בשעורים המכשירים לכך. המערכת השנייה היא מערכת תמיכה במורים ופיקוח על עבודתם החל בעבודת צוות, דרך תמיכה של מנחים מקומיים ועזרה של מנחים אזוריים.

אשרינו שאנחנו זוכים.

שי נתנו

Lyrical Lessons

ZAMIR CHORALE OF BOSTON EDUCATES THROUGH SONG

They sang for a mere 20 minutes. But when the Zamir Chorale of Boston concluded their performance at the United Nation's first international day to commemorate victims of the Holocaust, the standing-room-only audience was singing and crying, too.

It wasn't just the speech by Holocaust survivor Gerda Klein that moved performers and the audience of survivors, families and ambassadors. Or even just the music. It was both of the above, placed in articulate context by Dr. Joshua Jacobson, Chorale director and founder.

In his signature conducting style, Jacobson preceded each song with a detailed introduction that enhanced its impact. He told how concentration camp prisoner Martin Rosenberg wrote the "Jewish Death Song"—a reworking of the Russian Jewish folk song "Ten Brothers"—for a secret choir, to revive the voices of murdered choral singers. And he explained how Elie Wiesel taught Zamir the version of *Ani ma'amim* ("I Believe") that he learned in the camps.

"We sang for the six million people who weren't there to sing for themselves," says Marilyn Jaye, a soprano in Zamir since 1994. All the more important, she notes, because some audience members had never before heard stories and music from the Holocaust. Says Jacobson, "I never miss an opportunity to educate."

An educational and musical institution in its 38th year, Zamir, which means "nightingale" in Hebrew, has a mission to awaken audiences to the breadth and beauty of Jewish culture. "Education drives everything we do," says Jacobson of the 50-member chorus, Hebrew College's artists-in-residence since 1989.

"I want the audience to keep thinking they're walking into a concert hall, but also to remember how much they've learned from the concert afterwards. Jewish music stands for Jewish history, civilization and culture in these concerts. And the most common response I hear from audience members is 'I didn't realize there was so much variety and so much depth in Jewish music.'"

Professor of Music at Northeastern University and Visiting Professor of Jewish Music at Hebrew College, Jacobson conducts extensive research to find secular and synagogue music for Zamir's repertoire, commissions



"Education drives everything we do," says Joshua Jacobson, Zamir Chorale Director and founder.

composers to write new music and arranges many pieces himself. He then teaches Chorale members and audiences about this unearthed or new music, including its history and relevance to Jewish culture, "taking them on a trip through space and time" between songs. Audiences may also consult concert program notes for English translations of Hebrew lyrics. But the real learning experience, Jacobson says, happens when you hear the music.

This was true for Susan Rubin, President of Zamir since 2000, and a soprano with the group since 1995. As a child, she had felt ambivalent toward "dry" Jewish liturgical music, but when her parents brought home the CD of Zamir's *Lights: Music for Chanukah*, she was amazed. "Out of all of my choral experiences, I've never been so touched spiritually as I have been by my experience with Zamir," she says.

Zamir Chorale concerts have had the same effect on many audiences, most notably during the group's 1999 trip to Eastern Europe, an effort to revive pre-Holocaust Jewish culture. The trip commemorated the centennial of the first Zamir Chorale, which originated in Lodz, Poland in 1899. One-hundred years later, the group encountered remnants of death camps, haunting memories of the Holocaust and audiences unsure of their religious and cultural background. Performing songs that had not been

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Marion Gribetz Leads Professional Development for Shoolman Graduate School



Marion Gribetz

Energizing professional development for Jewish educators in Boston for nearly 20 years, Marion Gribetz has joined Hebrew College's Shoolman Graduate School of Jewish Education to guide the professional development dimension of Shoolman's growth.

"In order to be a good professional, you need to be constantly learning and reflecting," says Gribetz, who started here in September as Director of Professional Development. "There are so many moving targets when you're teaching: the students, the content area, the objectives. To be engaged with all of it, you have to keep learning—there is no end."

Formerly the Director of the Center for Institutional and Professional Development at the Bureau of Jewish Education (BJE) of Greater Boston, Gribetz works closely with Shoolman Dean Harvey Shapiro in leading the College's efforts to provide sustained professional growth and learning experiences for Jewish educators in the greater Boston area, Western Massachusetts, South Florida and other regions.

"An academic institution such as Hebrew College should be connected to the world,

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heard there since before the Holocaust, Zamir awakened their audiences through the music.

Zamir has continued to advance its educational mission through its ongoing relationship with Hebrew College. The chorus meets every Tuesday evening, September through June, from 7:15 to 10:00 p.m. in Berenson Hall, and holds a concert and lecture series through Hebrew College's Center for Adult Jewish Learning each spring, focusing on an annual theme. The 2006 spring series "Psalms" concluded with "The Music and Mystery of Psalms," a lecture with performances by Zamir at Hebrew College, and "Psalmsensation: A Multi-Ethnic Concert Experience" at the Sanders Theater in Cambridge.

"These performances exemplify what Zamir is all about: exposing audiences to the breadth and depth of Jewish music," says Nancy Sargon-Zarsky P'69, CEP'o8, an alto in Zamir since 1982. "In 'Psalmsensation,' we presented different cultural and historical interpretations of the same texts, yet each piece highlighted the psalm's meaning and demonstrated its universal appeal." Accompanied by piano, percussion, clarinet, flute, saxophone and Turkish lyre, the Chorale recreated rich sounds, ranging from ancient Jewish cantillation to modern secular compositions from Israel, Brazil and the United States.

"Out of all my choral experiences, I've never been so touched spiritually as I have been by Zamir," says Susan Rubin.

Zamir also enjoys a fruitful collaboration with Hebrew College's Cantor-Educator Program (CEP); Jacobson calls their relationship symbiotic. Dr. Scott M. Sokol, Director of the CEP and Dean of the Jewish Music Institute at HC, has served as Zamir's assistant conductor and vocal coach, and remains an honorary board member and frequent soloist. He requires CEP students to sing in a choral group for at least one year, and encourages them to audition for Zamir when they feel ready. "Singing in Zamir gives CEP students exposure to a huge Jewish choral repertoire and exposure to one of the best Jewish choral conductors around," says Sokol.

In addition to Sokol and Jacobson, Charles Osborne, former cantor at Temple Emanuel in Newton, teaches at Hebrew College and contributes to Zamir. Since 1987, he has not only served as guest soloist and honorary board member, but has also composed many pieces which Zamir has premiered. Osborne sees Zamir as "a group that takes the concept of *gemilut hasadim* (deeds of loving kindness) most seriously. In Hebrew College, they have found a home to create programs of cultural and historical interest that would not have been possible otherwise."

Beyond Hebrew College, the Chorale offers several learning opportunities: an annual conducting internship in Jewish choral

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Life after Me'ah

MASTER OF JEWISH LIBERAL STUDIES OFFERS THE NEXT PERSONAL CHALLENGE

One spring evening at the Hebrew College campus, Patricia Bizzell, Judith Izen and 18 other adult students settled in for Rabbi Meir Sendor's class on the Zohar. During this session, Sendor, a soft-spoken, bearded Orthodox rabbi and renowned scholar of Kabbalah, meticulously unravels the mysteries of the famous Zohar passage known as the *Saba de Mishpatim*, a commentary on the Torah portion *Mishpatim*, dealing with the kabbalistic doctrine of the afterlife.

To illustrate an obscure point in the text, Rabbi Sendor suddenly remarks, "There is something a little bit like this in the movie *Ghost*. You know, the movie with Demi Moore, Patrick Swayze and Whoopi Goldberg? You haven't seen it? Go rent it; it's very romantic," he advises.

Rabbi Sendor's ability to bridge Jewish text with contemporary life impresses students like Izen, a doll historian, and Bizzell, a professor of American literature at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester. Last year Izen and Bizzell, both enthusiastic graduates of the Me'ah program, took time out of their busy schedules and set their sights on a more personal challenge: They decided to follow their passion for Jewish learning to

greater heights and enroll in the Master of Jewish Liberal Studies (M.J.L.S.) program.

Offered by the Me'ah Graduate Institute, the M.J.L.S. program provides Me'ah graduates with a logical next step in the continuum of lifelong Jewish learning. "About four years ago, it became clear that we had a substantial population of Me'ah graduates in the Boston area who we were serving in an episodic way," explains Avi Bernstein-Nahar, Dean of Educational Planning and Development at Hebrew College's Center for Adult Jewish Learning. "We needed to step up to the plate to serve Me'ah graduates in a more sustained and ambitious way," agrees Hebrew College President David Gordis. "What we've found in introducing a serious program such as Me'ah, and in the universal response to it, is that the students don't want to stop."

For Izen, Bizzell and other M.J.L.S. students, the program's greatest appeal lies in its combination of academic rigor and flexibility. Now in its fourth academic year, the M.J.L.S. degree program offers Me'ah graduates and those with equivalent background the opportunity to weave together a curriculum to meet their personal goals and interests within three broad content areas: Jewish thought and philosophy, biblical and rabbinic text interpretation and Jewish cultural history. M.J.L.S. students participate in special interdisciplinary master's level seminars, a wide array of Me'ah Graduate Institute (MGI) course offerings and one or two years of Hebrew language studies. Throughout the program, students are paired with individual faculty mentors and receive written feedback on their work from their instructors.

"M.J.L.S. classes have provided intellectual excitement and spiritual inspiration, even beyond what I eagerly anticipated," says Patricia Bizzell.

"The M.J.L.S. is unique in the world of master's degrees in Jewish studies as a path specifically designed to promote the growth and development of the adult Jewish learner through intensive study in an academic environment," says Bernstein-Nahar. To enable adults of wide-ranging lifestyles to fit classes into their schedules, the program offers both daytime and evening courses and encourages everyone to work at his or her own pace. In a typical program, students will enroll in about 14 courses over four years, though many will take longer. The first graduates are expected to complete the program in May 2007.

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M.J.L.S. student Patricia Bizzell.

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helping those professionals to learn and grow Jewishly, Hebraically and educationally,” says Shapiro. “We are delighted to have Marion take on this endeavor. Her appointment represents the successful growth of our programs and our continual desire to reach out and profoundly influence the field of Jewish education internationally.”

“In order to be a good professional, you need to be constantly learning and reflecting,” says Gribetz.

Gribetz has served as Adjunct Instructor in Jewish Education at Hebrew College since 1994 and will continue to teach in her new position. In addition to her work for the BJE, she brings much experience as former Director of Education at the Jewish Women’s Archive and from her various senior level management positions at the Striar Jewish Community Center in Stoughton, Mass.

As a Jerusalem Fellow from 1984–1987, Gribetz began her Ph.D. studies in Jewish Education and Jewish Art at Hebrew University. She earned an M.A. in History from Tufts University and a B.A. in Art History and History from Barnard College. Co-author of *Gateways to Jewish Family Education* (Bureau of Jewish Education of Greater Boston, 2000), she has authored and co-authored numerous publications. She is currently a member of the research team for “Hot Spots in Jewish Education,” a research project being conducted nationally through the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University.

Gribetz looks forward to strengthening the Shoolman Graduate School’s existing programs, interacting with educators throughout Boston and beyond to meet their professional needs, and pursuing new ideas in the field. “When candidates for a master’s degree in Jewish education are exposed to innovative thinking, they can provide a great service to the rest of the world,” she says. “I want to help them pursue the right certificates and degrees, and continue their learning afterwards.”

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M.J.L.S. has grown, largely through word-of-mouth, to a total student population of about 14 students for the 2006 academic year. The program, whose participants range in age from 40 to 70, has expanded in another way: M.J.L.S. classes are now open to matriculated students in the Master of Arts in Jewish Studies program.

M.J.L.S. is a natural fit for student Jeff Kichen, 54, a self-proclaimed bibliophile who may have as many as 12,000 books in his Framingham home. “In many ways, I have learned how to read better,” he says, noting the faculty’s deep engagement with text. Kichen, who teaches adult education in public health, has derived an additional benefit. “I’m an experienced adult educator,” he says, “but I’ve learned a great deal from observing the extraordinary teachers in this program.” As Kichen sees it, these two gains alone make the more than two-hour round-trip commute from his office in Wilbraham well worth the effort.

M.J.L.S. faculty members also see great value in the program. “Everyone needs to learn—not just college-aged students,” says M.J.L.S. and MGI teacher Marc Z. Brettler, Dora Golding Professor of Biblical Studies in the Department of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies at Brandeis University, “and different students of different ages bring diverse life experiences and attitudes to their learning.” Brettler, who has taught the first-ever Bible courses in Hebrew to Me’ah graduates, believes there is a demand for these courses in the community as more adults seek unmediated access to biblical texts in the original Hebrew. “I feel it is part of my obligation to the Jewish community to do this work,” Brettler says.

“What we’ve found in introducing a serious program such as Me’ah is that the students don’t want to stop,” says David Gordis.

In many ways, both faculty and students participate in the M.J.L.S. program for the sheer pleasure of it. In fact, several M.J.L.S. students have expressed that they are not pursuing the degree to earn a professional credential. “It enriches their profession or career, and they feel better qualified for their work in the Jewish community,” notes David Gordis, “but it is not their primary objective.”

Patricia Bizzell is a case in point. Even as she resumes full-time teaching and assumes the role of chair of her school’s faculty assembly in the 2006–2007 academic year, Bizzell is determined to carve out the time for M.J.L.S. course work. “M.J.L.S. classes have provided intellectual excitement and spiritual inspiration, even beyond what I eagerly anticipated,” she recalls of her first year. “They have been meat and drink to me, a profound new passion that I cannot give up.” **HCT**

Heirs to a Revolution

DEVORAH ZLOCHOWER ON BEING AN ORTHODOX JEWISH FEMINIST

Non-sexist liturgy, Jewish women's rituals, female rabbis, equality in synagogue services, Jewish feminist scholarship and Jewish acceptance of diversity in its many forms—radical topics of heated debate just three decades ago, these innovations are today taken as givens by many young Jews. Indeed, the questions and demands of Jewish feminists of the 1970s and 1980s that forged the foundation of a more inclusive Jewish landscape are now subject to a new generation's scrutiny.

Spurred by the North American feminist movement during the 1970s, Jewish feminist pioneers challenged notions of theology, ritual, community and society—and transformed Jewish American society by raising the status of women. Thirty years later, a second wave of Jewish feminists is pushing that envelope. Are these younger activists pursuing the same agendas as their predecessors? What have they learned from the first generation? And how will the second wave, in turn, transform the future?

To address these questions, Hebrew College's Center for Adult Learning (CAJL) and the Jewish Women's Archive (JWA) co-sponsored a lecture series in May 2006 entitled "Heirs to a Revolution: Intergenerational Dialogues on Jewish Feminism." Conceived and organized by Judith Rosenbaum, Director of Education for the JWA, and facilitated by the CAJL staff, this three-part series paired Jewish feminist pioneers with their next-generation counterparts in discussions of religion, ritual and social justice. Rosenbaum, herself a second-generation Jewish feminist, says the series "highlighted the diversity of Jewish feminism, the old and new challenges that this movement faces, and the delicate and often wavering balance between tradition and innovation that we seek."

The first session, entitled "Feminism and Orthodoxy: No Longer Strange Bedfellows?" featured Orthodox

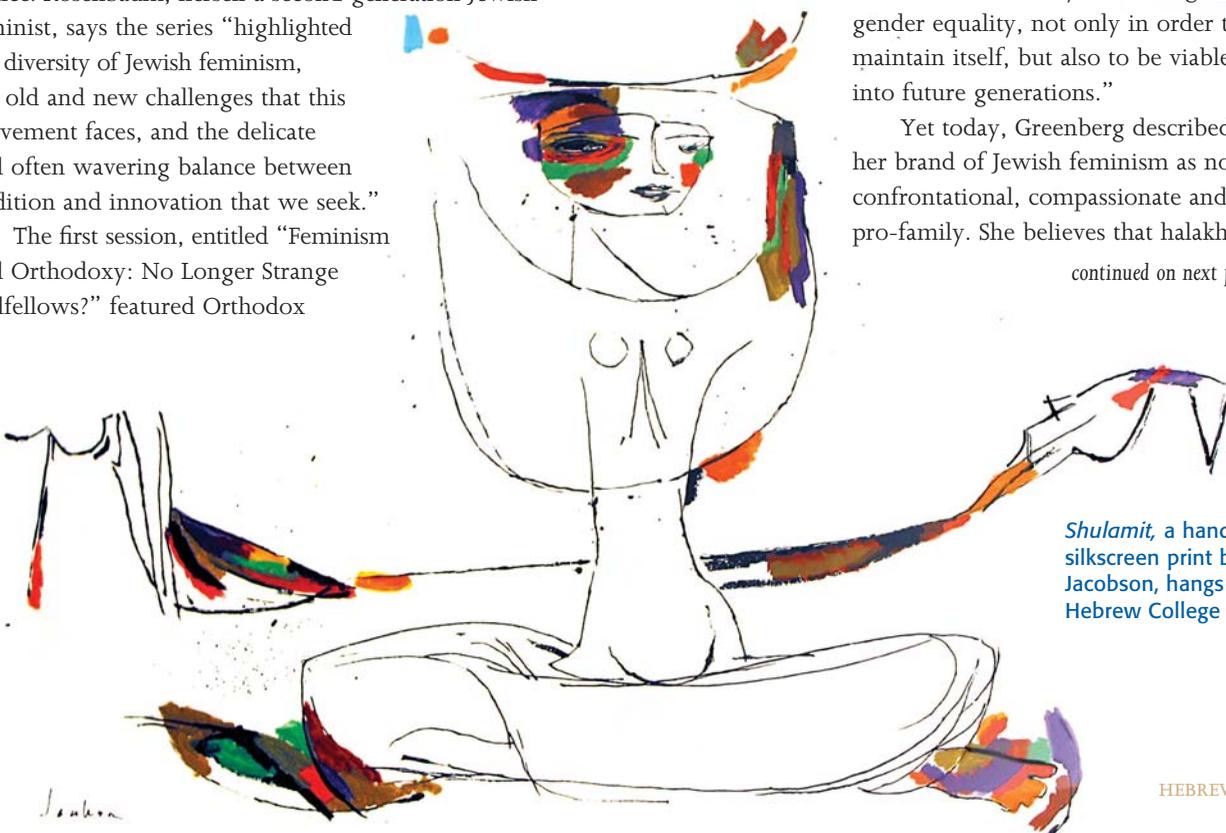
feminist pioneer Blu Greenberg, founding President of the Jewish Orthodox Feminist Alliance (JOFA), and younger scholar Devorah Zlochower, *rosh bet midrash* (head of learning) and former Director of Full-Time Programs at Drisha Institute for Jewish Education, the world's first center for women's advanced Jewish text study. The second session on "Reenvisioning Ritual" paired Sue Levi Elwell, Reform rabbi and forerunner in the creation of women's seders and *haggadot*, with Ayelet Cohen, Associate Rabbi of Congregation Beth Simchat Torah in New York, the world's largest synagogue serving the diverse LGBT (Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transsexual) community. In the final session on "Catalyzing Social Change," Ruth Messinger, Executive Director of American Jewish World Service and former New York City politician, appeared with her daughter, Miriam Messinger, Executive Director of The City School, a Boston youth development program seeking social reform for minorities.

It was in the session on feminism and Jewish Orthodoxy that the balance between tradition and innovation was most precarious. True to the series' objectives, the exchange between the presenters, Blu Greenberg and Devorah Zlochower, revealed the links—and chinks—in the chain between two successive generations of activism.

Perhaps more than anyone else, Blu Greenberg has sparked feminist innovation in the religious Jewish community. As author, teacher and lecturer, she has in the past insisted that "Orthodoxy must integrate gender equality, not only in order to maintain itself, but also to be viable into future generations."

Yet today, Greenberg described her brand of Jewish feminism as non-confrontational, compassionate and pro-family. She believes that halakhic

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Shulamit, a handcolored silkscreen print by Nathaniel Jacobson, hangs in the Hebrew College collection.



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Judaism offers many opportunities for observant women to enhance their observance and increase their participation in communal leadership. It is a philosophy that she developed while working inside her Orthodox community and pushing its parameters from within.

Devorah Zlochower also works within the Orthodox community, building on the foundation laid by Greenberg and other Orthodox women before her who demanded higher educational opportunities. But Zlochower's approach to Orthodox Jewish feminism is less patient, more passionate about breaking down barriers and more in conflict with the community and its precepts. While Greenberg emphasized maintaining distinctive roles and different, but equal, opportunities for women, Zlochower was adamant about the need for equal access in *all* forms of Judaism.

Both presenters agreed that Orthodox Judaism is poised for more profound changes—such as the ordination of women as rabbis—and that women must continue to work together to achieve the critical mass needed to promote these changes. At Drisha Institute, Devorah Zlochower is doing her part. As an administrator, instructor of Talmud and *halakhah*, and role model and mentor to her own students, she is training members of the next generation of Orthodox women to serve as scholars, educators, religious leaders and public speakers.

How will her generation, the second wave of Jewish feminists, influence these younger women and transform the future? The following remarks, excerpted from Zlochower's presentation, explore some of the possibilities.

DEVORAH ZLOCHOWER:

I think I was always a feminist, although I probably would not have used that term until recently. I grew up in a large family in Pittsburgh, the oldest of eight children. I was

educated in right-wing Orthodox schools, and even attended two years of study at a post-high school teacher's seminary in Brooklyn.

My family is Orthodox. My parents are both yeshiva educated. They're college educated, as well, and my dad is a scientist. I suppose I was set up by my parents from a very young age for internal conflict, as I often received quite different messages at home and at school. While both environments taught me to value the texts of my tradition, my father's notion of respect for the tradition included critical inquiry, while my fundamentalist school did not. Social expectations, however, were more convergent. I attended a girl's yeshiva, where the traditional role of wife and mother was ingrained.

From a very early age, I fought this picture of my future. I was far more interested in baseball and learning Torah than was generally deemed appropriate for girls, and I struggled against the limits on my freedom that came with the responsibilities of a large family. As a child and teenager, this struggle manifested as dissatisfaction with my femaleness. I had no models of women who had rejected or altered the traditional role, and so I simply envied my younger brothers, who played on a baseball team and learned Torah. I was mesmerized by those heavy tomes, intrigued by *tallit* and *tefillin*, but saw them as male and untouchable, though very desirable.

At age 25, I took a leave of absence from graduate school and attended Drisha Institute, where I began to fulfill a lifelong dream of learning Gemara. And for much of those first five years at Drisha, I was satisfied just to learn. I was not interested in changing our ritual participation. I did not attend a women's *tefillah* group. I did not put on *tallit* and *tefillin*. Yes, I had read Blu Greenberg's work on Jewish feminism, but I was different. I just wanted equal access to the text; then I thought I would take the knowledge I gained and teach it to other women who wanted the same for themselves. I thought I could insert myself into those learned discussions and debates just as I was.

But a strange thing happened as I continued to learn. It became eminently clear that I was not the intended audience for those texts. The students of these texts, just like the teachers of the text, were supposed to be men. And my beloved tradition, the books I had fanaticized about all those years, was excluding me. This was evident in major ways: Women are the objects, and not the subjects, of study in the laws relating to marriage, divorce and menstruation—women are discussed, but never discussants. But the smaller details were even more disturbing to me: A sexist statement could occur in text or discussion at any point.

So living a life of learning Torah, which is what I had wanted, meant being simultaneously an outsider and insider. I had access to the texts. I could learn them and, yes, love

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Shared Border-Land

HC-ANTS COLLABORATIVE INSPIRES PERSONAL GROWTH

Deitrich Bonhoeffer. Abraham Joshua Heschel. A visit to a mosque, lunch and learn in a sukkah. Adult learning courses that cross borders of Christianity, Islam and Judaism. Graduate courses on major themes in Jewish and Christian thought. Workshops and conferences on the intersection of religion and public policy.

Interfaith activities between Hebrew College and Andover Newton Theological School (ANTS) are fruitful and multiplying. Student and faculty-led programs, grouped under the rubric “Journeys on the Hill,” include a rich mixture of text study, explorations of ritual observance and social action. The Interreligious Center on Public Life, a joint venture of the two institutions, provides a public policy forum for scholars, clergy and lay leaders of diverse religious traditions.

But the real growth in the evolving relationship between the two hilltop neighbors is best measured in personal terms. For Dr. Greg Mobley, Associate Professor of Old Testament at ANTS, working with his HC counterparts has rejuvenated his own faith. “Seeing the passion and devotion of my Hebrew College colleagues for their religious tradition has inspired in me a greater spiritual tenderness toward Christianity, which had become a little academic and dry for me,” he admits.

Rabbi Or Rose, Rabbinical School Associate Dean and Director of Informal Education, says the interfaith dialogue pushes him to question his beliefs more deeply: “When you have conversations with others who are not insiders to your religious tradition, you have to clarify for yourself why you believe what you believe, why you practice what you practice, why you interact with the world in the ways you do. Nothing can be taken for granted.”

Mobley and Rose are two members of the Interreligious Collaborative, formed this fall by HC President David Gordis and ANTS President Nick Carter to guide the development of shared interfaith initiatives. The effort builds on nearly a decade of interfaith dialogue between the two institutions. “We needed to start a planning process to help us realize the full potential of what this relationship can become,” says Allen Katzoff, another Collaborative member and Director of HC’s Center for Adult Jewish Learning. “We’re just scratching the surface.”

Other Collaborative members are Rabbi Sandford Seltzer, Director of the Interreligious Center on Public Life and Rabbinical School Associate Dean of Community

Relations; Pricilla Deck, ANTS Director of Grants and Donor Development; and ANTS student Edie Howe.

On this shared journey, says Mobley, the two institutions are moving beyond most interfaith dialogues, which share activities across open borders, to creating a “shared border-land, where we both sit together and learn—we’re in neither camp.”

When you have conversations with others who are not insiders to your religious tradition, you have to clarify for yourself why you believe what you believe, why you practice what you practice, why you interact with the world in the ways you do. Nothing can be taken for granted.

It’s a dynamic that fosters cross-fertilization of ideas—Mobley, for one, has adopted *havruta* study for his Bible text courses. But religious values remain clearly defined and respected. “Your identity gets strengthened because the participants are so grounded and secure as they begin,” says Mobley.

Ideas for future shared initiatives are percolating. Katzoff envisions courses for clergy that teach the tools and skills of interfaith dialogue. Mobley imagines a joint graduate degree or certificate in interfaith work.

Whatever the particulars, all of these collaborative efforts on the Hill have one overarching goal. “In an age of fundamentalism and violence,” says Rose, “members of the Andover Newton and Hebrew College community understand just how important it is to create a counter-narrative that supports a vision of religious tolerance and mutual respect.” **HCT**





Seeing What Might Be

Dean Sharon Cohen Anisfeld Guides Rabbinical School's Evolution

Meeting Rabbi Sharon Cohen Anisfeld for the first time is like sitting down for a chat with an old friend who has been there for you in both good times and bad, and who only wants the best for you. Someone wise enough to help you chart the next phase of your life's journey, yet compassionate enough to let you learn from your own mistakes. Anisfeld's ensemble—a black knee-length dress, pearl necklace, black analog watch, short brown hair and wire frames—is that of a serious, dispassionate scholar, but the eyes behind those wire frames exude the unmistakable warmth of that old trusted friend.

She now brings both strengths to bear in charting the future of Hebrew College's Rabbinical School. Appointed on July 1 as the School's new Dean, Anisfeld draws on a rich array of leadership experiences, including one year as the Rabbinical School's Associate

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Dean and Director of Student Life, 13 years as Hillel Rabbi at Tufts, Harvard and Yale, and 11 years as a faculty member with the Bronfman Youth Fellowships in Israel summer program.

Throughout her career, Anisfeld's distinctive combination of intellectual and interpersonal skills has inspired young Jews. Perhaps none more than Yehuda Kurtzer, a former student of Anisfeld in the Bronfman Fellowship program, later a co-worker at Harvard Hillel and now a colleague at Hebrew College. "It is no coincidence that I have followed Sharon professionally wherever she goes; as first and foremost a teacher, she has taught me the importance of compassion and empathy in education as vehicles towards community-building and personal growth," he says. "Wherever Rabbi Anisfeld goes, she brings a transformative humanity that leaves a mark on the institution."

In her new role, Anisfeld will guide the three-year-old Rabbinical School program in its efforts to expand in size, while enriching its educational offerings. "In three short

Wherever Rabbi Anisfeld goes, she brings a transformative humanity that leaves a mark on the institution.

years, the Rabbinical School has become a well-respected and significant place on the Jewish map," she says. "Our highest priority now is to continue to retain and attract outstanding faculty, staff and students."

No small task, notes Dr. Arthur Green, Rector and founding former Dean of the School, who ordained Anisfeld at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in 1990. "She will need to maintain the best of our pioneering spirit, communal warmth and commitment to diversity," he says, "while enlarging the student body and faculty." And as Green sees it, Anisfeld is perfectly suited for this mission. "Sharon won the hearts of our community in her year here as Dean of Student Life," he says. "All of us are thrilled that she has stepped forward to accept this new responsibility."

A Teacher, a Friend

To explain her trajectory into the rabbinate and Jewish communal leadership, Anisfeld credits the "wonderful" rabbis and teachers at Temple B'rith Kodesh in Rochester, New York, the Reform synagogue of her youth. But much of her excitement about things Jewish seems downright instinctual. From an early age, she placed Judaism at the center of her life and craved Jewish knowledge. "I'm one of the few kids in North America who actually loved Hebrew school," she recalls with a smile.

Anisfeld's reputation as a well-versed educator who really listens to her students owes a great deal to two models—her

parents. Her mother, Doris Cohen, a children's librarian and Great Books discussion leader in local schools and other community institutions (including the local prison), conveyed a personal passion for conversation about great literature. From her mother, Anisfeld learned to read carefully, to support her interpretations with evidence from the text and to appreciate the value of discussing literature with others. "This informs the way I teach," says Anisfeld. "When two or more people study a text together, they deepen their understanding of the text, and they deepen their understanding of each other. The whole *havruta* model is based on this deep interconnection between friendship and Torah study."

From her father, Dr. Jules Cohen, Anisfeld learned an additional lesson that she would later apply as an educator. A physician who has worked for many years on the faculty of the University of Rochester Medical School, he has always emphasized the importance of teaching doctors how to ask the right questions, and how to listen carefully to their patients before making a diagnosis.

In her new position as Dean, Anisfeld intends to draw upon both analytical and personal skills. According to Rabbi Shimon Felix, Bronfman Youth Fellowships in Israel Executive Director, "She is a wonderful and gifted teacher, who has introduced many of our fellows to the beauty and power of traditional and contemporary Jewish texts. Her real strength, however, and what makes her such a remarkable educator, is the fact that she has always been a caring and loving friend, and mentor to whoever wants or needs one."

This strength has proven fruitful throughout Anisfeld's career, not only in one-on-one interactions with students, but also in group collaborations. As Hillel rabbi at Yale, for instance, she joined forces with students to create a feminist group called Jewish Women at Yale, which organized two national student conferences on women and Judaism. Ultimately, Anisfeld co-edited *The Women's Passover Companion* and *The Women's Seder Source Book* (Jewish Lights) with two of her students from Yale.

Anisfeld sees this as an example of what can happen when people are brought together in a significant way. "There is nothing more rewarding than being part of a project in which individuals are respected, human relationships are valued and a diverse group of people are able to work together toward a common vision," she says. "When I think about what it means to have vision, I think about two things: Can you see beyond what is to what might be, and can you see the person standing right in front of you?"

Sharpening the School's Klal Yisrael Vision

At the core of the Rabbinical School's vision is the development of a transdenominational community of learners who celebrate Jewish holidays together, pray together and engage in acts of social justice and public service. The hope

“When I think about what it means to have vision, I think about two things: Can you see beyond *what is* to *what might be*, and can you see the person standing right in front of you?”



is that Hebrew College’s Rabbinical School community will ultimately serve as a valuable model for congregations that HC graduates will be helping to shape in their future careers. As the new Dean, Anisfeld plans to strengthen three aspects of this approach to rabbinic education: transdenominationalism, egalitarianism and social justice activism. Not only has she done all of her past rabbinic work in transdenominational settings and been a partner in a transdenominational marriage (she was raised Reform, her husband, Orthodox), she has also done pioneering work in Jewish feminism, interfaith relations and economic justice.

One challenge for the School—and for Anisfeld personally—is to square its dual commitments to transdenominationalism and egalitarianism. “It’s always been important to me to have a transdenominational, *klal Yisrael* vision that includes the whole spectrum of Jewish life,” says Anisfeld. “I think it’s vital that Orthodox and non-Orthodox Jews have a sense of shared peoplehood. At the same time, I’ve been a feminist all my adult life, and our commitment to egalitarianism at the Rabbinical School is fundamental. How do we balance these competing values?” The first step, Anisfeld maintains, is to ensure that the School is engaged in significant conversation about these pluralist values—one that includes a wide range of voices from within and beyond the Rabbinical School community.

Another aspect of the School’s vision poised for further refinement—its requirement, unique among rabbinical schools, for students to learn about social justice issues and engage in activism—taps into Anisfeld’s experience as both scholar and activist. She argues that the School needs to reexamine what it means to bring Jewish sources to bear on contemporary issues in a responsible way—one that doesn’t pluck out verses to justify pre-existing views, but

rather engages with sources that both affirm and challenge those views. “Part of what it means to study Torah is to ask: What claim does this text have on me? How do I challenge the text and how does it challenge me?” Anisfeld explains. “It’s important to me to do this in a way that has integrity and depth. We’re in a good position to do this because of the seriousness of our commitment both to classical text study and to social justice.”

Anisfeld cultivated this “responsible” approach to Torah study, under the leadership of Rabbi Shimon Felix at the Bronfman Fellowship program. “The Rabbis, while making it clear that text is extraordinarily plastic and open-ended—as they say, there are ‘70 faces to the Torah’—also teach us to profoundly respect the text,” notes Felix. “This interaction—between the need to see the text through one’s own eyes, on the one hand, and the commitment to the text’s essential integrity, on the other—is what Talmud Torah is all about. Rabbi Anisfeld loves Torah, and therefore struggles mightily with it to make it her own.”

As she helps shape the vision of the Rabbinical School, Anisfeld will spend most of her time carrying out the day-to-day tasks needed to realize it, from recruitment to fundraising. As in her past positions, many of her efforts will involve facilitating communication and collaboration among faculty and staff members, particularly for collective decisions on issues such as the program’s curriculum and academic standards. As always, Anisfeld brings her trademark blend of wisdom and compassion to the task. “I am absolutely honored to be working with such a talented and dedicated group of faculty and staff,” she says. “The heart of this job is seeing those individuals for who they are, appreciating the strengths that they bring to the School and creating a context in which they can do their best work.” **HCT**



No More C

Hebrew Schools that Work.

A group of children and adults are running on a grassy field. In the foreground, a young boy in a red and blue long-sleeved shirt is running towards the camera. To his right, another boy in a blue t-shirt with a sailboat logo and the word 'Pantelis' is running. In the background, a girl in a pink shirt and a girl in a pink top are also running. A woman in a light blue shirt and a man in a striped shirt are visible on the left side of the frame. The background is a dense green hedge.

lock-Watching

—Lessons from the Field

It's a sunny, cloudless Sunday afternoon in early May. More than 1,200 guests converge in Gillette Stadium's massive events hall to meet New England Patriots players and cheerleaders signing autographs. But this is no NFL pep rally. Throughout the hall, spirited teenagers are drawing their own crowds as they belt out Hebrew choral songs, play klezmer music and perform Israeli dances. Hosted by Patriots owner Robert Kraft P'58 and his wife, Myra Me'ah'or, this is ProxBowl, a gala benefit for Hebrew College's Prozdor High School, whose student population has grown from 177 to 950 in the past decade.

In short, hundreds of teens, parents, siblings, grandparents and friends gave up their Sunday afternoon and drove in from more than 80 communities around Massachusetts and Southern New Hampshire to show their support for...a Hebrew high school.

Thirty years ago, I would not have imagined that anyone would go out of their way to celebrate their Hebrew school. The only reason I still attended mine—a Conservative Hebrew high school in suburban New Jersey—was to qualify for a subsidized trip to Israel upon graduation. It's not that my synagogue hadn't tried. The religious school board had created a serious program featuring a well-educated teaching staff and cutting edge curricula in Hebrew language and Bible. And, in a nod to the nascent promise of informal education, they even built a teen lounge and organized occasional *Shabbatonim*. Despite their best efforts, however, on many afternoons I found myself counting down the minutes until class let out at 5:45.

Maybe it was the time of day. On weekday afternoons, right after a full day of public school, it was hard to sit still and stay focused on still more teachers "covering" course material. And on Sunday mornings, local ball fields beckoned. Perhaps the ultimate problem was that most of our parents dropped us off to get a vacuum-packed, six-hour-a-week "Jewish education," little of which we would actually incorporate into our lives, once our feet touched down on the expansive parking lot beyond our classroom windows.

Even my favorite teacher, Avi West (now Education Officer for the Partnership for Jewish Life and Learning in Washington, D.C.), felt like he was fighting an uphill battle back then. "It's hard to sustain serious learning in a somewhat artificial system with limited hours and teachers who 'parachute' in, unload their stuff and then go home," says West. "You can't acculturate with an artificial textbook on artificial time and teachers who don't live in the community and have little opportunity to get to know their students and their needs."

Created in America in the early 20th century and modeled after public schools, Hebrew schools—commonly referred to as supplementary schools—were originally intended to "supplement" the substantial exposure to Jewish living that children received in their homes and communities at that time. But today, many parents expect these schools—most of which are staffed by low-wage, part-time, non-career teachers—to instill a love of Jewish learning and strong Jewish identity in their increasingly over-programmed kids. All in six hours a week. And in many cases, all within the few short years leading up to their bar or bat mitzvah.

"It used to be enough for us to be teachers and principals—to run a school where kids could learn vital information and infuse it with some joy," recalls congregational education consultant Cyd Weissman, "because you had a family and community that would raise you as a Jewish child. Today we're being asked to raise up a Jewish child to know, to believe and to belong."

In the past 30 years, supplementary Jewish education programs—whether organized as synagogue-based congregational schools or as community schools serving a pluralistic and often sizeable student population within a particular geographical region—have made significant improvements in educational content and delivery. But many of the same challenges persist. In congregational schools, these include a chronic shortage of qualified teachers, profound discipline problems and a low level of student achievement, observes Isa Aron, Professor of Jewish Education at the Hebrew Union College's Jewish Institute for Religion in Los Angeles and author of *Becoming a Congregation of Learners* (UAHC Press, 1995).

“It’s hard to sustain serious learning in a somewhat artificial system with limited hours and teachers who ‘parachute’ in, unload their stuff and then go home,” says Avi West.

And, on the whole, notes Jack Wertheimer, Provost and Professor of American Jewish History at the Jewish Theological Seminary and author of *Linking the Silos: How to Accelerate the Momentum in Jewish Education Today* (AVI CHAI Foundation, 2005), students who receive virtually all of their Jewish education within supplementary school classrooms—without complementing it with informal Jewish learning experiences such as camping and trips to Israel—continue to achieve remarkably low levels of Jewish literacy and long-term engagement in Jewish life, as compared with those with more intensive formal and informal educational experiences.

Indeed, it’s the most challenging group to engage within the elusive cohort of Jewish teens. According to Jonathan Woocher, CEO of Jewish Education Service of North America, across the entire spectrum of Jewish teen education—from students who attend only supplementary schools to those engaged in the most intensive forms of Jewish day high school education—less than 25 percent of Jewish teens maintain a Jewish life after graduating from high school.

Despite these grim reports, conversations with dozens of educators and consumers in community and congregational schools suggest that given sufficient time, money and creativity, supplementary schools can achieve remarkable success. In fact, a considerable number of exceptional community and congregational schools have produced impressive results. They’ve not only created Jewish learning programs that kids actually want to attend, but also turned out Jewishly literate graduates with a passion for Jewish living. What have these schools done differently?

The answer to this question has broad implications for the roughly two-thirds of children enrolled in Jewish youth education programs who attend supplementary rather than day schools, which now draw a disproportionate share of the Jewish community’s youth education dollar. “While investment in day schools is important, the majority of children will get their Jewish education in supplementary schools, suggesting that we need to invest the same resources and creativity in them,” argues Hebrew College President David Gordis. “The success of Prozdor shows that quality supplementary education need not take a back seat to day school education.”

Prozdor: Not Only a School, But a Community

Prozdor High School is successful primarily due to three factors, says Gordis. “It works,” he maintains, “because

teaching is taken seriously by an accomplished faculty; the children are empowered to make choices based on what interests them most; and it’s not only a school, but a community.”

Most of Prozdor’s faculty members hold advanced degrees and are enthusiastic experts in their subject areas—a combination that’s critical to their effectiveness, says Billy Mencow P’71, Associate Director of the Boston Bureau of Jewish Education (BJE). “Kids rise to the occasion when their teachers are Judaically literate and appear authentic—when they’re really into what they teach,” Mencow observes. “Otherwise, you’re dead in the water.” Dr. Harvey Shapiro, Dean of the Shoolman Graduate School of Jewish

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Kesher Newton teacher Sarah del Castillo has an M.A.J.S. graduate degree from Hebrew College.

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Education at Hebrew College, agrees. “Creating authentic Jewish scholar-teachers is at the heart of our mission,” he says. “We’re trying to train educators to be authentic as Jewish scholars, enabling them to access the tradition in its original form and to transmit that scholarship to their students in a compelling, creative, engaging way.”

Prozdor’s teachers must meet one other mission-critical criterion. “What makes our faculty incredible is that their skill in working with teens is preeminent,” says Prozdor Director Margie Berkowitz. To prove it, each prospective faculty member must audition with a sample lesson before a group of Prozdor students.

Prozdor not only gives students a voice in determining who teaches them, but also in what they learn. Using their own interests as a portal to Jewish learning and living,

Given sufficient time, money and creativity, supplementary schools can achieve remarkable success.



Children and parents join together for activities at Bet Sefer Solel, a community-run school in Mississauga, Ontario.

Prozdor students design their own programs from nearly 100 elective courses offerings, each creating a personal Prozdor experience. “We have created a new model for high school Jewish education that puts the student in the driver’s seat and enables him or her to make choices from a broad menu,” says Berkowitz. “We offer a variety of choices in hours, format and subject matter.” Classes are based at Hebrew College on Sundays and Tuesdays, as well as at a choice of seven branch locations during the week; students may attend classes for two, four or six hours a week. And no course requirements apply—not even in Hebrew language. “In elementary school, Hebrew is key, because it prepares you for congregational life and bar mitzvah,” says Berkowitz. “But if you have difficulty learning Hebrew, you’re stuck. Here we’ve introduced different tracks. We want every student to access Judaism through their own passion.”

Finally, Prozdor works hard to foster a community spirit within which authentic Jewish learning and living can flourish. Much of this communal bonding takes place on *Shabbatonim* and organized trips to points of Jewish interest from New England to Eastern Europe. But it also builds throughout the year at Sunday break time, a half-hour period during which hundreds of students come together to socialize, to participate in clubs and social justice activities or to celebrate Jewish holidays. “When you can create a community feeling in a school or class, that’s where the best learning takes place,” says Iris Petroff, President of the Coalition for Alternatives in Jewish Education. “Effective informal education invests in building the community and then weaving the learning into the communal experience.”

Prozdor’s professional, teen-centered, community oriented approach has not only multiplied its student population, but has also led many graduates to return to attend a 12th grade Jewish community leadership program called *Moreshet*.

Kesher: Another Community Success Story

But Prozdor’s success is not singular. Other community schools have thrived through their own innovations in these three areas. For example, Kesher, a 15-year-old community school in Greater Boston, serving children in grades K–11 at its Cambridge site and K–5 at its 4-year-old Newton site, has earned a high reputation for excellence in Jewish education and fast-growing enrollments.

Like Prozdor, Kesher insists on a staff that’s highly educated, dedicated and well-compensated. The program’s Newton faculty for the 2006–2007 academic year, exclusively career professional Jewish educators (including three Hebrew College graduate students), log far more hours per week (15 to 28) than most

supplementary school teachers. “All of our staff are pursuing master’s degrees in Jewish and educational fields,” says Andrew Doxer, a Keshar-Newton teacher now working toward a master’s degree in Jewish education at Hebrew College. “This translates into a professional staff that is committed to the transmission of Jewish life, religion and culture. Keshar also devotes weekly time for staff meetings and professional development.”

Keshar meets children on their own terms, combining Hebrew school with after-school daycare. Meeting Monday through Thursday (with kids and parents choosing a minimum of two days) after public schools let out, the program engages students in play and study activities until 6:00 p.m. Divided by age and proficiency, students study Judaica, modern Hebrew and tefillot, often in the context of art, drama, music and other hands-on projects that reflect their interests.

Keshar’s main goal is to build a sense of Jewish community and belonging among its students, their families and their teachers—one that builds their *kesharim* (connections) to Jewish knowledge and living. Toward that end, the program’s staff encourages the practice of *kavod* (respect) in all spheres of students’ lives and during all parts of the day. This spring at Keshar-Newton, during an afternoon session of *hugim* (special activities ranging from cross-stitching matzah covers to kite-building), a student approached Director Lauren Applebaum with a quandary. “I don’t like my hug,” she protested. “I don’t want to do it today.” Without hesitation, Applebaum replied, “Let’s try it for today and talk again. We want to show *kavod* to your teacher and your group for the rest of the day and not let them down.”

The school also builds community through its formal curriculum: All students study the same subjects at the same time at different levels, resulting in a school-wide “conversation.” And informal activities, such as pick-up baseball games, tighten relations between students and teachers. Referring to one instructor, Applebaum said, “Steve is not just the *kaetah daled* teacher, but also demonstrates a wicked curveball. You feel more



Andrew Doxer, teacher at Keshar Newton, is concurrently pursuing his M.J.Ed. degree at the Shoolman Graduate School of Jewish Education, Hebrew College.

Keshar’s main goal is to build a sense of Jewish community and belonging among its students, their families and their teachers—one that builds their *kesharim* (connections) to Jewish knowledge and living.

comfortable talking about God with someone you relate to in other ways.”

Margie Decter P’85, a Keshar Newton parent, lauds Keshar’s community-oriented learning environment: “Keshar’s approach mimics our Camp Yavneh experience, in which there is a palpable sense of spirit and belonging.”

As community schools, Prozdor and Keshar have developed successful models, but it’s often difficult to muster the political will in many congregations to organize with this degree of commitment. Not to mention the human and financial resources. After all, Prozdor has hundreds of students and Hebrew College’s substantial network of educators, alumni and donors. Keshar, whose two sites relied on Covenant Foundation grants to get started, charges tuition that far exceeds that of a typical supplementary school. Despite the formidable challenges involved, however, a growing number of congregational schools have built programs that have considerably increased student enrollment, Jewish literacy and identity.

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Creating a Congregation of Learners

Tapping into internal and external resources and capitalizing on opportunities unique to congregational life, these outstanding synagogue schools have also produced highly effective teaching staffs, engaging child-centered curricula and transformative communal experiences.

Hebrew College's Shapiro notes that several successful congregational schools have assembled their staff by recruiting the most knowledgeable, inspiring teachers they could find (and/or providing sufficient training to develop such teachers), while many others have looked within, engaging members of the congregation to become the teachers, ideally in their areas of expertise.

Central Synagogue in Manhattan has taken the former approach. Thanks to a generous grant from philanthropic members, the Reform congregation now employs seven full-time teachers. Forced to rebuild their 128-year-old synagogue after a fire in 1998, the congregation seized the opportunity to rebuild the community and transformed its culture into one of lifelong learning. For starters, the synagogue's education committee hired its first five full-time teachers in 2004 to serve the 450 children in its youth education program. "We realized that the key to our Jewish learning process was coming in contact with an exceptional teacher," recalls Rabbi Ruth A. Zlotnick, Central Synagogue's Director of Lifelong Learning.

Supported by a competitive salary and ongoing professional development opportunities, and guided by a clear set of curricular goals, each full-time teacher functions as point-person for a particular grade and creates original course material. "The full-time teachers participate in the

services and are treated like rock stars," says Zlotnick. "They get applause because they love what they do and the kids can feel it." The result: a more Judaically literate and passionate student body. "Our kids come much more often, we have a rousing *tefillah*, the kids know all the Shabbat prayers and are enthusiastic about them," says Zlotnick.

Taking a different tack by necessity, Solel Congregation in Mississauga, a suburb of Toronto, has flourished by recruiting from its own ranks. For Solel's 320 member-families, attracting—or affording—career professional Jewish educators from the city has never been a realistic option. So they have drawn upon their own strengths. Guided by the motto "to teach our children diligently" since its founding in 1973 by a small core group with solid Judaic knowledge and teaching skills, the synagogue has recruited its own members to educate 220 children in a religious school, called Bet Sefer Solel, that covers preschool to 10th grade.

"Parents are recruited as teachers, and students get teacher training in the tenth grade," says Arliene Botnick, Bet Sefer Solel's educational director. "Your best friend's parent may be your third grade teacher." Botnick notes that nine out of ten kids continue past their bar or bat mitzvah year to graduate, and more than half stay on to teach or tutor. "In my childhood, teachers were only seen at Hebrew school and were not part of the community," says congregant Cheryl Shine, whose three daughters have attended Solel's school. "Our teachers are visible in synagogue life, so our daughters are comfortable with them. Seeing kids, not much older, as teaching assistants inspires them to become teachers as well, so they stay involved until graduating high school. And, at that point, their identity is already established."

Like their community school counterparts, congregational schools have achieved greater success by customizing their programs' format and content to students' schedules and interests. For instance, since Temple Beth Elohim's religious school in Wellesley converted its program from one Monday evening a week to a set of weeknight electives and weekend retreats focused on experiential learning, the post-bar/bat mitzvah retention rate has risen from 23 to 75 percent, explains Alison Kur, Director of Congregational Learning.

In one Beth Elohim course entitled "Cooking for a Cause," students prepare meals for a local food bank and study texts on feeding the hungry. Another class studies Heschel's concept of radical amazement and then goes mountain climbing. Students choose electives based on their interests and attend retreats three times a year. "There's a vibrancy around here that didn't exist before," notes Kur. "The Jewish content is better than what we had, because we're delivering it in a context that our students see as relevant. They're choosing what they're



High School students Julia Mandehr P'09 and Steffi Dworkin P'09 choose art class from one of the many elective classes available at Prozdor.



already resonating with, and they get it more deeply than in a once-a-week, 40-minute class.”

Much of what determines the success of a congregational—or community-based—education program is understanding learners in terms of age, Jewish background and learning style, says Marilyn Stern MEd’96, Cert’96, Family Educator at Temple Isaiah in Lexington. “While at Hebrew College, one thing I enjoyed learning from Steve Copeland (Assistant Professor of Jewish Thought and Education) was a multimedia approach—powerful ways to use pieces of a text, artwork, song or video clip,” she recalls. “If you pick out what you most want to get across, you can approach it with different modalities.” Including movement, a learning mode of particular appeal for the youngest school-age children. “When the Gan (ק) class learns about the Sh’m’a, we focus on listening and oneness,” she says. “They go outside and listen to the ground and sounds while shutting their eyes, and then we ask them for their own budding ideas on the meaning of the oneness of God.”

Finally, in recognition that supplementary schools can’t provide a comprehensive Jewish education in six hours a week, a growing number of synagogues are providing Jewish communal learning opportunities for families and all members of the congregation. “Today, families are

saying, ‘I, too, am the learner. I, too, want the journey—to know, believe and belong.’” says Cyd Weissman. “This is our greatest moment of opportunity. This wave of parents who want to know, believe and belong recognizes that to send a child to learn in isolation produces little.”

At Congregation Beth Am in Los Altos Hills near Palo Alto, Shabbat is a family affair. “Shabbaton is like a family school,” says Youth Education Director Ellen Lefkowitz. “It’s not a one-shot deal.” Parents and their children meet on Shabbat for 25 two-and-a-half-hour sessions a year, in which they study as a family, in parallel with other families, and collaborate on family projects. For example, one family composed a song about the Torah portion of the week and performed it for all the other families.

Member Ann DeHovitz’s family, including her 11- and 14-year-old daughters, has attended the Shabbaton program for nine years. “Participating together has made our sense of Jewish identity stronger, because we have built memories around the learning we did as a family that we regularly refer back to,” DeHovitz maintains. “Also, the communal nature of the program made our children feel like the synagogue was ‘theirs’ at an early age.”

These highly successful Shabbatonim started about ten years ago when the Reform Movement’s “Excellence in

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The question is: Does the Jewish community have the resolve to invest a comparable amount of its time and money in an institution in which success has been the exception, rather than the rule?

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Congregational Education” initiative helped Beth Am cultivate what Isa Aron calls “a congregation of learners.” In short, the entire synagogue now strives to see itself as a shul, a Yiddish word for a place of prayer and learning. “Young children love to go to religious school, but at a certain age kids get the message that no one really cares about this,” Aron says. “If parents and congregational leaders send the message that Jewish learning is important, and the parents are learners, too, then kids get a very different message. The result is a greater commitment to learning while in school and a lower dropout rate after bar/bat mitzvah.”

It’s a message that a congregational school can most effectively communicate when there’s “a seamless connection between the Hebrew school experience and that of the broader synagogue family, and easily accessible avenues of connection to the rabbi and other congregational leaders,” says Harvey Shapiro. In other words, the school must be linked to adult, family and early childhood education, social action programs, lay leadership committees, holiday celebrations, services and youth activities. “The Hebrew school can’t do it by itself,” adds Shapiro. “It’s not only limited by time, but also requires a support system for it to be effective. This requires a full court press on the part of the synagogue staff and lay leadership.”

Congregational schools are also enhancing their effectiveness by partnering with institutions in the broader Jewish community, such as Israel travel programs and Jewish summer camps. “Congregations understand that the non-formal work of Jewish education extends beyond the walls of the congregation to venues such as summer camps,” says the Boston BJE’s Billy Mencow, a former Director of Camp Ramah New England. “More kids are seeing teachers from their summer camps in their congregations, and more staff and laypeople in congregations are getting that what happens in camps can happen at home.”

Elizabeth Corman, a Hebrew College M.J.Ed. student graduating from the Shoolman School of Jewish Education in 2007, also teaches at Keshet Newton community school.



Articulating a Vision—And Seeing It Through

High-performing supplementary schools do not pull a stellar teaching staff, captivating curriculum or inspiring learning community out of thin air. Nor do they achieve durable results by applying quick fixes to selected programmatic trouble spots. Their success—and it is achievable, Boston BJE Executive Director Daniel Margolis BJE’63, maintains—stems from articulating a clearly defined, long-lasting vision of what their school should be, collaborating with all stakeholders to determine how to realize that vision, investing in appropriate and qualified staff members to implement it, and finding the financial and human resources needed to support it.

Harvey Shapiro agrees. “The programs that are succeeding implement a well-articulated vision of the congregation or community school,” he says. “A vision needs to be developed, shared and espoused, and translated into educational goals.” In setting those goals, Shapiro cautions against overemphasizing simple, enjoyable experiences at the cost of rigor. “The majority of Jews in America are not sufficiently literate Jewishly,” he observes. “They can’t interpret Jewish texts and can’t independently decode and comprehend the Hebrew language. They may have positively affiliated with Jewish institutions and causes, while having little capacity to

create a Jewish legacy for their children that includes content of Jewish culture.”

To define and implement a well-articulated vision of a supplementary school requires a serious and ongoing investment of time and money, one that’s typically hard to sustain in most communities and congregations. In the past 15 years, however, a number of highly sophisticated initiatives, many sponsored by Jewish community agencies and movements, have enabled some supplementary schools to systematically redesign their program and achieve dramatic results.



Students Jessica Petrino, Sarah Lou P'08 and Steffi Dworkin P'09 work on a performance for their drama elective at Prozdor High School.

For example, inspired by the success of Congregation Beth Am’s task force on congregational learning, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute for Religion in 1992 launched the Experiment in Congregational Excellence (ECE), the nation’s first synagogue transformation program. The initiative has assisted 42 participating synagogues in various movements in a systematic process to create “congregations of learners” guided by a collaborative, reflective, results-oriented leadership of professional staff and volunteers.

Another ambitious initiative, Nurturing Excellence in Synagogue Schools (NESS), aims to improve the quality of synagogue schools and thereby boost low post-bar/bat mitzvah retention rates. Working with six Philadelphia-area schools, NESS provides professional development and mentoring for teachers, a leadership development seminar for educational directors, organizational development for professional and lay leaders, a curriculum development project and a process to systematically assess the program’s impact.

“NESS is the most comprehensive synagogue school transformation program in the country,” says Steven

Kraus, Director of the Center for Excellence in Congregational Learning at JESNA. Funded by philanthropists and the Jewish Community Federation, the Auerbach Central Agency for Jewish Education has worked intensively with the lay and professional staff at the six area congregations for the past three years. Leora W. Isaacs, Director of JESNA’s Berman Center for Research and Evaluation, has conducted a formal evaluation based on a preliminary and post-program survey of youths in each congregation. So far, her findings suggest that those post-bar/bat mitzvah

retention rates are likely to shoot up: Sixth graders showed a substantial increase in measures of positive Jewish identity and involvement in Jewish activities.

A Question of Will

Despite the impressive track record of synagogue and community school change initiatives, most supplementary schools get little support from Jewish community agencies or movements. And in the past 30 years that support has largely gone to day schools. “For a long time everybody recognized that religious schools on the whole were not working very well, and the religious community was pouring money into day schools,” says Isa Aron. “But day schools are not for everyone. Two-thirds of Jewish kids are in [supplementary] religious school, so how could you

ignore this large population of children?”

The question is: Does the Jewish community have the resolve to invest a comparable amount of its time and money in an institution in which success has been the exception, rather than the rule? “You can go through articulating what you stand for, adopt the appropriate governance structure, hire, nurture and supervise the right staff and budget for it, but then it becomes an issue of will,” says Daniel Margolis. “Do Jews in an open society have the communal will to commit their resources to supplementary schools in a serious way?”

Avi West, my old Hebrew School teacher who came of age during the Six Day War, reframes the question more bluntly: “We who morphed Judaism to survive the destruction of two Temples, developed rabbinic institutions that creatively guided us through millennia of changing cultures—we who survived the Holocaust and started the state of Israel—we can’t figure this out and get the financial resources for it?” **HCT**

A Room with Many Views

IN HC'S OPEN BET MIDRASH, ALL OPINIONS COUNT

What does this text mean to you? Does your understanding change the way you think? Act? Engage the world-at-large? Such questions propel Hebrew College's Open Bet Midrash, where students of diverse ages, professions, educational levels and belief systems come together in pairs, small groups and seminar-style conversations to study and discuss classical and modern Jewish texts.

In highly interactive sessions, now taking place at Hebrew College and in Jewish communities in Greater Boston and beyond, the Open Bet Midrash's expert teachers are guiding manifold learners in a shared pursuit of deeper understanding—and meaningful Jewish living. Unique in its implementation, the program is one of a growing number of Bet Midrash initiatives that promote a more inclusive and active approach to Jewish learning.

For the Open Bet Midrash's primary organizer, Dr. Jonah Steinberg, Associate Dean and Director of Academic Development and Advising at the Rabbinical School of Hebrew College, the program at its best delivers a peak experience of Jewish community, one that not only breaks down barriers between learners of widely disparate backgrounds, but also leverages their differences to draw fresh insights from ancient and modern sources—insights that can transform lives. And worlds. —MD

Bethie Miller came in with big questions. Miller, a participant in this past June's week-long session of the Open Bet Midrash at Hebrew College, took a leave-of-absence from an MIT graduate program to approach social and environmental challenges from a Jewish perspective. "How do we conceive of ourselves?" she asked. "What is humankind's role in the world? What is our responsibility to the environment? To each other?"

In searching for ways that her Jewish heritage could guide her commitment to world-mending work, Bethie Miller had much in common with other participants in this summer's Open Bet Midrash, "Study Leads to Action: Jewish Approaches to Social Responsibility." On the other hand, Miller wasn't typical of her fellow students. The

diverse groups who took part in the two summer sessions of the Open Bet Midrash defied type-casting—and that is a central aim of the program.

During her session, Miller learned in *havruta* (the traditional Aramaic word for studying in pairs or small "fellowship" groups) with a young Orthodox woman bound for study at the Drisha Institute in Manhattan, a lawyer who recently retired from a career at Merrill Lynch, a veteran social activist in Boston's religious communities, two rabbis seeking to renew their commitment to learning, a first-year rabbinical student from the Jewish Theological Seminary and an MIT undergraduate studying mathematics and the violin. This *havruta* learning enriched seminar-style discussions that included all participants in the intensive, week-long session. Each member of the *havruta* group shared their own insights and differing perspectives, learned from each other's encounters with the texts, and heard from the expert scholars and distinguished guests who guided and informed the week of study and community.

The idea behind "opening" the Bet Midrash of Hebrew College's transdenominational Rabbinical School to the wider community through the Open Bet Midrash initiative is simply this: Our tradition's sources belong to all of us, regardless of age, affiliation, profession or learning background. We would not be succeeding if all the participants looked or sounded alike. The learning would be less rich; we would lose opportunities to stretch our minds and to see our Jewish heritage—and the broader world—through others'



eyes and other life experiences. “We were able to learn with different people every day,” says Miller. “It was good for me to learn with people who knew much more Hebrew than I did, and also with people who wanted to focus on the English translations.”

A word-by-word vocabulary sheet hardly sounds like a radical innovation; neither does a translation or a list of guiding questions. Yet, in the Open Bet Midrash, these carefully prepared resources, tailor-made for each session, enable participants to work together across differences that might separate them elsewhere. Study sessions were complemented by evening talks on social responsibility

with scholars and activists such as Reverend Nick Carter, the President of Andover Newton Theological Seminary and former head of Sane Freeze, the nation’s largest grass-roots social action initiative; Ruth Messinger, President of the American Jewish World Service (AJWS); and David Rosen, founder of AVODAH: the Jewish Service Corps.

The *bet midrash* inherently and historically lends itself to openness. Just listen to the many differing voices of the Talmud, a literary reflection of the ancient *bet midrash*. That talmudic legacy resonates in Hebrew College’s Open Bet Midrash as an inspiring reminder that the sacred

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conversation of Judaism comes into its full glory when it is open to the broadest possible participation, open to new and critical ideas, open in awareness of the challenges and needs of the wider world.

It has not always been so.

Across the ages—even within the Talmud itself—we have seen efforts to “close” the bet midrash, to make it the remote preserve of some exclusive elite, cut off in its intellectual activity from the rest of the world. In Eastern Europe, the most elite bet midrash in a town was sometimes called a kloyz, a kind of Jewish cloister, a closed-off world unto



itself. Our Open Bet Midrash is not without its own ideology or agenda, but ours is an ideology of openness to differing perspectives and an agenda of mutual listening and learning across habitual boundaries. We welcome—in fact, we have already welcomed—the avowedly orthodox along with the radically liberal, so long as both are willing to listen to one another and to believe in the possibility of learning together.

In opening a traditional method of Jewish study to inclusive participation, our Open Bet Midrash, thankfully, does not stand entirely alone. Across Israel, through the Elul initiative, for example, and in North America—through programs associated with young communities such as New York’s Hadar, Los Angeles’ Ikar, Seattle’s Kavana Cooperative and the Washington, D.C. Minyan—the bet midrash phenomenon is poised to revitalize the world of Jewish learning, just as the Havurah movement brought new life to the world of Jewish prayer. (After all, havruta is Aramaic for havurah.) Indeed, both havurah and bet midrash reclaim the power of ancient Jewish institutions by inviting each of us to share responsibility for shaping the Jewish experience through active participation.

Yet the programs of Hebrew College’s Open Bet Midrash are truly unique, trail-blazing at the vanguard of

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Open Bet Midrash Sampler: A Taste of the World to Come

Here is a chance to take part in a virtual Bet Midrash, through Hebrew College Online. The passage below, from the end of the Babylonian Talmud’s tractate *Ta’anit*, describes a scene in an ideal future—the *olam haba*, or “world to come.” To best experience the kind of learning that happens in a Bet Midrash, read this passage aloud with a friend or a study partner—a practice and relationship known as *havruta*. Of course, you are welcome to take part in the online discussion, even if you do not yet have a *havruta* study partner.

Read the passage below several times. Consider the guiding questions that follow at the bottom of this page. We then

invite you to log on to hebrewcollege.edu/betmidrash and to take part in an online conversation, where you will be joined by Hebrew College faculty—including David Gordis, Arthur Green, Judith Kates and David Starr—staff members and students.

No computerized format can truly approximate the experience of studying in an actual Bet Midrash, amid the buzz of many *havruta* pairs exploring aspects of a text together. Still, we hope that this online experience, and this taste of a world to come, will whet your appetite for more text-based exploration, and we look forward to welcoming you in the Open Bet Midrash.

Text from the Babylonian Talmud’s tractate *Ta’anit*

עֲתִיד הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא לַעֲשׂוֹת מַחֹל לְצַדִּיקִים,

In the time to come, the Holy Blessed One will hold a dance for the righteous,

וְהוּא יוֹשֵׁב בֵּינֵיהֶם בְּגֵן עֵדֶן,

and God will sit in their midst, in the Garden of Eden,

וְכָל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד מֵרְאֵהוּ בְּאֶצְבָּעוֹ,

and each and every person will point with a finger,

שְׁנֵאמַר

as it is written,

”וְאָמַר בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא הִנֵּה אֵלֵינוּ זֶה קִוִּינוּ לוֹ וְיִוָּשִׁיעֵנוּ זֶה ה’ קִוִּינוּ לוֹ

נְגִילָה וְנִשְׂמְחָה בִּישׁוּעָתוֹ:” (ישעיה כה, ט).

“On that day they shall say, This is our God; we trusted in God and God delivered us.

This is the Lord, in whom we trusted; let us rejoice and exult in God’s deliverance!” (Isaiah 25:9)

Guiding Questions

- What title would you give to this vision, if you were trying to summarize its message in one brief statement? According to this text, what is the most remarkable feature or aspect of the world to come that makes it different from our present world?
- Does the vision of this text strike you as describing a scene in a better world, a world you would like to live in? Or is it, in some way, problematic and not the description of a desirable world?
- Think for a moment of the Ten Commandments and Jewish tradition’s prohibition of making images of the divine. Think of another famous scene,

in which the people of Israel danced around an image of a supposed divinity, the golden calf. Is the scene in this text different from that of the golden calf? What makes it different or similar?

- Reading closely, does this strike you as an *inclusive* vision or an *exclusive* vision? Does it seem intended to draw everyone into a vision of the ideal future, or does it reserve that destiny for a chosen few?
- The prophecy of Isaiah from which the quotation at the end of our text is drawn, begins this way: “The Lord of Hosts will make, on this very mountain, for all the peoples, a banquet of rich delights.... And God will destroy,

on this mountain, the covering that is cast over all the peoples and the veil that is spread over all the nations....” Does our rabbinic re-envisioning of this feast in the world to come seem to be in keeping with the original vision of Isaiah or different from it? How so? Feel free to open your own *Tanakh* (Bible), and look at the larger context of the verses in Isaiah. If this talmudic vision seems different to you, how might those differences reflect the rabbis’ motivations or ideas?

- If you were describing a celebration in the Garden of Eden of the world to come, how would you envision it? What message would you want to communicate with your description?



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the bet midrash revival. Drawing upon the rich resources of a transdenominational Rabbinical School, partnering with innovative Jewish organizations such as the AJWS and AVODAH, guided by expert scholar-facilitators and distinguished spiritual and social innovators, bringing custom-designed study materials and carefully developed methods to programs in a wide variety of settings, the Open Bet Midrash takes a distinctive approach that brings

The Bet Midrash inherently and historically lends itself to openness. Just listen to the many differing voices of the Talmud, a literary reflection of the ancient *bet midrash*.

new life, meaning and spiritual vibrancy to an ages-old form of Jewish learning. Behind each of the innovative programs of the Open Bet Midrash is the core aim of enabling participants from all Jewish backgrounds to engage in an in-depth encounter with sophisticated Jewish texts in a spiritually invigorating, but non-coercive, environment, open and responsive to the challenges and opportunities of the broader world.

With an eye toward that broader world, we are also committed to being “open” by extending the Open Bet Midrash beyond the walls of Hebrew College—partnering with local leadership of other institutions to expand the conversation even further. For example, Open Bet Midrash evenings at Congregation Kehilath Israel are part of Rabbi William Hamilton’s vision of revitalizing learning in his congregation and in the Brookline Jewish community. An Open Bet Midrash weekend in the Berkshires was integral to the vision of Kaya Shrum’s Kulam learning initiative, linking a string of local area congregations. This past summer’s Open Bet Midrash was offered in collaboration with AVODAH, bringing the first-hand experience of that frontline organization to the learning and discussion about social responsibility and Jewish activism.

Conversations have begun with Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life; an Arts Bet Midrash is in the works; and we will continue to learn and grow together with organizations such as AVODAH and AJWS. Each partnership—each *havruta*—helps keep our vision fresh and expansive and, yes, open. But so, too, does each and every session of the Open Bet Midrash, simply by virtue of the lively and varied Jewish voices involved—which is why we hope you will take part. **HCT**

Jonah Chanan Steinberg is Associate Dean and Director of Academic Development and Advising, as well as Bet Midrash Instructor for the Rabbinical School of Hebrew College



Visions of a Plausible God

A CONVERSATION WITH MITCHELL SILVER

I believe this is a pivotal moment in the development of Hebrew College. An institution that began as secular, cultural and Zionist more than 80 years ago has founded an innovative rabbinical school program and created an international buzz about the virtues of being transdenominational. Moreover, the majority of our students are now probably synagogue affiliated and most feel at home in one or more of the various streams of Jewish religious life. These developments raise the question: Will secular and cultural Jews still come to Hebrew College?

According to the 2001 American Jewish Identity Survey (Kosmin, Keysar and Mayer), fully a quarter of the American Jewish public identifies itself as “Jewish with no religion.” Another substantial segment affiliates with religious institutions, but only in the most superficial way—in many cases, for the single purpose of providing their children with a rite of passage that may hold little religious significance for the children.

While the majority of Hebrew College’s student population does not embrace a secular Jewish perspective, secular Jews remain integral to the educated and complex Jewish public that we are trying to help create and sustain. Secular Jews founded and built the Zionist movement, were pathfinders in modern Hebrew and Yiddish arts and letters, and have been leaders in just about every modern social justice movement known to the Western world.

Mitchell Silver, Ph.D., teacher of philosophy at University of Massachusetts-Boston since 1982, Education Director of the Boston Workmen’s Circle/Arbeiter Ring’s School and Cultural Director of Camp Kinderland, a progressive, secular Jewish children’s summer camp, is himself a builder and a pathfinder. He’s been in the trenches building his movement in Massachusetts and beyond for more than 30 years. He’s also an accomplished philosopher and educational leader, a profound example of what’s at stake for us today: Were a Mitch Silver to fall away from what we at Hebrew College mean by “the Jewish public,” the Jewish world would be forever impoverished.

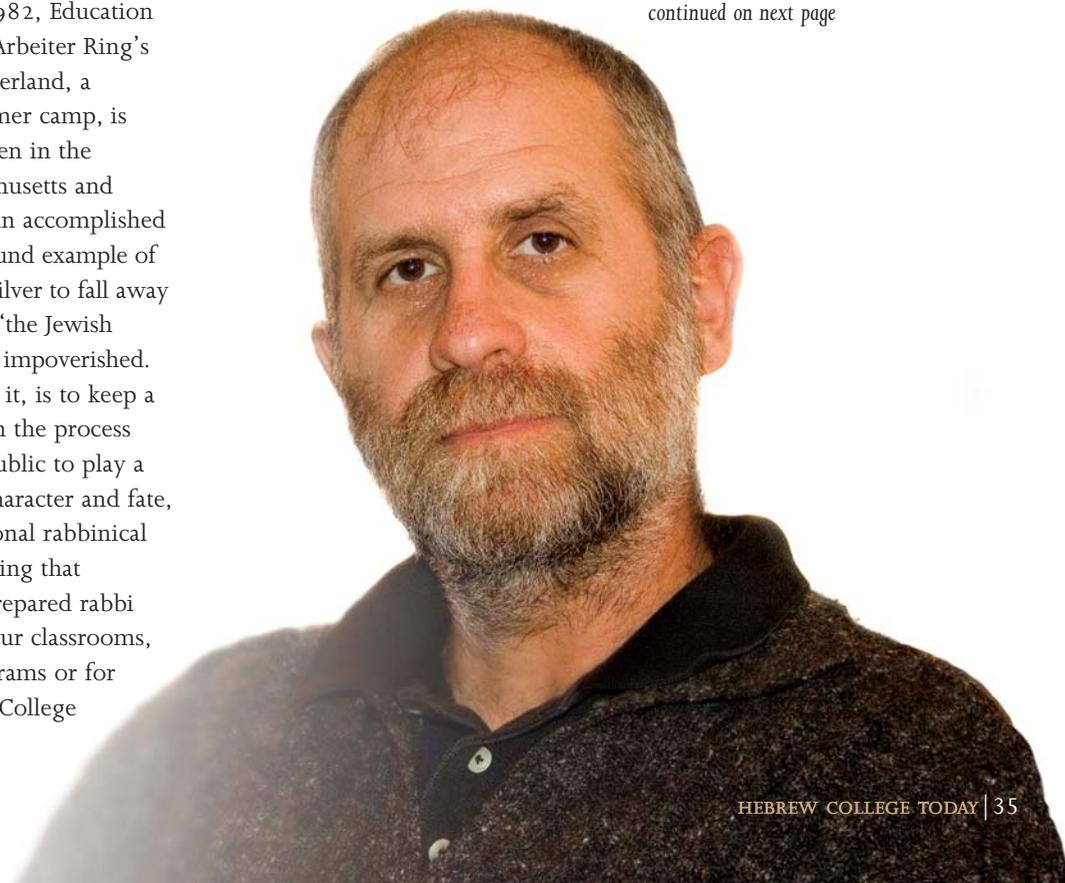
The College’s mission, as I understand it, is to keep a broad and diverse Jewish public engaged in the process of educating itself, thereby allowing this public to play a constructive role in determining its own character and fate, the fate of *klal Yisrael*. Our transdenominational rabbinical school propels us in this direction by insisting that differences strengthen us and that a well-prepared rabbi will be equipped to engage with *all of us*. Our classrooms, whether used for our various masters programs or for *Me’ah*, also embody this mission. Hebrew College

instructors teach; they don’t preach. Our classrooms are a place of relentless questioning, inquiry based on evidence, of insight and argument, and of humility.

It was in this spirit that I organized a conference on secular Jewishness in 2004, and the Hebrew College Philosopher’s Project, a forum at Hebrew College where scholar-teachers from around Boston can gather regularly to discuss philosophical issues that arise in the Jewish classroom. The project is designed to open a dialogue among teachers of diverse sensibility and commitment. As I explained to Silver when we met via the Project, Hebrew College began as a secular institution. Though we have traveled a distance from this original vision, our 2004 conference, the Philosophers Project and our teaching philosophy continue to strengthen the College as a welcoming place for Jews of a secular orientation. This January, Hebrew College will undertake a new initiative to reach out to secular and cultural Jews with generous support from the Posen Foundation.

I met with Mitchell Silver on an April afternoon in my office at Hebrew College and we talked for several hours. Our starting point: Silver’s two books, *Respecting the Wicked Child* (University of Massachusetts, 1998) and the recently released *A Plausible God: Secular Reflections on Liberal Jewish Theology* (Fordham University, 2006). Much of our conversation highlighted Silver’s personal journey, including his early encounters with religion and atheism, his youthful

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experiences in the 1970s at secular Jewish institutions such as Camp Kinderland, originally a Jewish communist camp, and more recently his leadership roles at the Boston Workmen's Circle. But our primary focus was on Silver's strenuous efforts to understand why so many of today's Jews are attracted to religion and comfortable—more comfortable than he—with talk of God.

"I don't mean all this to imply that one can't believe in the 'old God.' I just don't think you can do it, if you are going to be respectful of our best understanding of the world."

The heart of our conversation, revolving around Silver's interesting distinction between what he calls the "old" and "new" God, is reproduced below. In Silver's view, contemporary liberal Jewish thinkers, such as Arthur Green and Michael Lerner, make a radical break with pre-modern theology. The result, Silver says, is a plausible God. But is that God theologically compelling? Or morally acceptable? Silver has an open mind, but he's far from convinced.

AB: Can you explain the distinction, so central to your second book, between the "old" and the "new" God?

MS: The "old" God has many characteristics of a person: will, intentions, perhaps desires—a mind, essentially. The old God is able to know things, indeed is all-knowing, and is responsible for the rest of Being and somehow transcends the rest of Being—there is the creator and the creation. His creativity is much greater, but nevertheless like ours when we create. He has an idea of what he wants and is able to make it...

In its crudest forms, the old God becomes physical, almost...embodied. Throughout history, you've found people who've been uncomfortable with that, many of them mystics, not only Jews but Christians, and of course Eastern theologians. More recently, in the last two centuries—and gaining momentum especially in the 20th century—we have theologians who have quite rejected [this picture of God] and are trying to re-conceive what is divine, to make it less anthropomorphic and less transcendent, in some cases completely immanent.

There now seems to be a new concept of God with a popular place in the modern world, and not restricted to just liberal Jewish theology. It's an idea of a certain modern people.

AB: Which Jewish thinkers stand out for you as innovating in this way?

MS: The three theologians I use to exemplify this trend in my new book are Mordechai Kaplan, Arthur Green and Michael Lerner.

AB: So you are trying to draw an idealized picture of a theologian of the "new" God, drawing on arguments

and themes from these three theologians?

MS: Yes. I'm not writing about Kaplan, Green and Lerner per se, but using elements from each of them to draw a composite of a new kind of theologian with a new kind of theology. The "new" God of this book is a picture which quite possibly no single theologian would endorse completely, but I think the picture is representative of a powerful trend in modern theology and religious life...

This new God is first of all immanent in the world, not transcendent in the world. Another key aspect is that although sometimes it is identified with all of Being—just synonymous with all that is—sometimes it is identified with certain aspects of Being. What it's identified with, in either case, are certain possibilities within Being, the possibilities of goodness. God gets defined as that in Being that makes good things possible; for some theologians [this means] love, moral responsibility, or the full flourishing of human personality, or the evolution of freedom. There's something about Being that makes these possible, and that we call God.

AB: Is this a psychological thesis?

MS: It can be. There are some things in Being that are not just possibilities but actualities, that are incredibly valuable, that represent us at our best, or that are the times when we feel most connected to everything else. These psychological experiences are either seen as evidence for or [actually] identified with God, with what is divine.

AB: What would you say is the motive for this new movement in theology?

MS: One of my speculations is that there is a reluctance to abandon "God," even though one feels compelled to abandon the old God.

Coming from a secularist perspective, I have said that in abandoning the old God I am giving up the word. But then someone says to me, hey, don't give up the word. Dr. Gordis, for example, gave a lovely anecdote at a talk last year as part of your conference on secular Jewishness. As Gordis tells it, someone says to him, "I've just got to let you know, I'm an atheist. I don't believe in God." Gordis replies, "Tell me about the God you don't believe in." Having listened to the explanation, Gordis concludes the exchange: "Let's shake hands. I don't believe in that God either."

Implicit is that Gordis does believe in some God. Not that God, but another God. But I'm tempted to ask him, "Tell me about the God that you do believe in." I suspect that Gordis would give me something that I would recognize as the new God. Maybe not. I don't know. I'd like to

continue the discussion. But if he did say, “I believe in the potential for freedom, or human goodness,” or if he said, “Human beings have within them the potential for that which aspires to loving connection with the rest of Being,” I—a person who doesn’t believe in God—would say, “Well, if that’s the God you believe in, I accept that.” Now the question is: Is there nothing further for us to discuss? Is it of no importance that this thing that’s labeled by



Gordis as “God” and by me as “the natural potential for goodness” has different labels attached to it?

AB: Isn’t this just a semantic issue?

MS: One might say that this is a book that’s only about semantics. I think it makes a difference whether we call something by the name of God. How one interprets a given reality is an especially significant form of semantics.

AB: If the difference between a new-God and a no-God interpretation of the world is “semantic,” are you saying that, in a sense, they are both right?

MS: I think “new-God” belief is true to the facts, as long as it stays new and doesn’t slip into the old. I think atheism is true to the facts. But the two sets of belief suggest different interpretations [of the world]. I take the “no-God” belief as how I interpret the world. I think, in some ways, it’s an inferior interpretation than the one that sees God in the world. But I think, in some ways, it’s superior.

I hope I do justice to the strengths of this kind of new-God theism. I certainly end up concluding that it is something with a great deal of appeal and is completely acceptable, from a rational point of view. But, at times, I’m rigorous with it. I think I’m most rigorous with it when it tries to increase its appeal by trading in on the unearned connotations that it gets from being linked [semantically and historically] with the old God.

I don’t mean all this to imply that one can’t believe in the “old God.” I just don’t think you can do it, if you are going to be respectful of our best understanding of the world.

AB: The rabbis have a notion of *siq l’torah*, a fence around the Torah, designed to protect the essential commandments from grave harm. Is your atheism a fence around your Torah?

MS: I think some more thoughtful secularists are concerned that while Green and Lerner may be talking “new God,” most people are just hearing “God.” And, indeed, I think with many new-God congregations, they illicitly get a kind of solace from the new God that, if you’re sticking with the new God, they aren’t entitled to. They indulge in kinds of prayer to the new God, for example, that, if they were clear about what the new God is, would make their prayer attitude incoherent.

My reason for wanting to keep the clarity is that I think that there is some moral difference between the old God on the one side and the new God/no God on the other. We have, as communities, as nations, as humanity, problems to solve. I don’t care what your aesthetic tastes are, because we can enjoy different literature, different plays, different music without troubling one another. What we can’t do is solve our problems together, if we think there are different facts, different possible solutions. If someone wants to put a certain amount of resources into curing cancer through prayer, I think that is taking away from a more promising solution. Now if someone wants to talk about how God inspired them to do the research to cure cancer, fine. That new God is fine for me... I have no problem with that. **HCT**

Avi Bernstein-Nahar is Dean of Educational Planning and Development at Hebrew College’s Center for Adult Jewish Learning.

Faculty

Dr. Avi Bernstein-Nahar, Dean of Educational Planning and Development, CAJL, and Assistant Professor of Jewish Thought, has been appointed an Associate of the Reform Zionist Institute, a new initiative of the Association of Reform Zionists of America (ARTZA). Under the leadership of eminent historian Professor Michael Meyer of Hebrew Union College and ARTZA President Rabbi Stanley Davids, the Institute is charged with rethinking the Reform Movement's theoretical and practical relationship to Zionism.

Dr. Steve Copeland, Assistant Professor of Jewish Thought and Education, contributed to the March issue of *Sh'ma: A Journal of Jewish Responsibility* an article entitled "The Way is Always Outside" on the need for diverse modes of exploration and expression beyond the verbal mode.

Dr. David M. Gordis, President of Hebrew College and Professor of Rabbinics, chaired a panel on "Denominational Judaism: A Vital Force for Tomorrow" at a May 2006 conference on "Crossing Denominational Boundaries," co-sponsored by Synagogues: Transformation and Renewal (STAR) and Hebrew College. Also in May, he presented at the forum "Are We a Christian Nation?" held at Andover Newton Theological School and co-sponsored by ICPL and the Center for Religious Inquiry and The Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs. As President of Hebrew College, he hosted a group of imams, religious educators and academics from India and Bangladesh, who visited the United States under the auspices of the U.S. State Department. The meeting, held at Hebrew College in July, was devoted to a discussion of Islamic-Jewish relations and of a means for mutual



Marion Gribetz

understanding. In August, Dr. Gordis gave a presentation on the topic of "Judaism in America: Retrospect and Prospect" at the Chautauqua Institute in N.Y., during their week-long program on "Belief in America." At this year's Conference on the Advancement of Jewish Education (CAJE), he spoke at Duke University on "Kavod, Jewish Education and the 21st Century."

Dr. Arthur Green, Rector of the Rabbinical School of Hebrew College, delivered one of this year's Franz Rosenzweig Lectures at Yale University. These lectures, held at the end of October, are endowed by a gift of the late Arthur Cohen, himself a well-known author and theologian.

Marion Gribetz, Director of Professional Development, Shoolman Graduate School of Jewish Education, and Adjunct Instructor of Jewish Education, was a featured panelist at the CAJE closing plenary, "Vision Possible: Connecting Your Vision to Jewish Education and Literacy" in August 2006. She was the keynote speaker at the BJE Early Childhood Education Services 2006 kinnusim in

April with a talk entitled "Israeli Art: The Real and the Imagined," where she also co-presented a session entitled "Israel: The Family and the School." In June 2006, she chaired a session for educators at the international conference "Reclaiming Mikveh: Pouring Ancient Water into a Contemporary Vessel," sponsored by the Union of Reform Judaism and Mayyim Hayyim Mikveh and Education Center held in Newton. She participates in an ongoing Mandel Leadership Institute seminar on "The Place of Vision in Jewish Education."

Joshua Jacobson, Visiting Professor of Jewish Music, was guest lecturer at the Brandeis University Summer Institute for Israel Studies and guest faculty at the Berkshire Institute for Music and Art in Williamstown, Mass., this summer. He also conducted and taught at the annual North American Jewish Choral Festival in Kerhonkson, N.Y., in July. As Director of the Zamir Chorale of Boston (artists-in-residence at Hebrew College), he conducted the Chorale and friends in a program entitled "Psalmsensation" at the Sanders Theatre in Cambridge. The

program included the world premiere of Emmett Price's "Joyful Noise of Praise" and the New England premiere of "Hallelujah (Psalm 150)" by Andrew Bleckner. His review, "Victor Tunkel's Music of the Hebrew Bible—The Western Ashkenazic Tradition," appeared in *The Journal of Synagogue Music* (Fall, 2006). In October, he delivered the keynote address at the symposium on Jewish Music and Musicians at Creighton University, Omaha, Nebr., and a guest lecture, "In Defense of Salamone Rossi," at the Yale School of Sacred Music Colloquium series.

Dr. Judith Kates, Professor of Jewish Women's Studies, taught a text study session entitled "The Women's Resistance Movement in the Book of Exodus: Lifesaving Across Ethnic and Class Boundaries" for Keshet, Boston's Jewish GLBT education and advocacy organization for which she serves on the Advisory Board. She also taught a session entitled "Shir Hashirim at Matan Torah" at Washington Square Minyan's *tikkun leil Shavuot* and participated in a Brandeis University seminar on "Bridging Scholarship and Pedagogy in the Teaching of Rabbinic Literature." Kates gave a keynote presentation for the High Holiday program, "The Story of Hannah, Spiritual Revolutionary," at Mayyim Hayyim Mikveh and Education Center in Newton. Her latest publications are two articles, "Entering the Holy of Holies: Rabbinic Midrash and the Language of the Song" and "Transfigured Night: Midrashic Readings of the Book of Ruth," both published in *Scrolls of Love: Reading Ruth and the Song of Songs*, edited by Lesleigh Cushing and Peter S. Hawkins (Fordham University, 2006).

Dr. Jacob Meskin, Assistant Professor of Jewish Thought and Jewish Education and Director of Faculty

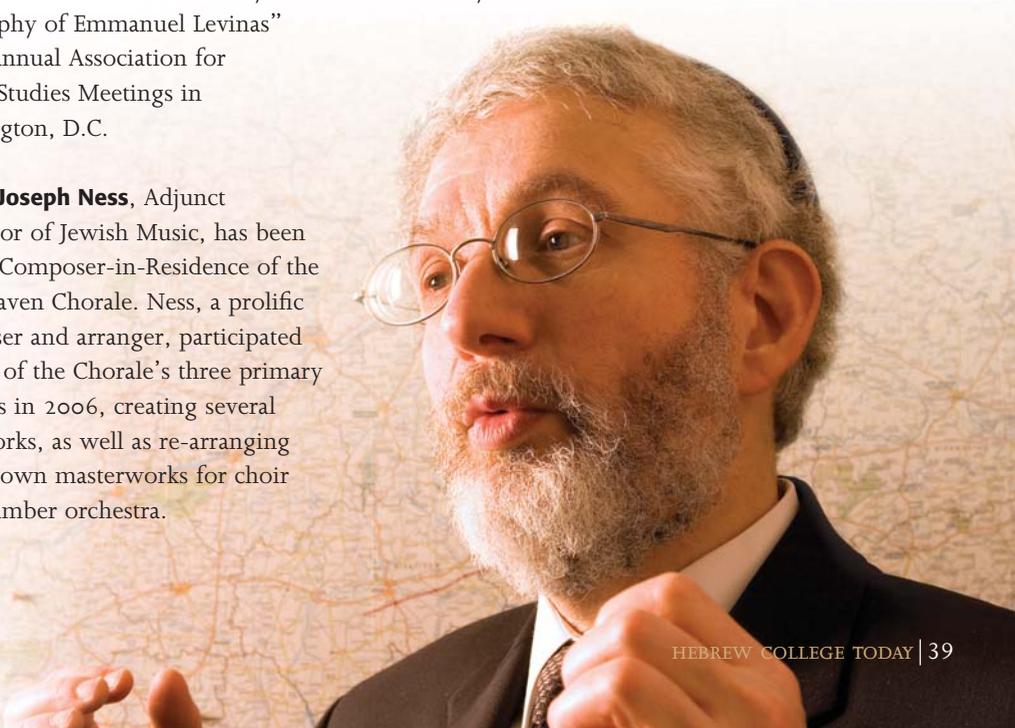
Training for the Me'ah Program, taught two courses at other institutions in the spring of 2006: an undergraduate course entitled "Modern Jewish Thought" for the Program in Jewish Studies at Northeastern University and an adult education course entitled "Abraham and Sarah as Spiritual Seekers" for the post-Me'ah program at Temple Israel in Sharon, Mass. In May, Meskin was asked to serve as a part-time educational consultant for 2006–2007 for the Combined Jewish Philanthropies, with responsibilities for revising the curriculum of the Ikkarim program, and for faculty oversight. On the scholarly front, Meskin wrote "Reasonable Rabbis?! Practice and Situatedness in Menachem Fisch's *Rational Rabbis*," for the online periodical *Textual Reasoning*. Meskin's article "From Phenomenology to Liberation: The Displacement of History and Theology in Levinas's *Totality and Infinity*," was reprinted in *Emmanuel Levinas: Critical Assessments of Leading Philosophers*, edited by Claire Katz (Routledge, 2005). In November 2005, Meskin presented "Levinas, Zionism, and the Wellspring of Exile" at the annual American Academy of Religion meetings in Philadelphia and, in December of 2005, he presented "The Role of Lurianic Kabbalah in the Early Philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas" at the Annual Association for Jewish Studies Meetings in Washington, D.C.

Cantor Joseph Ness, Adjunct Instructor of Jewish Music, has been named Composer-in-Residence of the New Haven Chorale. Ness, a prolific composer and arranger, participated in each of the Chorale's three primary concerts in 2006, creating several new works, as well as re-arranging well-known masterworks for choir and chamber orchestra.

Cantor Charles Osborne, Adjunct Instructor of Jewish Music, will be listed in the 2007 edition of *Who's Who in America* for the second year.

Dr. Nehemia Polen, Professor of Jewish Thought and Director of the Hasidic Text Institute, was the Shavuot Scholar-in-Residence for the five-part series "The Origins and Meaning of Hasidic Leadership," which took place at Congregation Schara Tzedek in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. In July 2006, he participated in the Institute for Jewish Spirituality, Cantorial Leadership Program, "The Power of Silence and Niggun," held at the Trinity Conference Center, West Cornwall, Conn. Also in July, Polen presented a paper, "Leviticus and Hebrews... and Leviticus," at "The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology," a conference at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland.

Rabbi Yehudah Potok, Bet Midrash Instructor and Academic Director of Prozdor High School, spoke at the conference "Genetics in the Jewish Community: 'A Personal Matter Needing Professional Guidance,'" held at the Leventhal-Sidman Jewish Community Center in Newton in October. He is co-editor, with Joel Sussman, of the new Camp Yavneh community/*klal Yisrael* siddur.





Peretz Rodman

Rabbi Peretz Rodman, Visiting Lecturer in Hebrew Language and Literature, Hebrew College Online, served as Rabbi and Scholar-in-Residence for Kehillat Beijing in the Chinese capital for two weeks in fall 2006. His columns on the weekly Torah portion appear five times a year in the weekly *Forward*, published in New York. In addition, he has recently contributed articles on the concept of *derekh erez* and on the problem of whether to honor an abusive parent for the website My Jewish Learning, as well as a review of a novel by A. B. Yehoshua for JBooks.com.

Rabbi Or Rose, Associate Dean and Director of Informal Education for the Rabbinical School, organized in April 2006, with his student Margie Klein, the first meeting of Jewish Seminarians for Justice (100 seminarians from nine different schools) in Washington, D.C. The program included participation in the national “Save Darfur” rally and, following the rally, a series of workshops on Judaism and activism. Also in spring 2006, he participated in a panel discussion at the Andover Newton Theological School Alumni Convocation on the meaning of the Sabbath in contemporary religious life and gave a presentation on “Jewish Mystical Approaches to Revelation” to the Rhode Island Board of Rabbis in preparation of Shavout, held at Brown University. At the 2006 Hebrew College Commencement, he

was presented with an interfaith award, the Rabbi Murray I. Rothman Award of Andover Newton Theological School, by ANTS President Nick Carter. Continuing his social action work, he organized the HC program, “Darfur: What Next?” with Rev. Gloria White-Hammond and others, and led a group of 45 ANTS-HC students to the “Global Day for Darfur” rally in New York City in September 2006. Also in September, he helped organize a conference on Dietrich Bonhoeffer, sponsored jointly by Andover Newton Theological School, Boston College, Hebrew College and the Holocaust Museum, where he gave a lecture entitled “Bonhoeffer and Religious Pluralism Today.” Rose’s most recent publications include “Petitionary Prayer and Theological Inconsistency,” in *Jewish Education News* (Spring, 2006); “Righteous Indignation: An Interview with William Sloan Coffin,” in *Tikkun* (March/April, 2006); “Tradition and Innovation: Rabbinic Education,” in *Sh’m’a: A Journal of Jewish Responsibility* (June, 2006); “Breaking Faith With Nuclear Weapons,” for the Jewish Telegraphic Agency (June, 2006); “Sarah and Hagar: Echoes Across Time,” in *American Jewish World Service* (September, 2006); and

“A Season for Inclusion: A Family Reflection,” *Tikkun* (November/December, 2006).

Dr. Sol Schimmel, Professor of Jewish Education and Psychology, gave a televised lecture at Congregation Mishkan Tefilla entitled “The Minyan as Medicine for the Soul.” Serving as Scholar-in-Residence for the High Holy Days at Brandeis University Hillel, he taught rabbinic and medieval texts on themes from the Days of Awe. In addition, he conducted a teaching and study session for Hebrew College Rabbinical School students on the theme of forgiveness in Judaism and in Christianity. Schimmel has developed an efficient and pedagogically sound model for teaching online courses with high enrollment. The model, which incorporates both plenary and multiple subgroup discussion forums, was implemented in his fall 2006 online course “Using Midrash Aggadah to Teach Ethics,” offered to students enrolled in the Hebrew College/Pardes Institute Jewish Education program.

Dr. Harvey Shapiro, Dean of the Shoolman Graduate School of Jewish Education and Associate Professor



Harvey Shapiro

of Education, gave a Shavuot presentation at Temple Aliyah in Needham on Rabbi Hayyim of Volozhin, the father of the modern Eastern European yeshiva movement, entitled “Breathing Torah: R. Hayyim of Volozhin’s ‘Spirit of Life.’” He also wrote an article, “Rabbi Hayyim of Volozhin’s Non-Messianic Theory of the Jewish Present and Future,” published in the *Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy*.

Cantor Scott Sokol, Dean of the Jewish Music Institute, Director of the Cantor-Educator Program, Director of Jewish Special Education and Associate Professor of Jewish Music and Educational Psychology, presented a concert “New Cantors at the Old Vilna Shul,” along with his students from the Jewish Music Institute, in March 2006. He was also featured as soloist at “Psalmsensation: A Multi-Ethnic Concert Experience” with the Zamir Chorale of Boston at Sanders Theater in Cambridge. His article “Jewish Views of Disability: The Mosaic Example” appeared in the *Journal of Synagogue Music*, published by the Cantors Assembly. Sokol presented a paper, entitled “Neuropsychological Assessment: A Primer for the Jewish Educator,” at a day-long symposium presented at the Bureau of Jewish Education in June 2006.

Dr. David Starr, Dean of Me’ah and Assistant Professor of Jewish History, gave an academic paper on “Conservative Judaism, Zionism, and the State of Israel,” sponsored by the Florida-Israel Institute, Florida Atlantic University and Broward College, in September 2006. More locally, his other September lecture, “Religion and the Nation State: Bonhoeffer and the Problem of Modern Jewry,” was presented at a conference entitled “Dietrich Bonhoeffer for Our Times: Jewish and Christian Perspectives,” sponsored by Hebrew College, Andover Newton Theological School and Boston College. Starr was keynote speaker at another fall 2006 Hebrew

College event, given for the Young Leadership Division of the Hebrew College and Prozdor Alumni Association, entitled “Jew vs. Jew, Jew vs. Arab: Israel’s Challenges in the 21st Century.” He presented a paper, “Israel Studies in Contemporary Adult Learning,” at the December Association of Jewish Studies Conference in San Diego. Starr was chosen as a Jerusalem Fellow by the Mandel Institute in Israel for the spring 2007 semester.

Dr. Jonah Steinberg was appointed Associate Dean and Director of Academic Development and Advising for the Rabbinical School. In fall 2006, he led a project of developing benchmark goals for the five years of the rabbinical program at Hebrew College. Steinberg has continued to promote Bet Midrash learning at Hebrew College and elsewhere, through two summer sessions of Hebrew College’s Open Bet Midrash and a new evening Bet Midrash course this fall, as well as Bet Midrash sessions at New York City’s Kehilat Hadar and Congregation Shaare Zedek, and the National Havurah Committee’s Summer Institute.

Alumni

Jeremy Eichler P’91 recently assumed the position of classical music critic for the *Boston Globe*, where he writes feature stories and profiles on a regular basis. He has written about music for *The New York Times*, *Vanity Fair* and *The Washington Post*, as well as other publications.

Susan Press Fox P’59 was recently installed as International Vice President of Women’s League for Conservative Judaism at the organization’s Philadelphia Biennial Convention in November 2006. President of the

Metropolitan Branch of WLCJ from 2000–2002, she has been an International Trainer for the Women’s League since 2004 and is also an NGO representative to the United Nations.

Paula Tarutz Jacobs P’64, BJE’68 received Temple Israel of Natick’s Maurice and Lillian Geshelin Humanitarian Award. This award represents the highest form of recognition by Temple Israel for volunteer service, granted to a person who embodies principles “for service to community, family and fellow man, for devotion to religious and moral convictions, for compassion to the human spirit and for performing deeds exemplary to the highest spirit of man and God.”

Aviva Schwartz P’00, a student in the honors program at Simmons College in the 94th percentile of her class, was admitted to the Academy at Simmons College at the Honors Convocation on September 13, 2006.

Seth Weinstein P’91 is co-author and musical composer of “How to Save the World And Find True Love in 90 Minutes,” a musical about a phobic UN bookstore clerk who develops the ability to read people’s minds. This play has received a favorable review during its run at the New World Stages in New York City. A pianist, conductor and composer, Weinstein was class valedictorian of his Prozdor graduating class.

Dr. Jeffrey R. Woolf P’71, BHL’75, Senior Lecturer in the Talmud Department at Bar Ilan University, was appointed Senior Editor and faculty member at the Institute for Politics and Religion at the Shalem Center in Jerusalem. He is currently completing work on a book analyzing the basic structures of medieval Ashkenazic culture.

Additional information about alumni can be found in the Prozdor/Hebrew College alumni magazine, L’Bogrim.



Susan Press Fox

Hebrew College Celebrates 81st Commencement

June 4, 2006



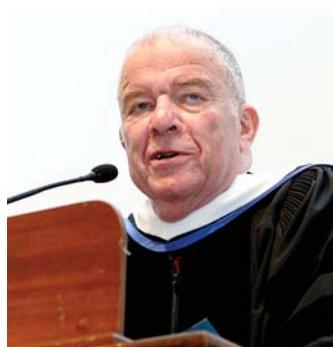
Members of the Hebrew College Class of 2006 (L to R): Shana Onigman, Janice Rebibo, David Metzger, Ellyn Shriber, Caryn-Amy King, Daniel Price, Kim Herzog, Nicole Levy, Matthew Conti, Shayndel Kahn, Hana Berman, David Wesson, Sharon Strosberg, Sally Zimowski, Rachel Raz, Avinoam Durani, Deborah Feinstein, Sheryl Selby, Ellen Bernstein, Sammy Ben-Avi, Michael Hirsch. (Not shown: Lori Asulin, Sharon Citrin, Debra Cohen, Rivkah Horowitz, Jessica Johnson, Vivian Newman, Francine Ochs, Johanna Perlin, Maureen Potts, Ari Reis, Laurie Shapiro, Abby Smuckler, Linda Sue Sohn, Yvette Ternorutsky, Carlin Trietsch.)



President Gordis and Board Chair Ted Cutler with (L to R) Dorit Zmiri, recipient of the Louis Hillson Memorial Award; honorary degree recipients Louis Kaitz, Dr. Marietta Lutze Sackler, Leonard Fein and Mickey Cail; and Esther Kosofsky, recipient of the Sidney Hillson Memorial Award.



Valedictorian Kimberly Beth Herzog.



Leonard Fein gave the commencement address.

Heirs to a Revolution

continued from page 14

them as I had always dreamed. But I would never be able to lose myself in those texts. I would be brought up short, again and again, reminded of who I was—a woman.

To declare one's love for the Jewish tradition by holding it close, while calling it to task for its inequities—that is what it means to me to be an Orthodox feminist. It means fighting for insider status, being recognized fully as a participating Jew, yet declaring allegiance to a belief system that does not yet do this. I am attracted and repelled, in love and despairing, happy and fighting mad, trying to find peace with being in conflict.

In Orthodoxy, obviously the battle for equal access is not over, although significant strides have been made. Many of these opportunities are available only in certain Orthodox communities. But the fact that these changes are occurring *somewhere* within the larger Orthodox community is significant, because it says one can be an Orthodox woman and learn Talmud; a woman can read from the Torah, wear a tallit, speak from the bimah, answer halakhic questions and even become a *rosh bet midrash*.

At the same time, as Orthodox feminism currently calls for greater recognition and participation of women within the framework of *halakhah*, it also calls into question the fundamental structure of the community and its most sacred tenets. When one has been denied entry into the halls of power, one sees more clearly its imbedded political structure. The beauty of the oral law to me as an Orthodox Jew is the collusion that occurred between the Divine and human beings. Texts are interpreted and authority is exercised by people—but only *some* (male) people. Is it even possible to affect equal treatment between men and women without abandoning *halakhah*?

This is the dilemma at the heart of the Orthodox feminist enterprise. It's not simply a matter of expanding the arenas of women's participation. It's not even about expanding the authority structures to include women as religious leaders and rabbis. Without recognizing the full extent of women's exclusion from the history, interpretation and legislation, from our very notions of God, Torah and community, we can't solve the problem. But once we recognize the enormity of the problem, how do we move forward? What can we possibly do and how do we preserve the tradition with this fundamental critique? And I do want to preserve the tradition. I love it. I still want in and I can't get in, unless I belong fully.

So what's the solution? As an educator, I believe in the power of questions and a lot less in the importance of answers. I want my community to recognize the problem openly and honestly. **HCT**

Karas

continued from page 7

that she came to embrace her heritage. Once old enough, she joined Hadassah, where she remains a life member. Later, at Mishkan Tefila, she rose from temple sisterhood member to president, and soon assumed a number of Jewish communal leadership positions.

Barbara's engagement in Jewish life also stemmed from observing the role women played in the home and kitchen. She fondly remembers Sabbath visits to her grandmother, who lovingly prepared a "magic pot."

"Bubbe never knew how many people were coming," she says. "Yet no matter how many came, there was always enough for one more, always something left in the pot."

It's a lesson that has long driven Barbara and Leo's business and charitable joint ventures and one that now energizes the dynamic couple's development work at Hebrew College. Their efforts draw on a lifetime of leadership skills learned not from guidebooks or manuals, but by pursuing issues and supporting organizations that align with their deepest concerns.

Barbara recalls when their children were young and the couple worked with neighbors to convince the town to install a much needed stop sign on their street. "You get involved in your community with something you care about," she says. "If you care about something and want to get involved, you develop the skills over the years."

Leo believes that practice, even more than education, ultimately shapes success, a point driven home by his now long-deceased father—the mentor he still "consults"—who built a successful business without formal training. "You can learn skills at Harvard Business School," he muses, "but it is when faced with real problems that people learn how to come up with the solutions."

Since September 2005, the couple has applied that knowledge to Hebrew College's annual campaign, producing extraordinary results. "The Karases have been a beacon of light for Hebrew College," says Beth Moskowitz, a member of the Hebrew College Board of Trustees and Development Committee. "They've not only created a stronger concept of a development committee and run the best annual campaign ever, but they've helped us reach out and expand the Hebrew College family. Frankly, you can't help but want to raise money for them."

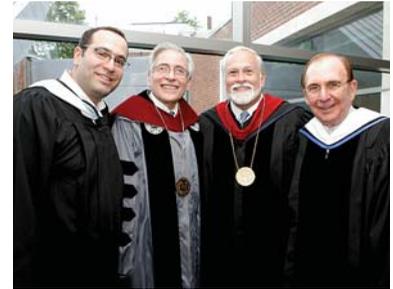
Much of what drives their efforts is Leo and Barbara's deep appreciation for the College and their strong belief in its potential. "Hebrew College is an important part of Jewish life," says Leo, "and we're happy to help move this innovative vision forward." **HCT**

Hebrew College Celebrates 81st Commencement

June 4, 2006



Grand Marshal Betty Brudnick P'46.



L to R: Rabbi Or Rose, recipient of the Rabbi Murray I. Rothman Award of ANTS; President Gordis; Reverend Nick Carter, President of ANTS; and Ted Cutler.



Rabbinical School student Sonya Saltzman RS'08, leading closing prayer.



L to R: Betty Goldman P'62, BJE'd'66 and Grand Marshal Judith Feldman P'62, BJE'd'66.



Hebrew College's Prozdor High School graduation included 143 students.



L to R: Stanley Cohen P'53, BJE'd'56, MHL'59; Elaine Hoffman Morris P'53, BJE'd'56; Gabriel Margolis P'52, BJE'd'56.



Dr. Douglas A. Burd P'81 with wife, Dr. Carol Burd, and family.

Hebrew College's Celebrates Reunions

June 4, 2006



Prozdor Class of 1956. Front row (L to R): Herbert J. Dorris P'56; Jean Karol Becker P'56, BJE'd'60; Merle Glee Snyder P'56, BJE'd'60; Frieda Johles Forman P'56; Israel (Izzy) Milkow P'56, BJE'd'60. Second row (L to R): Elaine Tates Winograd P'56; Marilyn Yudin Vener P'56, BJE'd'83; Gladys Schwartz Kabler P'56. Third row (L to R): Rhoda Silverstein P'56; Myril Witt Adler P'56, BJE'd'60; class agent Sheila Rosalyn Deitchman P'56; Stephen Z. Kraus P'56. Fourth row: Leon Rothenberg P'56. (Not shown: Carol Krepon Ingall P'56, Richard Weiner P'56.)



Hebrew College and Prozdor 1940s alumni reunion (L to R): Hebrew College Overseer Rose Bronstein P'41, BJE'd'45, MHL'70; Marilyn Landes P'41, HC'45, from Jerusalem; Pearl Tarnor P'42, BJE'd'46, from California; Mollie Stein Glanz, P'44, BJE'd'46; class agent Bernice (Bunny) Cohen Schwartz P'42, BJE'd'46. (Not shown: Shirley (Dolly) Rosenberg BJE'd'46, from Ramat Aviv Israel.)



Prozdor Class of 1946: Betty Brudnick P'46 and Arthur Schatz P'46, BHL'79. (Not shown: Carolyn Landy Levens P'46, BJE'd'50 and Jean Brooks Safon P'46, BJE'd'50, Me'ah'03.)



L to R: Stanley Cohen P'53, BJE'd'56, MHL'59; Elaine Hoffman Morris P'53, BJE'd'56; Gabriel Margolis P'52, BJE'd'56.



L to R: Sarah Polimer Raine P'36, BJE'd'40; Rose Bronstein P'41, BJE'd'45, MHL'70; class agent Helen Dogem Dennis P'37, Dpl'41; class agent Reva Newton Fishlyn P'36, BJE'd'41.

Zamir

continued from page 10

music through the Mary Wolfman Epstein Conducting Fellowship; workshops for conductors of Jewish and non-Jewish choirs that highlight the wide range of Jewish choral music; a semi-annual electronic newsletter, *Notes from Zamir*; and 13 self-produced audio recordings to date, distributed widely and reviewed by the American Record Guide—earning Zamir a national reputation as “America’s foremost Jewish choral ensemble.”

Tours also comprise a vibrant part of the Zamir educational experience. The Chorale’s centennial tour to Eastern Europe inspired the PBS video, *Zamir: Jewish Voices Return to Poland*. Zamir’s other international trips have included Italy and Israel, as well as travel throughout North America.

Performances exemplify what Zamir is all about: exposing audiences to the breadth and depth of Jewish music.

Zamir’s educational mission and its creative realization is a testament to Jacobson, who has been the Chorale’s Director since its founding. “In many ways, the group is Josh Jacobson,” says Sarra Spierer CEP’07, a former member, “because it was born out of him. It continues with him, and changes with him.”

Jacobson founded the Zamir Chorale of Boston in 1969, while a graduate student at the New England Conservatory, where he received a master’s degree in Choral Conducting in 1971. He had already earned his bachelor’s degree in music from Harvard in 1969, graduated from Prozdor in 1965 and attended Camp Yavneh, where the new music counselor, Stanley Sperber, had introduced him to “first-rate choral music” and encouraged his musical pursuits. Jacobson went on to earn a Doctor of Musical Arts from the University of Cincinnati in 1984, taking a one-year break from Zamir for his residency from 1980 to 1981.

He has many plans for Zamir’s continued growth, among them an open sing of Handel’s *Judas Maccabaeus* this fall and organizing an annual Jewish choral festival in collaboration with the Jewish Music Institute. These plans build upon a distinguished reputation that the Chorale enjoys locally, nationally and internationally.

Praising Jacobson for expressing the spiritual and musical side of Israel through the Chorale’s performances, Israeli composer Tzvi Avni puts it succinctly: “Zamir gives us something to celebrate.” **HCT**

Hebrew College Endowment Funds

Hebrew College is grateful to the following individuals, foundations and companies for their generous contributions to the Hebrew College endowment during the period of **July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2006**.

Wendy R. Breslau Citation and Award

Marilyn Breslau

Rose Bronstein Fellowship

Judith Feldman P'62, BJE'd'66
 Marion Feldman P'31, BJE'd'36
 Minna P'91 and Joel Goldstein
 Rosalind Me'ah'06 and
 Mervin Gray Me'ah'06
 Doris Kaplan
 Mildred Kravitz P'36, BJE'd'54, z'l
 Mildred Levitt BJE'd'49

Sara Feinsilver Prize

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The ProxBowl Leadership Dinner

April 25, 2006

A ProxBowl "Tailgate" party, recognizing Hebrew College Leadership donors, was hosted by Margie and Robert Kargman.



Hostess Margie Kargman.



Howard and Elyse Rubin, co-chairs, ProxBowl Parents Committee.



L to R: Trustee Theodore H. Teplow, and Zvi and Miriam Bat-Yam.



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Ralph and Taren Metson, member of the HC Board of Overseers.



President David M. Gordis with trustee Mark Atkins.



Marjorie Tichnor.

The Hebrew College Prozbowl

May 7, 2006

More than 1,200 guests of all ages gathered at Gillette Stadium at what is believed to be the most highly attended fundraiser for a Jewish institution in recent Boston history. The event was co-chaired by Myra Me'ah'01 and Robert Kraft P'58 and celebrated the outstanding accomplishments of Hebrew College Prozdor High School.



Prozdor student Kei Ishii P'07, Prozbowl co-chair Robert Kraft P'58, student Amy Schultz P'06, Prozbowl co-chair Myra Kraft and Margie Berkowitz.



Gloria Adelson Field, Prozbowl Leadership Chair.



Trustee and Prozdor parent Beth Moskowitz with President Gordis.



Prozdor parents Richard P'65 and Marcy Curtis with daughter Nicole P'05.



CJP President Barry Shrage with Andre and Madison Tippet.



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The Hebrew College ProxBowl

May 7, 2006



Myra and Robert Kraft P'58 with Alex Fishman P'02, ProxBowl emcee.



The Prozdor Klezmer Band was among dozens of student groups that performed.



ProxBowl Grandparent Committee co-chairs Phyllis and Clifford Seresky.



Margie Berkowitz P'61, Prozdor Director.



Bill Zarch, High School Director.

Goldman Lecture

September 16, 2006



Gerry M. Goldman, Harry Goldman, R. Stanley Goldman and Vivian Schaar sponsored a lecture in honor of their parents, A. Leon and Marilyn Goldman, on their 60th wedding anniversary.



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