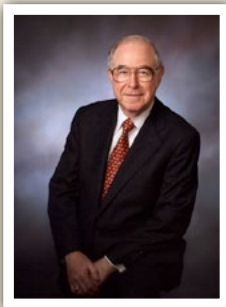


WINTER 2012 | KISLEV 5772

FROM THE DIRECTOR

“Every man has a name,” goes the well-known poem by the Hebrew poetess Zelda, “given him by his stature and by his smile Every man has a name given him by his celebrations and by his work.” The Judaic Studies program at Portland State University bears the name of the Harold Schnitzer Family, and so it was with special sorrow that we mourned the passing of Harold Schnitzer in April. His philanthropy continues to shape the state of Oregon, its Jewish community, institutions of higher education and medical facilities, and so much beyond. My colleagues and I are grateful for his visionary determination to bring excellence in Judaic Studies to the city of Portland and to our sister program in Eugene. He understood that a thriving program in Judaic Studies not only expands knowledge but also promotes humane understanding, decisively transforming the lives of our students, many of whom enjoyed wide-ranging discussions with him in his Salmon Street offices during his last years. Harold Schnitzer’s stature and his smile, his celebrations and his work, will always be our standard and our inspiration.

(Continued on page 2)



Harold Schnitzer z'l

CITY OF KNOWLEDGE

The Harold Schnitzer Family Program in Judaic Studies has more students than ever and three tenure-line faculty members. When the Rabbi Stampfer Professor of Israel Studies joins us next fall, we will have the capacity to offer a complete undergraduate Major.

To advance this extraordinary growth of Jewish knowledge and culture in the Portland region we are starting something new.

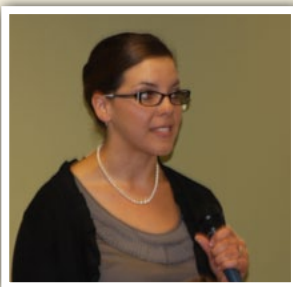
Please join our City of Knowledge Supporters Circle. Your gift will help send students to Israel, grow resources for teaching and research, and build the collection of Jewish and Israel Studies materials in the University Library. Imagine what your gift could do:

\$3600 sustains an undergraduate’s study of Jewish history, literature, and culture for a full year

\$1800 sends a student to study for the summer at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem*

\$720 immerses an 18-year-old in the study of the Holocaust, or rabbinic texts, or Israeli literature

(Continued on page 6)



Shayla Vondrachek

JUDAIC STUDIES EXHIBIT OF YIZKOR BOOKS AT PSU LIBRARY

“Of Place and Memory: The Yizkor Book as a Window into a World Destroyed” highlights the PSU Library’s collection of Yizkor (memorial) books, one of the largest such collections in the western United States. Yizkor books were created in the decades after the Holocaust to memorialize the Jewish communities destroyed during the war. The books are compilations of histories, personal recollections, and eyewitness testimonies; they also record the names of the dead, who often had no burial place or memorial. Yizkor books are thus a testament to the diversity and vitality of a Jewish culture and way of life that was annihilated by the Nazis and their collaborators. The exhibit, curated by Lokey Assistant Professor Natan Meir with assistance from student intern Shayla Vondrachek, makes the Yizkor books—usually written in Hebrew and/or Yiddish—accessible to the general

public by providing translations of key pages and highlighting important themes using visual cues and artwork. The exhibit is on display on the first floor of the PSU Library (accessible whenever the library is open) through mid-December; thereafter, it will continue to be accessible in electronic format as an online exhibit through the library website.

(Continued from page 1)

FROM THE DIRECTOR

This has been a year of transitions for us. In the last newsletter we welcomed our new faculty member, Professor Loren Spielman, and we thanked the numerous people who have helped ensure that the Rabbi Joshua Stampfer Professorship in Israel Studies, our fourth faculty position, will be filled in 2012 thanks to additional major gifts from Harold Schnitzer and Lorry Lokey.

Now we must also acknowledge in more bittersweet fashion the retirement of Dean Marvin Kaiser from the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences this past spring. Dean Kaiser's heartfelt commitment to Judaic Studies over the past decade was decisive for our program's growth and success, and special in its personal warmth and sense of connection to the wider Jewish community. We are truly grateful for his support, and will miss working with him. At the same time, we look forward to welcoming Dean Susan Beatty, who joins us from the University of Colorado at Boulder in January.

We also bid a *nesiyah tovah* (*bon voyage*) to two of our colleagues, Linda Maizels and Ayal Yariv. Linda accepted a position in the Jewish Studies program at Colby College in Maine, and her husband Ayal joins her. They have both been star instructors, with devotedly enthusiastic students. Linda's courses in American Jewish history, Israel, and the history of antisemitism have consistently been among the most popular in our program, and Ayal's charismatic language teaching was pivotal in the growth of PSU's Hebrew program to three full years of instruction. Many of our students credit Linda and Ayal for their decision to concentrate in Judaic Studies. We wish them the best in their new work.

Finally, our board member Jared Gellert has relocated with his family to Philadelphia. We are grateful for his generous support of the program and his discerning advice and guidance during this period of growth. We are in the same measure glad to welcome Steven Kaufman to our board. Steven is already responsible for the creation of the Abigail Jacobs-Kaufman scholarship fund for Judaic Studies students, and we are excited to work with him to chart the program's future growth.

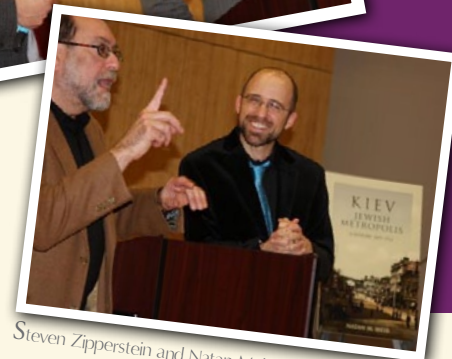
I invite you, the readers, to celebrate with us the continued growth of our program, especially the addition of a professor of Israel Studies this year, and to join us for our programs, courses, and events.

Sincerely,
Michael Weingrad

Girls in Trouble at the First Fruits Festival



Michael Weingrad and Robert Whitehill



Steven Zipperstein and Natan Meir



Wendy Zierler

Maxim Shrayev



Meir Shalev

ACADEMIC YEAR 2010-2011 EVENTS

2010

October: **Byron Sherwin** (Spertus College) traced the changing conceptions and implications of the Golem legend from earliest Jewish sources to contemporary debates over biotechnology and corporate capitalism.

November: Journalist and author **Yossi Klein Halevi** spoke at the MJCC about efforts to delegitimize Israel, gave a moving talk at PSU about his first book *Memoirs of a Jewish Extremist*, and spoke in Hebrew at a Café v'Ivrit event about his book in progress on the Six Day War. In addition, he led a dialogue session with Muslim and Jewish students at PSU. Events were co-sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland, the Jewish Student Union at PSU, and the Mittleman Jewish Community Center.

2011

January: Book Celebration

In January, one hundred and fifty colleagues and community members gathered in the renovated Lincoln Hall recital auditorium to celebrate the publication of new books by Professors **Michael Weingrad** and **Natan Meir**. Stanford University Professor **Steven Zipperstein** spoke about Meir's authoritative study *Kiev, Jewish Metropolis: A History, 1859-1914* as well as the volume Meir co-edited, *Anti-Jewish Violence: Rethinking the Pogrom in East European Jewish History*. Poet **Robert Whitehill**, discussed in Weingrad's book *American Hebrew Literature: Writing Jewish National Identity in the United States*, gave a reading of several of his poems, translated from Hebrew into English, about his upbringing in Lubbock, Texas.

The books have garnered excellent reviews this year in the *Forward* (in which Allan Nadler called Meir's Kiev book "a work which is in every respect a model of how civic history ought to be written"), *Tablet Magazine* (in which Adam Kirsch described Weingrad's book as "fascinating" and "haunting"), and other venues.

February: **Wendy Zierler** (Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion) delivered the annual Gus & Libby Solomon Lecture. Her interactive talk, entitled "The Jew as Talking Horse," discussed the complications of Jewish identity, focusing on a story by Bernard Malamud.

March: Bestselling Israeli author **Meir Shalev** spoke about his new collection of essays on the Bible's intriguing firsts. Co-sponsored by Congregation Neveh Shalom, Café v'Ivrit, and the PSU English Department and Middle East Studies Center.

April: The Lorry I. Lokey Lecture was delivered by **Dennis Klein** (Kean University), who spoke about Holocaust memoirs in comparison with testimonies concerning the 1994 Rwanda genocide.

Maxim Shrayev (Boston College) also spoke about the memorialization of the Holocaust, in this case in poems by Russian-Jewish poets writing in the Soviet Union in the 1940s.

June: J-Dub recording artist *Girls in Trouble* tore the roof of during their CD-release party at the inaugural First Fruits Festival. Front-woman Alicia Jo Rabbins, a Six Points fellow at the Foundation for Jewish Culture, also put down her fiddle to lead a little bit of late night Torah study in celebration of Shavuot.

Natan Meir presented the inaugural Marcus Simmons Lecture in October at Temple Beth Israel in Eugene, endowed in memory of the synagogue's first rabbi. His talk, introduced by Vivienne Friendly, Rabbi Simmons' daughter, and Professor Deborah Green of the Harold Schnitzer Family Program in Judaic Studies Program at the University of Oregon, touched on some of the major themes covered by his recent book, *Kiev, Jewish Metropolis: A History, 1859-1914*. Meir also spoke on his book in April at a symposium at Reed College on new books in Jewish Studies and at PSU's "Russkii chai" (Russian Tea) student language circle, and in May at Stanford University (sponsored jointly by the Center for Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies and the Taube Center for Jewish Studies), the Jewish Community Library of San Francisco, and the YIVO Institute for Jewish Studies at New York's Center for Jewish History. While on a research trip in Ukraine over the summer, Meir gave an informal Russian-language talk to a group of young people at Kiev's new Moishe House, and in October presented a talk about his research at Temple Beth Shalom of Spokane.

Michael Weingrad has translated more than 70 poems from Hebrew for a volume provisionally titled *Letters to America: Selected Poems of Reuven Ben-Yosef*. Ben-Yosef (1937-2001) was born Robert Eliot Reiss in New York City and changed his name and his language after immigrating to Israel in 1959.

The word for life is always plural in Hebrew,
 as if the Jew has several lives, as it was said
 of the divine blooming of our father in Eden,
 the father of humanity: *and God breathed
 into his nostrils the breath of life*, or lives
 in Hebrew, two worlds, which disappears in English,
 for a man lives fully only in our tongue . . .
 —from "For the Sake of Our Land" by Reuven Ben-Yosef, trans. Michael Weingrad

Loren Spielman taught four new courses this year on Second Temple History, Hebrew Bible, Rabbinic Literature and Biblical Interpretation during his first year as a faculty member in the Judaic Studies program. He also completed an article on Jewish attitudes towards sport and spectacle during the Second Temple period based on a paper he presented at Creighton University; the article will appear in the forthcoming volume of *Studies in Jewish Civilization, Jews in the Gym: Judaism, Sports and Athletics* (Purdue University Press). He was scholar in residence at the Institute for Judaic Studies Weekend in Quest and spoke about sport and spectacle at a number of other local events in and around Portland. As a Schusterman Teaching fellow, Loren also organized the First Fruits Festival, a mixed media event combining the music of J-dub recording artist *Girls in Trouble* with an evening of study in celebration of the Jewish holiday of Shavuot.

2012 UPCOMING EVENTS

February 23 7:00 P.M.

THE 7th ANNUAL GUS & LIBBY SOLOMON LECTURE WITH SANFORD R. CARDIN THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF TOMORROW

President of the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation, Sanford (Sandy) R. Cardin is a frequent presenter and panelist in global forums on topics related to catalytic grantmaking, innovative program-building, Jewish identity, young adult engagement, Israel and more. His published works include a chapter in *What We Now Know About Jewish Education* (2008) and a reflective essay on trends in contemporary American Judaism in *Synagogues in a Time of Change* (2009). Sandy currently serves as a director of several organizations, including Hillel Russia, and has served in the past on the boards of such groups as the Council on Foundations and the Jewish Funders Network. A native of Baltimore, Sandy is a graduate of Harvard University and the University of Maryland School of Law.

The 7 p.m. talk, followed by Q&A, is free and open to the public and will be held in the newly renovated Lincoln Hall, on PSU's main campus.

This event is made possible by generous support from Richard Solomon, and is sponsored by the Harold Schnitzer Family Program in Judaic Studies at PSU, the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland and the Oregon Jewish Community Foundation.



April 24

THE LORRY I. LOKEY LECTURE WITH GERSHON HUNDERT

Gershon Hundert, Leonor Segal Professor of Jewish Studies at McGill University, will deliver the Lorry I. Lokey Lecture on "The Making of the YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe." Hundert served as editor-in-chief of the encyclopedia, published in 2008 by Yale University Press in conjunction with the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research. The two-volume work—made up of original articles and essays on religion, folklore, politics, art, music, theater, language and literature—presents the history and culture of Eastern European Jews over their centuries of settlement in the region. It is available online in full-text version at www.yivoencyclopedia.org. Hundert will also give a talk in Hebrew on a related topic at Machon Ivrit's Hebrew-language conversation group, Cafe V'Ivrit, on April 23.

**Date to be
announced**

MATAN HERMONI

Israeli writer and scholar Matan Hermoni published his first novel this year to wide acclaim. *Hebrew Publishing Company* is a rarity in Israeli fiction in that it is set primarily among the Yiddish writers of the Lower East Side in 1920s New York. "The most remarkable thing about this lovely book is the simultaneous proximity and distance between these seemingly different and opposing worlds. Hebrew and Yiddish, New York and Israel, high literature and pulp fiction, masculine and feminine—all of these mix together in a wonderful carnivalesque stew" (Haaretz). Hermoni will speak about modern Jewish literature at PSU, and give a Hebrew reading from his novel for the Café v'Ivrit talk series.

(Continued from page 1)

CITY OF KNOWLEDGE

\$540 provides professional development opportunities for faculty to improve teaching
\$180 adds new books on Jewish and Israeli history and culture to the PSU library*

**And, thanks to a generous matching gift from Mr. Lorry Lokey, all gifts to Israel Travel and to Library funds will be doubled.*

To join our City of Knowledge Circle, please follow the link on our Judaic Studies webpage at www.pdx.edu/judaic. There, you will find additional information about this new annual-giving program and a link to a secure site, where you can choose your personal giving priority. Or contact Jenn Director Knudsen: 503-725-2305, jenn.d.knudsen@pdx.edu.

Judaic Studies sincerely thanks our trend-setting Circle members:

Benefactors (\$1800)	Larry and Pam Levy
Promoters (\$540)	Helen Herner Dr. Joe Thaler and Rabbi Ariel Stone
Helpers (\$180)	Lawrence and Estelle Winthrop
Other supporters	Lynn Bonner Marvin Diamond Sivia Kaye Prof. Martin Zwick and Elinor Langer

PSU HIRES NEW HEBREW INSTRUCTOR

Portland State University's new Hebrew instructor is Or Rogovin, hired this fall by the Department of World Languages and Literatures to teach PSU's three levels of Modern Hebrew, working closely with faculty from the Harold Schnitzer Family Program in Judaic Studies.

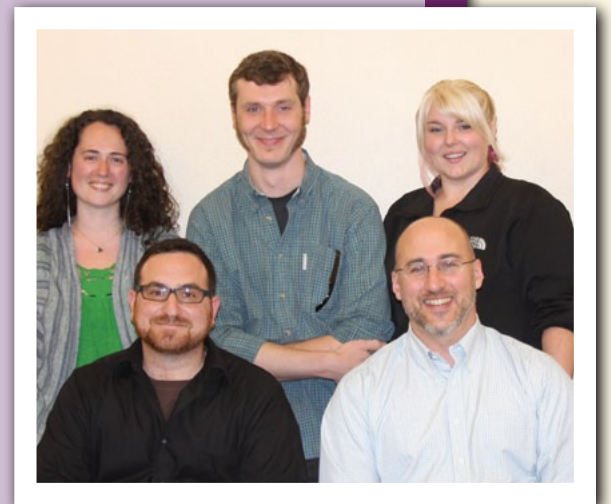
Born in Israel and raised in Rishon Le-Zion, Rogovin earned a bachelor's degree in 2001 from Tel Aviv University in poetics and comparative literature. In 2004, he moved to Seattle, where he began working toward his Ph.D. in Hebrew literature in the University of Washington's Department of Comparative Literature. During his graduate studies, he spent one year studying Yiddish at Oxford. His dissertation is on the representation of the perpetrators in Holocaust literature, especially in Hebrew.



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR STUDENTS!

The following students graduated in 2010 with the Minor in Judaic Studies: **Ivar Anderson, Jaclyn Dyos, Benjamin Emerson, Erin Kurtz, Rumaitha Mohammed, Amy Randel, and Britney Turner.** Congratulations!

And they are putting their studies to exciting use. Ivar served as Sara Glasgow Cogan intern at the Oregon Jewish Museum (see below). Erin has begun an MA program in education at Mills College. Rumaitha is travelling in the Middle East. Amy is now in Kiev, Ukraine, working as an intern for the Jewish Service Corps of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. Last year's graduate and former Cogan scholar Megan Dyer is pursuing an MA at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.



Erin Kurtz, Ivar Anderson, and Jaclyn Dyos with Professors Loren Spielman and Michael Weingrad

COGAN SCHOLARS MAKE HISTORY

Judaic Studies minor **Ivar Anderson** served as Sara Glasgow Cogan intern at the Oregon Jewish Museum in Winter and Spring terms of 2011, doing research for an upcoming exhibition on the Jewish immigrant experience in Portland. The exhibit will have a particular focus on the Neighborhood House, a settlement house founded by the local chapter of the National Council of Jewish Women, and will compare the experience of new Americans in the early 20th century with that of contemporary immigrants. Ivar spent time looking through the OJM archives, the periodicals and Neighborhood House collections, and oral history transcripts. Ivar also assisted in the processing of the newly acquired Congregation Beth Israel papers, which he had helped to inventory during a previous Judaic Studies internship in 2009. Working closely with a professional archivist, Ivar says that he learned "a great deal about archiving as a process, a practice, and as a profession." Ivar continued his work at the OJM into the summer. "The internship has been of great value to me," says Ivar. "I am really glad for the relationship that the Judaic Studies Program and the OJM have formed, and would like to see it grow in the future."

The Sara Glasgow Cogan scholarship is awarded to Judaic Studies students undertaking internships with local Jewish communal and cultural organizations. Past recipients have served as interns at the Oregon Jewish Museum, Cedar Sinai Park, and the Oregon Area Jewish Committee. This year's Cogan intern is **Shayla Vondrachek**, who is working at the Oregon Jewish Museum.



THE HONOR IS MUTUAL

On Oct. 17, nearly 130 PSU faculty, staff and community members witnessed PSU President Wim Wiewel bestow an honorary doctorate of humane letters upon Rabbi Joshua Stampfer. In his remarks, Wiewel noted that Stampfer has been a prominent leader of Portland's Jewish community for a half-century. He called the rabbi a philanthropist, a scholar, a friend of the university "and, above all, a real mensch."

Stampfer, who is 89 and began teaching at PSU in 1961, responded, "I am deeply honored with this recognition from Portland State University. I regard my relationship with Portland State as one of the treasures of my life."

To see a slideshow of the event, visit www.pdx.edu/judaic/links. And, if you'd like to view a video of the ceremony, please request a DVD from Jenn Director Knudsen at (503) 725-2305 or jenn.d.knudsen@pdx.edu.



**the harold schnitzer
family program in
judaic studies**

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Affiliate Faculty: John Ott, Jennifer Schuberth, Or Rogovin,
Leerom Medovoi, Robert Liebman