

## *The Center's First Major International Academic Conference*

In response to an undeniable resurgence of antisemitism in many parts of the world, members of the Center's faculty and advisory board set out to create a scholarly conference that would revisit antisemitism throughout history. The primary goal was to inform students, faculty, K-12 teachers, and the broader public about the newest results in scholarship and to start a dialogue about how stereotypes and prejudices develop, how they are transferred, how they return,

*Magda Teter, one of 19 presenters during the three-day conference.*



and how they can shape the perception of the world.

The April 2016 Reconsidering Antisemitism: Past and Present conference gathered a group of 19 leading experts—which included scholars, journalists and a politician—in Chapel Hill for three days of intensive discussion. Several hundred students, scholars and community members participated in the conference. The discussion topics were chosen from different historic epochs in order to show the complicated history of anti-Judaism and antisemitism starting in antiquity and resurfacing in recent events in Europe, South America, the Middle East, and the United States. New insights from

the many presenters helped the audience understand that anti-Judaism and antisemitism can only be



discussed and analyzed in a context which needs to be studied thoroughly. As one of the participating K-12 teachers noted, "learning about antisemitism demands a close examination of human pain and suffering" and he said he must "integrate this learning into my course curriculum." An undergraduate student wrote that one talk made her "rethink the way that I view the past, and [it] has already changed the way that I intend to approach my own research in my graduate studies."

One unique aspect of the conference was a poster session showcasing research conducted by Carolina's undergraduates. The posters were based on either work that was done for a university course or as independent, extra-curricular research. Exceptional presentations were eligible for prizes, and the winners were: Ramon Alarcon, "Jewish Representation in English Theater: Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* and Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*," Ashley Cooper, Jacob Greenblatt, Elizabeth Yoder, "Anti-Jewish Bias in Medieval Christian Art," Christopher S. McIlveen, "Antisemitism in the Virtual World: The Rise of 'Anon'," and Allyson Yelton, "German-Jewish Art and Antisemitism

— Continued on page 2 —

## *major gift* SUPPORTS ACADEMICS, RESEARCH AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

In 2012, the Center created a capstone course in Jewish Studies as a required component for the undergraduate degree in Religious Studies/Jewish Studies. The capstone course is an upper-level research seminar—for undergraduate and graduate students—that explores various topics in the diverse field of Jewish Studies. The course is offered each academic year with a different topic, led by a different professor. Through the years, the course has focused on Jewish literature, Jewish-Christian relations, Jewish humor, and Jewish folklore and material life.

A new endowment, funded by anonymous donors, was established last academic year to support the course. Funds will be utilized to assist faculty in developing new course content, to provide the financial means to arrange for class field trips and visits to historical and cultural sites, to cover expenses with

the professor's academic department, and to bring in visiting lecturers to enhance the course curriculum. The same donors also provided two other endowment funds—to support a lectureship for the campus community and general public focused on Sephardic Judaism, and to provide support for faculty and student research and projects in Jewish Studies and Sephardic Judaism.

"There are many costs associated with creating new course content and providing a truly unique learning opportunity for our students in the capstone course, and we are very grateful to have this fund provide the necessary support for the long-term," said Ruth von Bernuth, director. "We are also very grateful for this new lectureship and the research support, which will enrich the learning experiences for our students and community, as well as provide new scholarly opportunities."



*Students in Professor Berlinger's JWST 697 "The Material Life of Jewish America" capstone course curated the exhibition "From T-Shirts to Tattoos: Jewish Material Culture at UNC-Chapel Hill". The exhibition is housed in the Center's office, first floor of Pettigrew Hall.*

# FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

## *A Stellar Review*



**Ruth von Bernuth**

Director, Carolina Center for Jewish Studies

Associate Professor, Department of Germanic  
and Slavic Languages and Literatures

rnb@email.unc.edu  
(919) 962-4866

The last academic year of the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies was filled with several major events and activities, but perhaps most notable for the Center was our first external review. The review committee was on campus for two days in February and met with more than 30 faculty members, administrators, and students who are involved with the Center. We are very proud of the results. The review stated that the committee members were “extremely impressed by the Center’s intellectual vibrancy, collegiality, and overall contributions to the university, as well as its service to the public through curricular enrichment and innovative public programming.” Their report also identified some long-term tasks for the future success of the Center including continued expansion of programming for both academic offerings and community events and a goal of increasing student enrollment in Jewish studies courses and the minors and major. The Center will also need to endow its operations and its administrative positions so that staffing levels are suitable for our rapidly growing program. The report stated that the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies “is one of the best Jewish Studies programs in the country.” These positive results are a product of the strong commitment of the advisory board, the many donors who supported the Center throughout the years, as well as the engaged and active professors, students, and staff. Thank you to all of our supporters!

We want to continue our mission in the future and the coming academic year will bring a very full event schedule, including two major thematic

concentrations: the University’s Food for All initiative and “*The Defiant Requiem*.”

The university-wide academic theme for 2015-2017 is “Food for All: Local and Global Perspectives.” With this theme, the University is challenging all areas of campus to examine wide-ranging topics including food cultures and nutrition, food security, world hunger and more. This year, the Center will, thanks to a generous gift from Jimmy and Susan Pittleman, support academic courses with a focus on Jewish food as well as host a workshop on “Jewish Food in the Global South” in the spring semester.

“*The Defiant Requiem* at UNC” will be a semester-long series of events during Spring 2017. The purpose of the project is to inform students, faculty, and community about Jewish cultural life in concentration camps during the Holocaust and to explore the important role of music in devastating situations. The performance at UNC on April 20 will combine Verdi’s requiem with video testimony from survivors of the original Terezín chorus and footage from the 1944 Nazi propaganda film about Theresienstadt. It will involve hundreds of Carolina’s students as well as faculty—playing in the orchestra, performing as soloists, or singing in the choirs. The Center is hosting or co-sponsoring several other connected events including a performance of Yiddish songs by Soviet Jews during the Second World War and an academic conference on “Performing Commemoration: Music and the Politics of Trauma.” More details on all our upcoming events can be found on our web site: [jewishstudies.unc.edu](http://jewishstudies.unc.edu).

## *Center’s First*

*Continued from page 1*

We have posted videos from all the conference sessions on our web site, [jewishstudies.unc.edu](http://jewishstudies.unc.edu), which serve as a useful teaching tool for faculty members and also allow other scholars and community members to benefit from the presentations/discussions.

in the 19th Century.”

The conference’s scholars also connected through the conference—some of them are already invited to other universities based on their presentation at our antisemitism conference—which means the conversations will continue.

“I am thrilled to announce that fund raising met the goal to cover the expenses of the conference. Please know how grateful we are for your financial support as well as time and energy in helping make this, our first major scholarly conference, not only possible but also so meaningful,” said Ruth von Bernuth, director. “Thanks to generous donors, active faculty and students, as well as an interested

general audience, the conference was a big success and showed how important it is to study current events with historic depths.”

*Sarah McCullen with her undergraduate research poster.*



# EVENTS

## fall 2016

### [COMMUNITY LECTURE]

#### Women in the Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel

*The Morris, Ida and Alan Heilig Lectureship in Jewish Studies*  
September 19, 7:00 p.m. / William and Ida Friday Center for Continuing Education

**SUSAN ACKERMAN** (Dartmouth College) will discuss how the Hebrew Bible is a book that was primarily written by men, for men, and about men, and thus the biblical text is not particularly forthcoming when it comes to the lives and experiences of women. This lecture looks at the ways in which scholars have been able to combine a careful reading of the biblical text with anthropological and archaeological data, and with comparative evidence from the larger biblical world, to reconstruct certain features of ancient Israelite women's culture.

### [ACADEMIC LECTURE]

#### Antisemitism in France in 2016: A Survey

November 1, 5:30 p.m. / Location TBA

**JEAN-YVES CAMUS** (Institut de Relations Internationales et Stratégiques) will share the facts and figures of antisemitism in 2016, with a look back on the period beginning with the start of the Second Intifada, which is when the figures reach an unprecedented level. The talk will also take a look at the perpetrators of antisemitic violence and the continuity of the prejudices.

### [ACADEMIC LECTURE]

#### The Cultural Significance of the Ghetto of Venice for Jewish History: A Reflection on the 500th Anniversary of its Founding

November 3, 5:30 p.m. / Hyde Hall

**DAVID RUDERMAN** (University of Pennsylvania) will evoke scenes of the Venetian ghetto which was established 500 years ago in March 1516. This lecture will explore the ghetto's intellectual life, reflect on some previous historical approaches, and contextualize the ghetto experience within the larger framework of early modern and modern Jewish history.

### [COMMUNITY LECTURE]

#### Film Screening and Discussion – ROSENWALD: The great story of a Jewish and African American partnership in the South during Jim Crow times

*Sylvia and Irving Margolis Lecture on the Jewish Experience in the American South*  
November 7, 7:00 p.m. / William and Ida Friday Center for Continuing Education

**AVIVA KEMPNER'S** film is the incredible story of Julius Rosenwald, who never finished high school, but rose to become the President of Sears. Influenced by the writings of the educator Booker T. Washington, this Jewish philanthropist joined forces with African American communities during the Jim Crow South to build over 5,300 schools during the early part of the 20th century. Inspired by the Jewish ideals of *tzedakah* (charity) and *tikkun olam* (repairing the world), and a deep concern over racial inequality in America, Julius Rosenwald used his wealth to become one of America's most effective philanthropists.

## SAVE THE DATE *spring 2017*

#### Last Yiddish Heroes: Lost and Found Songs of Soviet Jews During World War II

Jan. 30, 7:00 p.m., Gerrard Hall, with singer-songwriter  
PSOY KOROLENKO and historian ANNA SHTERNISH  
(University of Toronto).

#### "And Now I Have Read in Jewish Something": Yiddish Performances by Holocaust Survivors

Feb 13, 7:00 p.m., William and Ida Friday Center for Continuing  
Education, with JEFFREY SHANDLER (Rutgers University).

#### Film Screening – The Defiant Requiem

Feb. 23, 7:30 p.m., Kenan Rehearsal Hall, Kenan Music Building S

#### Jewish Food in the Global South: A Symposium\*

Supported by Jimmy and Susan Pittleman.  
March 4–5, Location TBA

#### Consuming Temples: German Jews and Consumer Culture on Both Sides of the Atlantic

March 20, 5:30p.m., Location TBA, with PAUL LERNER  
(University of Southern California).

#### Performing Commemoration: Music and the Politics of Trauma\*

March 24–26, Hosted by the UNC department of Music.

#### On the Study of Jews of Color

April 17, 7:00 p.m., William and Ida Friday Center for Continuing  
Education, with LEWIS GORDON, (University of Connecticut).

#### Defiant Requiem: Verdi at Terezín at UNC\*

April 20, 7:30 p.m., Memorial Hall

#### Uhlman Family Seminar\*

Date and topic TBA.

\*Some workshops, concerts and conferences may require advance registration and/or tickets. Please visit our web site for more information. Otherwise, the academic and community lectures are free and open to the public, no tickets or reservations are required, and seating is not reserved.

To receive email updates about our event schedule, please subscribe to our listserv by emailing us at [jewishstudies@unc.edu](mailto:jewishstudies@unc.edu). Updates are also posted on our Web site at [jewishstudies.unc.edu](http://jewishstudies.unc.edu) and our social media sites.

The Center is dependent on private gifts to support its academic and community programs. Please consider making a tax-deductible gift. To learn more about our programs, and how you can become involved, please visit: [jewishstudies.unc.edu](http://jewishstudies.unc.edu).



## *Destiny in a Footnote*

TWO OF OUR GRADUATE STUDENTS WERE HOODED IN MAY: SAMUEL KESSLER AND ANNEGRET OEHME.

Annegret, who came from Germany in 2010 to enter the Carolina-Duke Graduate Program in German Studies in order to study Old Yiddish, will soon start a faculty position at the University of Washington in Seattle. Sam is now headed to Virginia Tech as a postdoctoral fellow in Judaic Studies. Both of them will teach future generations in Jewish studies and will share their experiences from taking courses in Jewish studies at UNC and participating in the Center's interdisciplinary group of graduate students.

In 2009, Annegret Oehme was reading material for a research paper about medieval German literature at the library at Freie Universität Berlin, when a footnote about old Yiddish literature caught her attention. A few weeks later she acquired "Introduction to Old Yiddish Literature" by Jean Baumgarten, which she promptly read from cover to cover.

"This book opened a whole new world to me, something that seemed like a white spot on a map, ready to be explored. And the material I study today is still as fascinating as the pages in Baumgarten's book!," said Oehme. "Once I learned more about Yiddish literature, I considered pursuing a Ph.D. with that as a central topic. A colleague in Berlin suggested writing to Professor Ruth von Bernuth, who met with me for a coffee in Berlin. This meeting convinced me that I wanted to write a dissertation under her supervision. It turned out that I had the right impression as Professor von Bernuth was the most dedicated advisor I could have hoped for. She pushed me to find my own path and my own scholarly voice."

Oehme, of Zwickau, in Saxony, Germany, is the newest graduate of the Carolina-Duke Graduate Program in German Studies. Her doctoral research traces the story of a knight of King Arthur, called Wigalois, across different cultures and languages in order to show how this is a shared German-Yiddish narrative. In her dissertation, she explains how this story is not just a tale that was retold in Yiddish, but rather how the 16th century Yiddish adaptations of this story ensure the continued retelling in both languages.

Oehme has taken on numerous jobs while also pursuing her degree, including serving as a research assistant at the Duke University Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, where she processed Yiddish and German material; helping with translation of Hebrew epitaphs at the Jewish cemetery in Zwickau, Germany; working as a teacher assistant for several undergraduate courses; and most recently, serving as a graduate student assistant for the Center's Reconsidering Antisemitism conference.

"I loved working at the conference and seeing



*Annegret, on right, with Ruth von Bernuth at the May 2016 commencement.*

PHOTO: JESUS HIDALGO CAMPOS

how the audience members, from all sorts of backgrounds, and scholars and journalists and teachers all connected over this topic in the talks and during the breaks. It was wonderful to see that happen," said Oehme. "But my favorite job was being the teaching assistant for Professor Jonathan Hess' class 'German Culture and the Jewish Question'. Professor Hess shared so many tricks and tips for teaching a literature/culture class with us, his graduate student teaching assistants. I learned so much from this experience, especially in regard to engaging students in a larger lecture class. He generously shared stories from past classes and explained why he did things this way or the other, gave this or that assignment, and thus showed that a great teacher is not necessarily perfect right away. It is more important to learn from experience and care about the students and what they learn in the class."

Oehme will put this knowledge into action starting this semester, as she begins her new position as a tenure-track assistant professor in the Department of Germanics at the University of Washington, Seattle.

"I am very excited about teaching a class on 'The History of the German Language.' This course allows me to draw on multiple facets of my research interests, tracing the development of German language and culture from the Middle Ages to the present day and discussing cultural exchanges and diversity."

## GRADUATE STUDENT PROFILE / *Samuel Joseph Kessler*

### *Moving On*

For years, Samuel Joseph Kessler was a “regular” at the Center. In addition to participating in dozens of lunch seminars and community lectures each semester, he also served as the student representative on the Center’s advisory board for two years and managed the Jewish Studies Graduate Student Network events held last October. Now, it is time for Kessler to move on to new challenges and opportunities. In May 2016, he graduated with his Ph.D. from the department of Religious Studies and a graduate certificate in Jewish Studies. This academic year, he is a postdoctoral fellow in Judaic Studies at Virginia Polytechnic and State University.

“My ultimate career goal is to become a professor of Judaic Studies or Religious Studies,” said Kessler. “This academic year, I have been offered a postdoctoral position in Judaic Studies at Virginia Tech, which allows me to continue teaching in the field while also having time to publish articles, present at conferences, and begin the process of turning my dissertation into a book. Since my new position is in Judaic Studies, and I received my doctorate in a Religious Studies program, there is little doubt that the graduate certificate in Jewish Studies gave the search committee added confidence in my ability to teach and conduct research in the field of Jewish Studies.”

Kessler’s research specialty is religious transformation in Central European Jewry in the 19th century.

“I have long been fascinated by the 19th century, an era when many of the cultural norms and social values in Euro-America were reimagined. This century witnessed widespread economic industrialization in Europe and the United States, the construction of trans-continental railroads, and the mass migration of formerly rural populations into urban settings. The religious life of people, and especially of Jews and Christians, has long been fascinating to me. I chose the field of Central European Jewish history because it allowed me to bring together my interests in theology and ritual with research into the historical context of economic and social modernization.”

Kessler chose to pursue his doctorate in Religious Studies at Carolina “because of the broad experience I would get as a teaching assistant and teaching fellow, as well as for the department’s focus on academic training.” Throughout all his years in the program, Kessler taught or served as a teaching assistant for a wide variety of courses at Carolina, including: “Religion and Science”; “Introduction to Religious Ethics”; “Philosophical Approaches to Religion”; “Introduction to Christian Traditions”; “Introduction to Early Judaism”; “Classic Jewish Texts”; “Judaism in Our Time”; “Introduction to the Hebrew Bible”; “History of Religion in America”; and “Heaven & Hell.”

“It is always my goal to create a classroom environment that is intellectually critical, culturally sensitive, and continually exciting,” added Kessler. “At the end of each class period, students should be able to point to the material we covered that day—be it texts, images, or songs—and understand it in a more subtle and complex way. Over the semester, my goal is for student writing to reflect new critical methodologies, new vocabularies, and a new contextual awareness. A clarifying example of the power and responsibility of being a teacher occurred three years ago when I was giving a guest lecture on medieval kabbalism for an introductory class on Judaism. I began the lecture by asking what we mean by ‘medieval’ and ‘the middle ages,’ and explaining that, when we tell European history, this is the period between the fall of the Western Roman Empire and the beginning of the Italian Renaissance. But of course, this is also the Golden Age of Islam, and a vibrant period in the history of Orthodox Christianity based in Constantinople. After the class, half a dozen students approached me and quietly thanked me for defining ‘middle ages’—they had never understood the term before. And a Muslim student approached and said she appreciated my reference to Islam, which was not having a ‘medieval’ period. These are the moments that make being a teacher of Jewish Studies so rewarding.”

**Tine Rassale**, graduate student in the department of Religious Studies, has a summer internship at the Oriental Institute Museum in Chicago. She is working at the registration department to digitalize collections from several archaeological sites, for example, Megiddo in northern Israel.



*Sam, with his wife at graduation.*



**FACULTY NEWS**

**Michael A. Figueroa**, department of Music, will serve as faculty liaison to the Center's advisory board for this academic year. **Andrea Cooper**, department of Religious Studies, will serve as undergraduate student liaison.



FIGUEROA



COOPER

**Jonathan M. Hess**, Malkin Distinguished Professor of Jewish History and Culture, has been appointed chair of the department of Germanic and Slavic Languages and Literatures.



HESS



LAMBERT

**David Lambert**, department of Religious Studies, has been granted tenure and was promoted to associate professor.

**Danielle Christmas** was recently promoted to assistant professor in the department of English & Comparative Literature.



CHRISTMAS



SHEMER

**Yaron Shemer**, department of Asian Studies, received a 2016 Academic Excellence Award from the Institute for the Arts and Humanities.

**Ruth von Bernuth's** newest book, "How the Wise Men Got to Chelm: The Life and Times of a Yiddish Folk Tradition," is due out in October with NYU Press.



SPRINTZIK

**Hanna Sprintzik**, department of Asian Studies, received a grant to convert her First Year Seminar "Israeli Popular Culture – The Case of Music" into an online summer course to be offered in summer 2017. The course will be open to Carolina students and also non-students.

FACULTY PROFILE / ***Gabrielle A. Berlinger***

## ***Jewish Folklore at Carolina***

As a folklorist who studies Jewish cultures, Gabrielle A. Berlinger, the Babette S. and Bernard J. Tanenbaum Fellow in Jewish History and Culture, and assistant professor, department of American Studies, is interested in all forms of expression that are passed down from one generation to the next, either through practice or oral transmission. These may include cooking traditions, stories and jokes, ritual customs, religious beliefs, music and dance, occupational knowledge, and art practices. Whether learning about Jewish paper cutting traditions, the art of making tefillin (leather boxes containing Biblical verses, worn during prayer), or how to cook and eat Yemenite Jewish malawach or a Polish Jewish blintz, folklorists are interested in the relationship between individual makers and the greater societies of which they are a part, and how this relationship is communicated through artful expression.



BERLINGER

"Believe it or not, my interest in Jewish ritual life and material culture has its roots in Vietnam," said Berlinger. "While studying abroad in Vietnam as an undergraduate, I conducted a project on ancestor worship, specifically around the ancestor altars that families construct in their homes. There, I became interested in the intersection of sacred and domestic space—how ritual practice can transform ordinary space into extraordinary space."

During her first year of graduate school in folklore studies, Berlinger wrote a paper on domestic Jewish ritual objects in which she explored the entanglement of sacred and secular material worlds in the Jewish home. She later decided to conduct fieldwork during the holiday of Sukkot to further investigate the role of ritual in the creation and meaning of home. This study became the focus of her dissertation project, engaging themes of home and migration, domestication and wilderness, spirituality and materialism, and individuality and community. Her current book project documents sukkah construction, decoration, and use in Indiana, New York, and Israel between 2007 and 2015. Through case studies based on observation and



*Prof. Berlinger's students at the NC Museum of Art, spring 2016.*

interviews, she explores the relationship between experiences of im/migration and the meaning of "home" through this ritual architectural practice.

Berlinger earned her M.A. and Ph.D. from Indiana University, department of Folklore and Ethnomusicology, in 2013, and her B.A. in Anthropology from University of Pennsylvania. She was an Andrew W. Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow, Cultures of Conservation, at the Bard Graduate Center in New York City from 2013-2015, and in fall 2015, Berlinger joined Carolina's faculty.

"Last academic year, I had the good fortune of introducing two new courses to the Jewish Studies curriculum, open to both undergraduate and graduate students across the University. In the first course, 'Jewish Folklore and Ethnography,' students learned ethnographic skills to conduct individual fieldwork projects and engage with local cultural advocates and community scholars. The students' fieldwork has also helped launch a digital archiving project that I began this year, 'Mapping Jewish Experience in North Carolina,' in which students document contemporary Jewish expression across the state," said Berlinger. "The second new course I taught this year was a Jewish Studies Capstone seminar called, 'The Material Life of Jewish America,' in which the students researched and curated a final class exhibition about Jewish material culture across the UNC student population. The exhibition opened on May 4 in the Center's office in Pettigrew Hall and contains items such as an Old Well Mezuzah, t-shirts from Jewish sororities and fraternities on campus, and photographs of students displaying Jewish expression through body adornment, such as jewelry and tattoos."

## GRANT AWARDS / *Faculty and Students*

Thanks to generous private support, in 2015-2016 the Center was able to offer numerous funding awards to undergraduate students, graduate students, and faculty. Funding for these awards was made possible by the Jack O. Spies and Family Jewish Studies Fund, the Howard R. Levine Student Excellence Fund, the Cohen Excellence Fund, the Kaminsky Jewish Fund, the Wisnia Center for Jewish Studies Fund, the Gorelick Jewish Studies Fund, the Kittner Endowment, the Tau Epsilon Phi Fund, the Peter J. Frenkel Foundation, the Harvey Colchamiro Endowment Fund, the Shapiro/ZBT Undergraduate Research Fund, the Advisory Board Director's Expendable Fund, and the Fund for Jewish Studies.

### Undergraduate Research and Travel Award

**Ashley Cantu, Brian Farmer, Devan Haddock, Katy Harper, Cody Lupo, Robert Lyerly, and Timothy Walker**, all to participate in the Huqoq excavation.

### Shapiro/ZBT Undergraduate Research Award

**Stephanie Grant**, to participate in the Huqoq excavation.

### Christopher Browning Holocaust Studies Research and Travel Award

**Daniela Weiner**, to travel to Germany to digitize and code West German and Italian textbooks.

### Graduate Student Research and Travel Awards

**Travis Alexander**, to research the late Jewish architect Franklin D. Israel at the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles; **Robin Buller**, to travel to Washington, D.C. to pursue research in the archives of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum; **Joseph Block**, to examine archives in New York which are pertinent to African-American and Jewish debates about American liberalism in the 19th and 20th centuries; **Brian Coussens**, to participate in the Huqoq excavation; **Lea Greenberg**, to study at the International Yiddish Summer Program at Tel Aviv University; **Max Lazar**, to conduct archival work in Israel on everyday interactions between Jewish Germans, Non-Jewish Germans, and Eastern European Jews in Weimar Germany, 1919-1933; **Dakota Irvin**, to present a paper on antisemitic pogrom in the Russian empire at a conference in Great Britain.

### Graduate Student Summer Stipend

**Brad Erickson**, to create and post online 3D reconstructions of several ancient synagogues; **Daniel Schindler**, to conduct further research on archaeological pottery from Late Roman and Byzantine Galilean settlements.

### Faculty Research and Travel Awards

**Karen Auerbach**, to present her research at the Association for Jewish Studies Conference; **Joseph Lam**, to travel to Albright Institute for Archaeological Research in Jerusalem for his new research project; **Jessica Boon**, to conduct research in Seville and Lisbon; **Andrea Cooper**, to present her research at the Association for Jewish Studies Conference; **Rosa Perelmutter**, to travel to Cuba to discuss "Jewish Writers in Havana" at a conference.

### Faculty Course Development and Enhancement Awards

**Hana Pichova**, to create a new upper-level undergraduate course which examines the cultural trends and artistic achievements of mostly Jewish writers and film directors of the post-1989 Central Europe; **Michael Figueroa**, to develop a course on the music and historiography in Israel/Palestine and, with **Yaron Shemer**, bring in a visiting scholar, Edwin Seroussi; **Hanna Sprintzik** to support an Israeli popular culture lecture and film series; **Andrea Cooper**, to invite a visiting scholar to her Human Animals in Religion and Ethics course.

### Carolina Center for Jewish Studies Graduate Fellowship

This non-service fellowship supports a graduate student working in Jewish Studies in the advanced stages of his or her career at Carolina. The recipient of the fellowship for the academic year 2016-2017 is **Daniel Schindler**, department of Religious Studies. His dissertation analyzes archaeological pottery from Late Roman and Byzantine Galilean settlements.

### Graduate Student Recruitment Fellowship

These fellowships offer a \$7,000 stipend to enhance what departments are able to offer when recruiting prospective graduate students. Departments nominate prospective graduate students who have an academic and/or research interest related to the field of Jewish Studies. **Miguel Manuel Vargas**, incoming graduate student in the department of Religious Studies is the 2016-2017 recipient.

### TEP Graduate Student Recruitment Fellowship

These fellowships offer a \$18,000 stipend to enhance what departments are able to offer when recruiting prospective graduate students. Departments nominate prospective graduate students who have an academic and/or research interest related to the field of Jewish Studies. **Jocelyn Burney, '11**, incoming graduate student in the department of Religious Studies, is the 2016-2017 recipient.



PHOTOS: J. HABERMAN

### ADVISORY BOARD

On July 1st, **Daniel Singer, '05**, VP of Finance for FairWarning, Inc., joined the Center's Advisory Board.

The Center extends its thanks to **Alan Fields, '60, '65**, who completed his term of service to the Advisory Board on June 30th.

### ACADEMICS

This semester, the **academic requirements for the B.A. degree program have been updated** to better meet the goals of the program. To learn more about the requirements for the major in Religious Studies/Jewish Studies or the minors in Modern Hebrew or Jewish Studies, visit our web site at [jewishstudies.unc.edu](http://jewishstudies.unc.edu).

### NEWS FROM HUQUQ

Excavations this summer in the Late Roman (fifth century) synagogue at Huqoq, an ancient Jewish village in Israel's Lower Galilee, have revealed **stunning new mosaics** that decorated the floor. The excavations are directed by the Center's **Jodi Magness**. The mosaic panels decorating the floor of the synagogue's nave (center of the hall) portray two biblical stories: Noah's Ark and the parting of the Red Sea. The panel with Noah's Ark depicts an ark and pairs of animals, including elephants, leopards, donkeys, snakes, bears, lions, ostriches, camels, sheep and goats. The scene of the parting of the Red Sea shows Pharaoh's soldiers being swallowed by large fish, surrounded by overturned chariots with horses and chariot drivers.





Carolina Center for Jewish Studies  
Pettigrew Hall, Campus Box 3152  
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3152

*Fall 2016*

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

Please see the 2016-2017 schedule of events inside this newsletter. Visit our web site at [jewishstudies.unc.edu](http://jewishstudies.unc.edu) for more event information. If you'd like to receive email updates about upcoming events, please join our listserv by emailing us at [jewishstudies@unc.edu](mailto:jewishstudies@unc.edu) or signing up at our web site.

NONPROFIT  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
UNC-CHAPEL HILL

## *Research and Travel grant allows undergraduate to pursue Chajim Bloch archives*

BY TESLA LEE, '16

I had the unique privilege of traveling to New York City this winter, after receiving a generous research grant from the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies, to complete some archival research for my undergraduate senior honors thesis.

My thesis advisor and I had originally planned the trip for late January. However, due to adverse weather conditions and subsequent flight cancellations, my trip to the archives was postponed to mid-February. I left campus with an archival digital camera, a metro card, and a list of places I would need to visit in order to better understand my topic. Finding myself alone and in New York City for the first time, I mapped out a

feasible plan so that I could cover as much ground as possible. Since I was scheduled to stay in the city for only two days, I made arrangements to visit the Lower East Side Tenement Museum, Chajim Bloch's neighborhood in the Bronx, a nearby synagogue, to spend a day in Hasidic Williamsburg, and of course, to devote a full day to the archives at the YIVO Institute.

With unforgiving Monday morning snowflakes falling to the ground, I'll never forget making it to the doors of the Center for Jewish History on 16th St. only to find locked doors. The security guard informed me that it was President's Day, and that the archives were closed. And just like that, I learned rule number one of archival research: make sure said archives are in fact open. After leaving an unsure and altogether sad voicemail to my advisor, I found myself with nothing to do until my evening flight back to Raleigh. So I made my way over to Columbia University to work on restructuring my thesis around the unsuccessful attempt at completing my research. I did this for a few hours until it was time to head back to JFK. Then, upon check-in, I found out that my flight had been canceled until the following afternoon. Another round of phone calls and planning then took place, and I made arrangements to stay in a hotel near the archives.

The next morning, I was able to look through hundreds upon thousands of personal documents on my subject, Chajim Bloch (1881-1974), whom I have

been researching for over a year. These documents include correspondences with scholars and rabbis, to and from family, friends, and peers, as well as personal records, family histories, and much more. After registering at the YIVO Institute and locating the finding aid for these files, I was finally able to look at the aspects of my research I'd been unable to access from UNC, including these personal correspondences to important figures of the time period. I spent most of the day looking through these texts, taking notes, and getting help with basic Hebrew translations from the helpful employees at the archives.

Without receiving this research grant, my honors thesis would have been lacking many components which make it original and unique. Chajim Bloch saved everything, which means a large part of my work for this project was pre-cut out for me. Being able to physically touch and look through these preserved historical documents is not just an experience I will always remember, but it is also of continued use in developing the topic.

Despite the difficulties in itinerary, I am sincerely grateful for having had the opportunity to work with the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies to complete this research. I offer a genuine thank you for helping to make my first trip to New York City both atypical and rewarding. It is my hope that I can continue working on this subject in the future.



*Tesla Lee, '16 traveled to New York City in spring to utilize archives at the Center for Jewish History. Her research examined the life and work of Chajim Bloch.*