

FACULTY PROFILE

Karen Auerbach

"In a turn-of-the-century, once elegant building at 16 Ujazdowskie Avenue in the center of Warsaw, 10 Jewish families began reconstructing their lives after the Holocaust. While most surviving Polish Jews were making their homes in new countries, these families rebuilt on the rubble of the Polish capital and created new communities as they sought to distance themselves from the memory of a painful past."

So begins the publisher's description for "The House at Ujazdowskie 16" by Karen Auerbach, Carolina's newest Jewish studies faculty member. The book, published in 2013, tells of the personal journey of post-World War II Jewish families. The book is also the result of Auerbach's own journey, which began as a simple desire to learn more about her grandmother's life but then evolved into a major career change, years of living abroad, and an intensive research project.

"My grandmother was born in Argentina, the daughter of immigrants from Poland, raised in Warsaw, and moved to New York in 1923," explained Auerbach. "My desire to learn more about her life inspired me to travel to Poland when I was 21, and ever since that first trip, I have become more and more interested in the Polish people."

Subsequent trips to Poland ultimately led her to focus her research on the apartment building at Ujazdowskie 16. A former journalist for The Philadelphia Inquirer, Auerbach's professional curiosity was piqued, and she began researching the post-war histories of the building's residents.

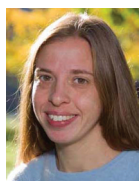
"In addition to working with the family members living in Poland, I also traveled to France, Germany and the U.S. to interview individuals who emigrated after the war," said Auerbach.



Family members who are featured in Auerbach's book are shown standing in front of the skeleton of Ujazdowskie 16, which was destroyed during World War II.

Auerbach lived in Poland, off and on, for nearly four years, during which time she learned Polish and began the journey that eventually led her away from journalism and into the world of academia.

She attended Brandeis, where she continued her research and earned her doctoral degree. She also studied Yiddish and began doing Yiddish translations, which surprisingly again brought her back to her grandmother.



AUERBACH

"My grandmother's first language was Yiddish but I never heard her speak it. But when I heard others speak Yiddish, I could hear the same speech patterns that my grandmother had when she spoke in English. I became very aware that the Yiddish language was an important part of her life," said Auerbach.

Auerbach came to Carolina from Monash University in Melbourne, Australia, where she was the Kronhill Lecturer in East European Jewish History and remains an affiliated research fellow in history. She previously held visiting positions at the University of Southampton in England, and Virginia Tech and Brown in the U.S. She was a postdoctoral fellow at the Frankel Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies at University of Michigan and held research positions at the Center for Advanced Holocaust

Studies in Washington and the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw. She holds a Ph.D. from Brandeis, and a B.A. from Rutgers.

"I am thrilled to be at Carolina, where there are distinguished History and Slavic studies departments, plus a rapidly growing Jewish studies program," added Auerbach, who is the inaugural Ambassador Stuart E. Eizenstat Fellow in Jewish History and Culture.

This semester she is teaching two courses: "The Search for Modern Jewish Identity" and "Ghettos and Shtetls? Urban Life in East European Jewish History." Next year she will continue teaching history courses with a focus on Jewish studies and Holocaust studies.

Auerbach's research interests focus on the social history of Polish Jews in the 19th and 20th century, especially issues relating to Jewish integration, urban life, and the evolution of Polish Jewish identifications. She is beginning another research project focusing on Jewish publishers of Polish books in the 19th and early 20th century.

"We are thrilled to welcome Karen Auerbach to Carolina. She has extensive teaching experience in Jewish history and Holocaust studies, and has published numerous articles in English, Polish and Yiddish," said Ruth von Bernuth, director of the Center. "Our students, faculty and the community overall will greatly benefit from her involvement on campus."



Ruth von Bernuth

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Assistant Professor, Department of Germanic
and Slavic Languages and Literatures

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This year, the Center continued to reach out to new academic fields like Jewish history and culture in the Iberian Peninsula and in Latin America and developed new courses on topics such as Argentinian Jewish culture.

From the Director's Desk *Expanding Opportunities*

As I sit to write this message, we are in the midst of the academic year, which brings new faculty, undergraduate and graduate students, as well as distinguished visitors to the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies.

This spring semester is Christopher Browning's last active semester on campus. Chris joined Carolina in 1999, and is the Frank Porter Graham Distinguished Professor of History. His research on the Holocaust is epoch making and changed the narrative of the history of the Holocaust. We certainly wish him well in his retirement and take comfort knowing that he will stay a frequent visitor of the Center. We are also confident that Holocaust studies will continue to thrive at Carolina under the direction of Karen Auerbach.

This year, the Center also continued to reach out to new academic fields. For example, the Center supports a group of graduate students and faculty who started to study Jewish history and culture in the Iberian Peninsula, Latin America (including the Caribbean) as well as Latino Jews in the United States. Supported by grants from the Center, other faculty also developed new courses on Latin American topics such as Argentinian Jewish culture. But this is only the tip of the iceberg — a remarkable 10 new courses in Jewish Studies were submitted to the *Undergraduate Bulletin* in the fall, including courses on Arab-Jews, the Expulsion of the Jews from Spain, and Urban Life in East

European Jewish History. We are thrilled to extend our course offerings for Carolina's undergraduate and graduate students.

We enjoyed a variety of visitors in the fall, starting with Gary Zola, who spoke about Lincoln and the Jews. His talk was followed by Moshe Rosman, who gave an academic lecture on the changing status of Jewish women in the early modern period. His talk and class visits were so inspiring that some of our undergraduate students choose to explore the topic further when writing their essays and final exams. At the end of the fall semester, alumnus Stuart Eizenstat, the newly appointed special adviser on Holocaust issues for Secretary of State John Kerry, lectured on the "Future of the Jews" in front of a packed audience.

This semester we have also welcomed Eric Cline, who explained how to excavate Armageddon, Arndt Engelhardt, who spoke about how to write a Jewish encyclopedia, and most recently, Michael Silber who shared insights on Jewish beards and Magda Teter who discussed how Jews made a difference in the early modern period. Soon, we will welcome Bill Morgan who will speak about Allen Ginsberg's Kaddish for his mother, Naomi Ginsberg.

We are able to support our undergraduate, graduate students, our faculty and to invite so many speakers due to your ongoing support. Thank you for your continued interest in, and support of, the Center.



This year, the Center hosted community lectures by Gary Zola, Stuart Eizenstat and Eric Cline.

Faculty and student Grant Awards, 2013–2014

News Briefs

ON THE (REALLY) BIG SCREEN: UNC archaeologist Jodi Magness is featured on the big screen — the *really* big screen — in the



new IMAX 3-D film, “Jerusalem”. Magness is the Kenan Distinguished Professor for Teaching Excellence and a member of the Center’s faculty steering committee. She specializes in

early Judaism and the archaeology of Palestine and is an expert on the Dead Sea Scrolls. The film has screened in several U.S. cities, with more screenings planned for the future. For details visit: <http://www.jerusalemthemovie.com/>.

THE UHLMAN FAMILY SEMINAR,

is offered by the UNC Program in the Humanities, in collaboration with the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies and Raleigh’s Burning Coal Theatre. The 2014 seminar, scheduled for April 12, 2014, is



titled: *Diaries, Dreams, and Desires: Anne Frank and Jewish Private Life*.

Presentations will explore the domestic worlds that Anne Frank and millions of Jewish families enjoyed before the

war, how they’ve been portrayed, and the disruption wrought on them by the Holocaust. Participants will consider how family documents and diaries play a role in remembering the Shoah, and how Frank coped with the hardships she faced with humor, an age-old resource for the Jewish people. The seminar will be capped with a presentation from Burning Coal Theatre on producing the “Diary” as a play, and will include performances of key scenes from the production.

Thanks to generous private support, this year the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies was able to offer more funding awards than ever before to undergraduate students, graduate students, and faculty.

Funding for these awards was made possible by the Frenkel Foundation, the Joseph Kittner Endowment Fund, the Howard R. Levine Student Excellence Fund, the Shapiro/ZBT Undergraduate Research Fund, the Rhonda A. and Robert Hillel Silver Fund for Graduate Support, the Jack O. Spies and Family Jewish Studies Fund, the Advisory Board Director’s Expendable Fund, and the Fund for Jewish Studies.

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH AND TRAVEL AWARD

Austin Glock Andrews, **David Culclasure**, **Lauren R Garrett**, and **Wilson Greene** to participate in the excavation of an ancient synagogue in Huqoq; **Shannon Brien** on the New York synagogue Emanu-El as a case study for Eastern European Jewry’s integration into a New York reform synagogue; and **Hannah Nemer** to conduct field research on the hidden Jews of Ethiopia.

GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH AND TRAVEL AWARDS

Brian Coussens, to work as the Assistant Area Supervisor of the modern Arab village and Byzantine synagogue at the excavation site in Huqoq; **Matthew Dougherty**, to research the “Jewish Indian Theory” as described in the personal papers of the Jewish playwright Mordecai Manuel Noah; **Bradley Erickson**, to work as a square supervisor in the ancient village area of the excavation in Huqoq; **Josh Parshall**, to conduct research on the activities of the Arbeter Ring (Workmen’s Circle) of Yiddish-speaking immigrants in the American South; **Daniel Schindler**, to study the pottery excavated from the site at Huqoq.

GRADUATE STUDENT SUMMER STIPENDS

Samuel Kessler, to travel to Israel to conduct research on the interaction of the Enlightenment and religion in 19th century Austro-Germany as exemplified in the life and work of Adolf Jellinek; **Annegret Oehme**, to travel to Europe to research the adaptations and transformations of *Wigalois*, a text that describes the adventures of an Arthurian knight, across different languages and different media from the 13th century to the 21st.

FACULTY RESEARCH AND TRAVEL AWARDS

Gregory Flaxman, to present his research on the philosophy of Baruch Spinoza and the cinematic experience at three conferences in Australia; **Joseph Lam**, to present his research on the Biblical Hebrew root *bhl* at the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting in Baltimore; **Yaron Shemer**, to present his research on the positioning of the Jew in two recent Egyptian documentaries at conferences in New Orleans and Seattle; **Hanna Sprintzik**, to travel to the International Conference on Hebrew Language in Israel to give a presentation to introduce new teaching methods aimed at improving the communication skills of students of Hebrew.

FACULTY COURSE DEVELOPMENT AND ENHANCEMENT AWARDS

Yaakov Ariel, to develop a course and workshop on Christian-Jewish relations in the Modern era; **Flora Cassen**, to develop three new Jewish history courses ranging in topic from the European Renaissance to the expulsion of Jews from Spain; **Joseph Lam**, to develop a custom course textbook for use in the Classical Hebrew course sequence; **Hanna Sprintzik**, to provide extracurricular activities and events for Hebrew language students; **Martin Sueldo**, to develop new courses on Argentine Jewish culture and film.

RHONDA A. AND ROBERT HILLEL SILVER GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP

This non-service fellowship, made possible through the generosity of Rhonda and Robert Hillel Silver, ’77, supports a graduate student working in Jewish Studies in the advanced stages of his or her career at Carolina. This fellowship enables a student to focus full time on his or her dissertation, improving quality and shortening the time required to complete a Ph.D. degree. Awarded to **Guy Shalev** for his project *Doctors with Borders*.

GRADUATE STUDENT RECRUITMENT FELLOWSHIPS AND TOP UP FELLOWSHIPS

These various fellowships, made possible thanks to generous private support, offer a stipend to enhance what departments are able to offer when recruiting prospective graduate students. Departments may nominate prospective graduate students who have an academic and/or research interest related to the field of Jewish Studies. Applications for the 2014–2015 academic year are currently under review.

HONOR ROLL OF DONORS

to the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies

July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013

Thank You!

The Carolina Center for Jewish Studies in UNC's College of Arts and Sciences gratefully thanks the donors who have supported its students, faculty, and programs during the University's most recent fiscal year, which ran from July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013. The Center's Honor Roll recognizes donors who made gifts during this period to support its expendable or endowed funds and whose gifts qualify them for membership in the following giving societies:

- Cornerstone Society – \$25,000 and above
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- Carolina Society – \$5,000 to \$9,999
- 1793 Society – \$2,000 to \$4,999
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Gifts made by young alumni qualify for the Dean's Circle when they meet the following criteria:

- Students: \$250
- Classes 2004 – 2008: \$1000 and above
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The Honor Roll does not include pledge balances, bequests, or other planned gifts to the Center for Jewish Studies. This list has been prepared with great care to ensure its accuracy. To report a mistake, please contact Margaret Costley at (919) 843-0345 or Margaret.Costley@unc.edu.

Thank you, once again, for generously supporting the work of the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies.

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STUDENT PROFILES

By Erika Huckestein

Jocelyn Burney, '14

Jocelyn Burney, '14, had a childhood dream of being an archeologist. "My mom has a great picture of me showing off an ancient Egypt-themed Lego kit that I got for my eighth birthday," said Burney. "I stayed up past my bedtime and built the whole thing in one night!" Burney's interest in religion developed more recently, sparked by her academic pursuits at Carolina. The Undergraduate Research and Travel Grant she received from the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies enabled her to pursue both of these interests. Burney, a Religious Studies and Archaeology major, spent last summer participating in the ongoing archeological excavation of the Huqoq synagogue in Israel led by Jodi Magness, the Kenan Distinguished Professor for Teaching Excellence in Early Judaism, Department of Religious Studies. She plans to return to Huqoq for the summer 2014 dig.

While Burney's work focused on the domestic area at Huqoq, where discoveries are rooted in the realities of everyday life, the impact of that work still had the potential to be quite profound. Burney recalled, "One of my favorite moments last season was finding a pile of nails in the doorway of a house. The wooden door was lost to time, but you could easily picture it

swinging on its hinges. Discoveries like that remind us that we are working in someone's home, which is a powerful and intimate experience."

Students such as Burney who work at the excavation site at Huqoq quickly learn that archeology has little in common with the Hollywood-style portrayals featured in the Indiana Jones films. However, Burney stressed that, "We still have plenty of 'ah-ha!' moments, not from finding hidden treasure, but from piecing together evidence to answer questions about the site."

For Burney this experience was invaluable. Not only is she able to use material from the excavations in order to write her senior honors thesis, but she has also learned another important lesson. "Hands-on interaction with history is an experience no textbook can convey. Working at Huqoq has enriched my studies at Carolina by giving me a holistic familiarity with the region that I study. The ability to picture landscapes and locations gives my studies more depth and meaning."

Burney's plans for the future are aimed at fulfilling her childhood dream, made more real by her experiences at Huqoq. She is applying to graduate programs in religious studies and will continue to spend her summers at the dig in Huqoq.

Burney showing off some of the findings from Huqoq.



Burney, in front row wearing the grey Carolina shirt, and Botros, far right in middle row, with mosaics found in Huqoq.



Tony Botros, '14

Tony Botros, '14, is a chemistry and biology double major from Milwaukee, Wisconsin who plans on enrolling in medical school next fall. Botros also serves as the senior class vice president for the 2013–2014 academic year. Though he is actively engaged in many activities on Carolina's campus, Botros's classroom experiences also motivated him to travel beyond the boundaries of North Carolina.

After taking an archeology class and realizing the importance of studying and researching in the field, Botros spent last summer participating in the ongoing archeological excavation of the Huqoq synagogue in Israel. He recalled, "When I heard about Professor Magness's dig in Israel, I saw it as a unique opportunity to get first-hand exposure to archaeology."

Botros learned a great deal from his participation in the dig—about archeology, and the region more generally. He explained that, "The biggest thing I took away from this is that I learned how much of a science archaeology actually is. Being only accustomed to bench work in Carolina's Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center, I didn't expect archaeology to follow

the same scientific method as the physical and biological sciences. The project had a proposed hypothesis, and we collected specimens in a very precise and meticulous manner in order to prove or reject this hypothesis."

Being in Israel also allowed Botros to get a better sense of the region than strictly classroom instruction could provide. "Throughout my time in Israel, I had the opportunity to talk with Druze, Bedouin, Jews from all different geographical backgrounds, Palestinians, and Christians. I gained a much fuller and diverse insight of the region."

For Botros working on the dig site when the mosaics were uncovered was a very powerful experience. He emphasized that "being one of the first people in 1,500 years to set eyes on the beautiful mosaics is a memory I'll never forget." Though his future plans include medical school, Botros also intends to remain involved in archeology in the Holy Land, including a return to Huqoq in summer 2014. His commitment is so strong, that even as a student Botros has already made a philanthropic donation to the program that allowed him to have such incredible experiences.



Botros, at the front of the camel, experiencing a new form of travel.

Our 2013–2014 public events, encompassing evening lectures, lunchtime academic seminars, the two-day Uhlman Family Seminar, and musical performances have come to a conclusion and we thank all of you who joined us.

We are now busy planning next year's program. Speakers, topics and dates will be listed in the next edition of this newsletter, posted on our Web site and Facebook pages, and promoted in advance to our list serv members.

Please visit jewishstudies.unc.edu for upcoming event information. If you'd like to receive updates about upcoming events, please join our listserv by emailing us at ccjs@unc.edu. In the email message, please provide both your email and mailing addresses.



Karen M. Gil
Dean
College of Arts and Sciences

*Carolina is becoming a leader
in the field, by enhancing
understanding of Jewish
history and culture on campus
and in the world.*

Message From the Dean

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the College of Arts and Sciences, I want to thank you for your commitment to learning, discovery and engagement through the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies.

The Center is critical to the College's academic mission: to create new knowledge and seek solutions to the world's greatest challenges, educate our students and prepare them for leadership in a fast-changing global society, and contribute meaningfully to North Carolina, the nation and the world.

This year, we were thrilled to welcome Chancellor Carol Folt, Provost Jim Dean, and one of the most impressive new groups of faculty for the College in recent memory. Our new colleagues include Karen Auerbach, the inaugural Stuart E. Eizenstat Fellow and Assistant Professor in the Department of History. She is a rising star focusing on the social history of Polish Jews after the Holocaust. Private support made it possible for us to recruit her to Carolina.

I am also delighted that Ruth von Bernuth is the

new Director of the Center. An Assistant Professor in the Department of Germanic and Slavic Languages and Literatures, she is an excellent scholar of German and Yiddish literature. We welcome her leadership.

With your support, the Carolina Center has made remarkable gains. Jewish Studies now has an outstanding assemblage of faculty, a robust public lecture series, two successful academic minors (Jewish Studies and Modern Hebrew), and an exciting new undergraduate major. As a result, Carolina is becoming a leader in the field, by enhancing understanding of Jewish history and culture on campus and in the world.

Your support remains critical for the Center to reach its goals for the decade. Significant funding for graduate students is especially important, so that Carolina can produce a new generation of leading teachers and scholars in Jewish Studies.

Jewish Studies at Carolina would not be where it is today without you. I look forward to working with you to ensure that the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies continues to lead.