

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE JEWISH STUDIES PROGRAM @ UD

From the Director



Dr. Polly Zavadviker

As we look back on the previous year, it is a pleasure to share news of the Jewish Studies Program at the University of Delaware. We have seen continued growth and creativity from our students, faculty, curriculum and public programs. We saw our largest graduating class of minors from the program in spring 2018, a testament to our students' rapidly growing interest in the academic study of Jewish culture and history.

The Jewish Studies Program has continued to expand its curriculum and relationships with departments on campus. In collaboration with Women and Gender Studies and Philosophy, we created a new minor program, "Women in Religion." As part of the curriculum, I taught a survey course on Women in Judaism in Fall 2018, where students explored the place of women in Judaism from biblical times to the present. In spring 2018, we also launched the first introductory course on world Jewish history from ancient to present times, together with the Department of History. Our curriculum continues to develop with the addition of energetic new instructor David Winkler in the Department of Language, Literature and Culture.

We hosted an impressive lineup of scholars and performers in 2018. In April, the Program hosted Holocaust survivor and Cantor David Wisnia, as well as his grandson Avi Wisnia, for a special concert event for Holocaust Remem-

brance Week entitled "From Generation to Generation: Remembering the Holocaust Through Story and Song." Also in April, the Program co-sponsored the Department of History's Harrington Lecture by renowned historian Natalie Zemon Davis. This lecture touched on Davis's research on Lazăr Șăineanu (1859-1934), a pioneering philologist and folklorist. In October, the Jewish Studies Program co-sponsored a performance of *The Merchant of Venice* by Delaware Shakespeare. In November, the Program co-sponsored a documentary screening of *My Dear Children: The Untold Story of the Pogroms* at the Siegel JCC in Wilmington, as well as a guest lecture on campus by Dr. Laura Levitt, Professor of Religion, Jewish Studies, and Gender at Temple University to launch the new Women & Religion minor.

I look forward to the continued growth of our program this upcoming year and to sharing developments with you at the end of 2019! My warmest wishes to all.

Student Spotlight: Rachel Bohny



Rachel Bohny

Tell us a little about yourself and why you chose to become a Jewish Studies minor.

I am a Junior Marketing and English Dual Major with minors in Jewish Studies with Language and International Business. I chose to become a Jewish Studies minor because I myself, am Jewish, and I wanted to know more about my culture and the history of my people. I wanted to be able to better relate to my religion and really discover why I continue to practice the religion. So far, I have learned a lot of

amazing and inspiring things that have reinforced my practicing of the Jewish religion.

What inspired you to take on an internship with the Jewish Historical Society of Delaware during the summer of 2018?

Professor Horowitz was the Professor of the HIST/JWST327: Jews, Commerce, and Business course that I took in Fall of 2017, and having only 7 people in the class, we

Continued next page

Student Spotlight: Rachel Bohny

all grew to know each other pretty well. He came up to me at the end of the year and proposed the idea of working with the Jewish Historical Society and doing research with them. I had always wanted to get more involved in the Jewish Studies program and continue to expand my knowledge of the Jewish religion, so it fit really well into my personal ideals. When I met Gail, the archivist for the Jewish Historical Society, I knew that I would have fun over the summer.

What tasks were you assigned? What did you find most interesting about the work you were doing?

I was assigned with going through the archives and compiling information to write an essay based on the information that I find. Originally, we had structured it so that I would be writing 2 essays: one with the history of all 4 Synagogues in Delaware, the other a biography of all of the prominent Jewish figures in Delaware. We ended up overestimating, and I actually

wrote a single, 20-page essay on a single synagogue in Delaware, Adas Kodesch Shel Emeth. I found everything to do with the histories fascinating, especially when some names kept popping up everywhere. It was also interesting to find things that weren't previously written into the histories, like some court cases that happened involving the synagogues and some of its members and the way that the Wilmington/Delaware Jewish Community came together and were always willing to help those who needed it.

How did this work relate to your studies at UD?

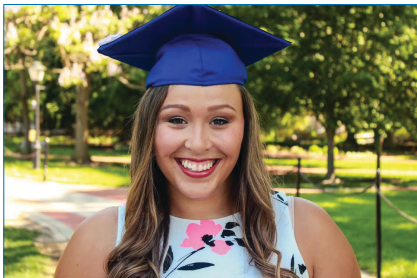
This research allowed for me to get more involved with the Jewish Studies department, which is something that I have had as a goal since freshman year. It also brought me more into the realm of research that involved archival work. It was good experience for if I ever need to work through a lot of information effectively. The

rows of boxes eventually excited me (after I got over the initial shock of over 100 boxes) for what was held inside and all of the cool things that the synagogues did.

What would you recommend to students seeking similar internship opportunities?

I would definitely recommend to students who want an internship in not only a non-profit, but also who love to discover new things. I never knew what would come out of each box and each pamphlet. It was also really nice learning how to work with different types of people. Some days, I was in the Reading Room doing archival work, and other days, I was out and about at the synagogues meeting congregants and learning how their community works today.

Dr. Vivian Z. Klaff Memorial Award Winners 2018



Juliet Felsen. I have always sought more opportunities to become more involved with my Jewish heritage since I became a Bat Mitzvah. Before I had even declared a major, I declared my Jewish Studies Minor, as I always knew that I was interested in continuing my Jewish education. I have been fortunate to travel to Israel 6 different times through various teen and young adult programs (Diller Teen Fellows, Maccabee, Birthright, Onward Israel) and to be able to call Israel my second home. I was (and still am) extremely passionate about learning

Hebrew and more about Israel's culture and politics, so that I could utilize my knowledge and gain even more from my experiences in Israel. Along with my minor, I became very active in Jewish Life at UD through Hillel as the Vice President of Challah for Hunger and IsraelU and as a Campus Engagement Intern. I am extremely proud and lucky to have been a member of the Jewish community at UD. Going forward, I am very excited to be attending Graduate School and receiving my Masters in Occupational Therapy at Florida Gulf Coast University. I know that I will take all that I have learned at UD and apply it to my future studies and throughout my life as a Jewish woman.

Erica Strauss. I am a graduate of the University of Delaware with a Bachelor's of Art in Public Policy. I am moving to Dallas, TX to become a corps member with Teach for America. With my Jewish

Studies minor, I learned about the history of my culture and my family. I was able to participate in interesting conversations centered around Judaism and learn Hebrew along the way. I connected with other Jewish individuals on campus in order to fully engage with the Jewish community. My favorite part of my minor was being able to apply it while I worked at Union for Reform Judaism Camp Harlam throughout my summers in college!



Holocaust Remembrance Day 2018



On April 11, 2018, the University of Delaware was privileged to welcome Holocaust survivor and liberator Cantor David Wisnia, along with his grandson Avi Wisnia, for a special presentation entitled, "From Generation to Generation: Remembering the Holocaust Through Story and Song." David, accompanied by Avi on piano, shared his vocal talents, singing traditional cantorial selections and songs from his childhood in Poland. This special concert event was co-sponsored by the University of Delaware Jewish Studies Program, the Halina Wind Preston Holocaust Education Committee, the Jewish Federation of Delaware, UD Hillel, and The Danielle Rose Paiken Foundation.

This event coincided with Yom Hashoah, or Holocaust Remembrance Day, and was a valuable and moving experience. Interspersed between the beautiful songs, David shared difficult memories of his time as a Jewish boy coming of age in Warsaw, Poland during World War II. He poignantly started with the idea that "most people live and remember their lives in chronological order, but I see mine as two different lives – one before World War II and one after." The trauma he experienced at the hands of Hitler's war machine was palpable as he described coming home from work one day, "I discovered my freshly murdered family, and that thought would never leave me. Terror, heartbreak, horror, and so little time to mourn."

From that day forward, David was torn away from his normal life, like so many others, and found himself in the notorious concentration camp Auschwitz, or *Oświęcim* in Polish. During the almost three years he spent there, he was

classified as a privileged prisoner because of his singing ability, which he used to entertain the guards and officers within the camp. This classification meant that he "could live another day," though as the war progressed this guarantee would no longer be true. As the Allies and Red Army advanced and began liberating camps, the Nazis scrambled to destroy evidence of their atrocities. While David

was forced on a death march from Auschwitz to Dachau, he realized he would not survive in the new camp and managed to escape.

When David heard the rumbling of tanks, he was terrified of seeing the Nazi iron cross; however, as they drew closer, he saw the American white star insignia. Since Nazis were impersonating Americans, he needed reassurance and received that when three soldiers spoke to him in English, Polish and Yiddish. He was rescued and welcomed as an honorary member to the 506th Parachute Infantry of the 101st Airborne Division and continued on with them as they liberated camps throughout Europe. David proudly wore his Screaming Eagles hat and jacket. He said of those troops, and his new homeland America, "I am 150% American, they are my family."



David's tragic but inspiring story of struggle and survival is one that resonates. He reminded the audience that of the 580 men with whom he entered Auschwitz, he is the only remaining survivor. In sharing his story, he is sharing the story of all of those men, of his family, and of the millions who perished during the Holocaust.

Nora Carleson, Ph.D. student in the History of American Civilization program and Teaching Assistant for Dr. Polly Zavadviker's History of the Jewish Holocaust course at the University of Delaware, shares her reaction to the program and its importance.

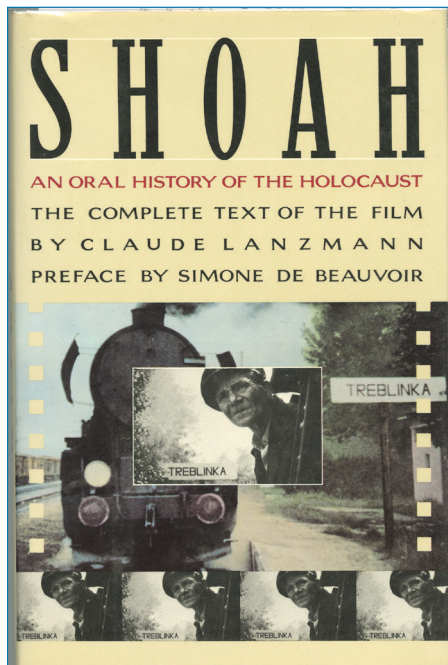
"I often find it difficult engaging large classrooms of students who routinely quote the all too familiar trope that "history is boring." However, in teaching the history of the Jewish Holocaust this semester, I have encountered something different; a marked interest in the history being taught. I am convinced that this interest stems from bringing public history programming to the classroom. This semester, students heard from the Chief Conservator from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, a faculty member who is a second generation Holocaust survivor, and now Auschwitz survivor Cantor David Wisnia.

These students are among the last generation that will be able to directly hear the stories of Holocaust survivors. While oral histories and documentaries do a great deal to personalize and relay the significance of first person accounts, there is something inherently different about being in a room with a survivor and feeling the presence of their memories and experiences flooding back.

With a voice filled with the emotion of loss, love, and faith, Mr. Wisnia teaches student and adult alike that in the darkest of times and facing the deepest of hatreds, it is our memories and voices that keep the past alive—perhaps staving off horrors of the future. Through his story, the voices of the millions who lost their lives, homes, and culture under the Nazi regime resonate. Through his songs, we see the persistence of human spirit and a memory that cannot be forgotten. The students I have spoken with echo these feelings. For them, Mr. Wisnia brought alive a story so often distant, though ever present, and brought their studies to a personal level.

Jewish Studies at UD's Special Collections

The University of Delaware Library Museums & Press presented two small exhibitions in Fall 2018 in tribute to Claude Lanzmann and Dorothy Kraushar Finger, two whose life legacies include Holocaust remembrance work. Library sources (listed below) from Special Collections, the Film and Video Collections, and circulating collections were used in the exhibitions.



Claude Lanzmann, who passed away in July 2018, was a French-born journalist, editor and film director, best known for his documentary film *Shoah*. A nine-hour oral history of the Holocaust that was 12 years in the making, *Shoah* is considered to be the definitive film related to that horrific event. Born in 1925, Lanzmann and his family were assimilated French Jews of Eastern European descent. As a high school student during the Nazi occupation of France, Lanzmann and his father joined the Communist Resistance. In the post-war years, Lanzmann began his career as a journalist and had a long editorial and personal relationship with Simone de Beauvoir. His work on *Shoah* began in the 1970s and was unusual in its making as it included no historical film, photographs, or other material evidence from the past. Lanzmann filmed landscapes and recorded remembrances from victims and their contemporaries who either participated

DOROTHY KRAUSHAR FINGER

1929-2018



In Memoriam

in or observed the inhumanities of the Nazi extermination plans. Paul Berman, in a 2012 *New York Times* review of Lanzmann's memoir, *A Patagonian Hare*, quoted Lanzmann, "The subject of the film would be death itself, death rather than survival." Lanzmann's use of "shoah" (catastrophe) as the title of his film brought international recognition to the gravity and biblical meaning of this Hebrew word.

The second exhibition honored Delawarean Dorothy Kraushar Finger, co-founder of the interfaith, non-profit Halina Wind Preston Holocaust Education Committee at the Jewish Federation of Delaware, who died on November 5, 2018. Dorothy was born in 1929 in Satnislawow, Poland, and was the sole survivor of her immediate family and all her Polish relatives. She endured living in three ghettos, a forced labor camp, hiding in a forest for a year, catching typhus, and relocation to a displaced persons center. Her uncle and relatives in Wilmington brought her to America after the war, where she graduated from Wilmington High School and the Wilmington General Hospital School of Nursing. Dorothy recorded her story for a collaboration between the Halina Wind Preston Holocaust Education Committee and Yale University, as well for the Shoah Foundation. Dorothy's oral history, along with testimonies from other Delawareans who

were survivors, Righteous Gentiles, or liberators, is preserved in an archival collection in Special Collections. She bore witness to the Holocaust by speaking to countless students, teachers, clergy, police and numerous community groups in Delaware. *Es Brent / It is burning* (2015) is her memoir of the Holocaust, but the book also includes news clippings, tributes, appointment letters, and heartfelt thanks from students and other grateful listeners.

Library resources:

Finger, Dorothy Krause. 2015. *Es Brent / It is Burning : a memoir of the Holocaust*. [Place of publication not identified]: [publisher not identified]. Morris Library: D810.J4 F56x 2015

Finger, Dorothy. Interview, December 10, 1989. Halina Wind Preston Holocaust Education Committee. Holocaust Testimonies Project. Special Collections

Lanzmann, Claude, Ziva Postec, Dominique Chapuis, Jimmy Glasberg, William Lubtchansky, Serge Toubiana, Caroline Champetier, et al. 2013. *Shoah*. Morris Library: DVD 13198

Lanzmann, Claude, and Frank Wynne. 2012. *The Patagonian Hare: A Memoir*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux. Morris Library: PN1998.3.L385 A3 2012

Lanzmann, Claude. 1985. *Shoah: an oral history of the Holocaust : the complete text of the film*. New York: Pantheon Books. Morris Library: D810.J4 L275513 1985

Spivack, Emily. 2014. *Worn stories*. New York : Princeton Architectural Press. Spivack's book collects more than sixty "memoirs in miniature" told through clothing-inspired narratives. Dorothy Finger's chapter is about a suit of clothing made from a bolt of cloth that survived from her mother's department store in Poland. Made after the war in Wilmington, this was Dorothy's only tangible link to her mother, who was murdered by the Nazis. Morris Library: GT524 .S66 2014

Spring 2019 Courses

Religion and Philosophy

JWST101: INTRODUCTION TO JUDAISM

M/W 3:35 - 4:50

Instructor: Rabbi Michael Beals, mbeals@udel.edu

This course will introduce students to practices, beliefs, and traditions of Judaism. Students will interact with bible excerpts, short stories, films, documentaries, and engage in lively discussion.

Hebrew Language

HEBR/JWST 106: HEBREW II - ELEMENTARY / INTERMEDIATE

M/W 1:25 - 2:15 & T/TH 2:00 - 2:50

Instructor: Eynat Gutman, eynat@udel.edu

Continuation of Elementary Hebrew. Increasing mastery of the basic skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing through texts, conversations and songs.

HEBR/JWST205: HEBREW CONVERSATION

T/TH 3:30 - 4:45

Instructor: Eynat Gutman, eynat@udel.edu

Practical use of Hebrew by means of discussions and oral reports on a variety of topics. Emphasis on improvement of conversational skills for social situations, as well as grammatical competence and reading comprehension through multicultural themes including the revival of the Hebrew language and various issues related to Hebrew culture.

History & Politics

HIST/JWST254: JEWISH HOLOCAUST 1933-1945

M/W/F 11:15 - 12:05

Instructor: Polly Zavadivker, pollyz@udel.edu

Focuses on the infamous "Final Solution," with particular emphasis on the roots of Anti-Semitism, National Socialist policies and plans, ghetto and camp life, the Einsatzgruppen, resistance, the politics of rescue and the art and literature of the Holocaust.

HIST268-032: SEMINAR: AMERICAN ETHNIC IDENTITIES

M 3:35 - 6:35

Instructor: Rebecca Davis, rldavis@udel.edu

This course explores the meanings of "ethnicity" in the twentieth-century U.S. and their connection to the histories of race relations and immigration. We will create a collaborative class website with examples of ethnic artifacts and historical interpretations of their contexts and meanings.

HIST/JWST327: JEWS & FOOD

M/W 5:00 - 6:15

Instructor: Roger Horowitz, rh@udel.edu

This class explores the many foods associated with Jews and the kosher laws governing what is acceptable for Jews. It will range widely over time and space, following the movement of Jews and changes in their foods from the ancient Middle East to modern America, including falafel, bagels, meat, & wine.

LLCU/JWST345: MODERN ISRAEL: HISTORY & CULTURE

M/W 3:35 - 4:50

Instructor: Eynat Gutman, eynat@udel.edu

Many factors contribute to a diverse and intriguing Israeli society. Topics include the roots of Zionism, the concept of the Israeli Sabra, the effects of the Holocaust, ethnic groups and the Arab-Israeli conflict, through history, film, literature and music.

HIST/JWST363: MODERN JEWISH HISTORY

M/W/F 9:05 - 9:55

Instructor: Polly Zavadivker, pollyz@udel.edu

Following the French Revolution Jewish life throughout Europe and the US underwent significant changes with respect to legal equality, civic rights, and religious reform. This course will focus on the ways in which Jewish history transformed and was transformed by the experience of modernity.

POSC/JWST482: AMERICA IN THE MIDDLE EAST

M/W 3:35 - 4:50

Instructor: Daniel Green, dgreen@udel.edu

Examines history of America's engagement with an emphasis on issues since 1979. We will spend most of the semester on America's involvement in regional oil politics, Middle East peace process, first and second Iraq Wars, relations with Iran, plans for Middle East democratization and the Bush II administration.

Literature & Culture

JWST 201: ISSUES & IDEAS IN JEWISH STUDIES

W 12:20 - 1:10

Instructor: David Winkler, dwinkler@udel.edu

A forum for scholars to share their thoughts and research on the culture, literature and history of the Jewish people. Topics range from historical reviews to contemporary issues.

ENGL/JWST202: BIBLICAL & CLASSICAL LITERATURE

T/TH 2:00 - 3:15

Instructor: Miranda Wilson, wils-onm@udel.edu

Study of Greek, Roman, and Biblical literatures, set in their mythical, historical and cultural contexts, introducing appropriate critical concepts.

Spring 2019 Highlights

Photojournalist **Silvina Frydlewski** will be visiting campus from Argentina during the spring semester. She will be delivering lectures throughout February and an exhibition of her work will be on view at the Siegel JCC in Wilmington, DE beginning on February 8th. Further details to follow.

Historian **Hasia Diner** will be speaking on campus on Holocaust Remembrance Day, Thursday, May 2nd. Further details to follow.

jspnews

THE JEWISH STUDIES PROGRAM @ UD

WINTER 2019

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Faculty News

Leslie Reidel (Theatre) is continuing to offer his cross-listed course on “The influence of Jews in the development of popular American Culture.” The course began several years ago as an experimental program and is now a regular course offering. He will be on sabbatical leave during the spring term and will be researching new material for the course with a particular focus on the Holocaust and humor. This interest follows the release last year of the documentary film, *The Last Laugh*, which examined the question through the eyes of several prominent American humorists, as well as the fascinating responses of two women who were Holocaust survivors. Leslie finds the question of humor in the face of dire circumstances facing Jews particularly compelling, in the wake of the unprecedented rise in anti-Semitic acts in the United States.

Yda Schreuder (Geography) has published a new book: *Amsterdam’s Sephardic Merchants and the Atlantic Sugar Trade in the Seventeenth Century* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2019). Her book examines the role of Amsterdam’s Sephardic merchants in the westward expansion of sugar production and trade in the seventeenth century through a historical-geographic perspective.

Sarah Wasserman (English) is a regional faculty fellow this year at the Wolf Humanities Center at the University of Pennsylvania. She recently published two pieces of public writing: “My Problem with

OOO or, Reflections on a McNugget” appeared on the Stanford Arcade Blog at <https://arcade.stanford.edu/blogs/my-problem-ooo-or-reflections-mcnugget>. A column on “Digital Intimacies” appeared in the September issue of the L.A.-based fashion magazine, *Flaunt*. Recent presentations include a talk “On Typography, On Transience” (Cornell) and “How We Write (Well)” at the Annual Conference for the Association for the Study of The Arts of the Present. She completed her book manuscript, *The Death of Things: Ephemera in America* and has an article on Ralph Ellison and Chester Himes currently under review.

Polly Zavadviker (History) continues to research Jewish social activism in First World War Russia and has an article currently under review. She appears in the documentary film *My Dear Children*, about the life of Feiga Shamis, a mother of 12 during the Russian Civil War pogroms, which is screening now at film festivals and on public television nationwide. Recent presentations include “Relics from the Rubble: The Rescue of Jewish Culture in Russia’s First World War” (Stockton University of New Jersey); and “The Witness and Document: Jewish War Writing in the Work of S. Dubnov and S. An-sky” (Yeshiva University). She recently received a planning grant from the Leonid Nevzlin Research Center at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, in support of the conference “Legacies of Pogroms” to be held in May 2019 in New York. Her public writing includes articles in the March, August, and December 2018 issues of *J-VOICE* magazine.