



# Editorial

Miriam Zimmerman, who has been contributing to this publication for 25 years, was visiting Indiana recently to attend her high school reunion in Terre Haute. (See her column on page 14.) She stopped by The Children’s Museum in Indianapolis because she wanted to see the growing sapling I had written about in our May 1 issue. It had been planted in front of the building on April 14.

That sapling (See photo on page 20.) is from the chestnut tree that stood outside the secret annex in Amsterdam where Anne Frank hid with her family during World War II. She had written about it in her diary. It gave hope to a teenage girl who was barred from the outside world for two years.

The timing of my meeting with Miriam was ideal because we were able to watch a live performance inside the museum where an exact replica of the secret annex exists. An actress, Christa Grimmer portraying Miep Gies, a female employee of Otto Frank who aided the family while in hiding, did a short monologue. Afterward she answered questions from the audience and then a short film was shown.

Even though Anne’s story is well known to Miriam and me, we both had tears in our eyes at the conclusion of the skit and then the film. Miriam’s late father was a Holocaust survivor from Germany and she said the accent of the actress was “spot on”. She also looked just like Gies did when she was young.

Since I have written extensively about The Children’s Museum and their exhibit on “The Power of Children: Making a Difference,” I won’t go into more details now except to say the museum is doing a superb job teaching children about the disastrous effects of prejudice, intolerance, and discrimination. This leaves one feeling uplifted instead of depressed.

Annually, The Children’s Museum holds The Power of Children Awards open to children nationally in grades 6–11. This is intended to honor and further empower youth who have made a significant impact on the lives of others, demonstrated selflessness, and exhibited a commitment to service and the betterment of society. To hear what has been created by these award-winning children is truly inspiring. Applications can be found at this site: [www.childrensmuseum.org](http://www.childrensmuseum.org).

As I wrote in our Indiana edition, if any time of year could be considered special for Jews – it is now. Besides several holidays in a row all taking place in September this year, many who do not attend services at any other time,

# About the Cover

This artwork by Suzy Friedman depicts the Jewish holidays we celebrate and observe throughout the year. Friedman created it with an eye for being decorative as well as meaningful. She finds it enjoyable to move from one image to the other within this piece and remember celebrations with family and friends.

This mosaic would be a nice piece for a synagogue, Jewish Community Center, Jewish Federation office, or Jewish museum. For further information or to order, contact her at [suzyfriedmanarts.com](http://suzyfriedmanarts.com), email her at [suzyfriedman](mailto:suzyfriedman)



Friedman

(see Cover, page 4)



show up for the High Holidays. In a society where Jews are only 2 percent of the population, this large turnout provides a sense of community, a feeling of belonging and being a part of something bigger than oneself.

I had the privilege to worship in some of our local synagogues for *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*. It was wonderful to experience the warm welcome from the rabbis and congregants in the different houses of worship. What I noticed this year were more similarities than differences among the denominations. Every congregation had inspiring *shofar* blowing ceremonies, interesting sermons on diverse topics and Jews praying intently. It was heartwarming to see and hear a children’s service with young children singing and participating.

On Sun., Sept. 22, I attended an evening *minyan* in a beautiful wooden *sukkah* next to a water fountain in a pond. (See photo on page 20.) It was a gorgeous day, about 68 degrees, with a crystal clear blue sky. Hearing the flowing water from the fountain hitting the quiet water below in unison with the sounds of our uttered prayers was a mesmerizing experience. With the fragrant smell of the *etrog* and a butterfly fluttering all around, I felt like I had been transported to *olam habah*, the world to come.

As I also mentioned in our Indiana edition, I finally met Bernie De Koven, who lives in Indianapolis. He wrote a regular column for this newspaper from 2009–2011 in which he gave numerous examples on how to include more fun into this brief game called life that we play while here for approximately 75 years. I met him at the Irvington neighborhood bookstore where he was launching his new book, *The Well-Played*

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*The Jewish*  
**Post & Opinion**  
Jewish News and Opinion since 1935.

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*Game: A Player’s Philosophy.*

Without even looking in the book, I can guess what it is about. Bernie understands better than most that life is simply a game and the goal is not about winning or even necessarily keeping score but about how to make the most of our shared time together. If his book is anything at all like his columns, reading it will be time well (see Editorial, page 3)

# Chassidic Rabbi

BY RABBI BENZION COHEN

## Good News

Here is some good news. A few weeks ago Friday night I walked to *shul* with four grandsons (ages 5–10). At one point they decided to have a race to a nearby light pole. They ran off. I said to myself “That looks like fun!” Then they decided to race again. This time I joined them. The good news?

1. I have grandchildren, *baruch Hashem*.
2. They love their grandfather, *baruch Hashem*.
3. They walk to *shul* with him Friday night, *baruch Hashem*.
4. I can still run, *baruch Hashem*.
5. My 7 and 10 year old grandsons can really run fast, *baruch Hashem*.
6. I came in third, and not last, *baruch Hashem*

The moral of the story? “Serve the Lord with joy!” Life is like a cup that is half full. If you look at the half that is full, you can always be happy. If you look at the half that is empty, you can easily get depressed. I could have said “*Oy vey*, I am getting old! My 7 and 10 year old grandchildren outran me.”

This is especially important now, as we celebrate the holiday of *Succos*, “The season of our rejoicing.”

We all need happiness. I consider myself very fortunate that I found it. Until the age of 18 I lived a rather secular life. I looked hard for a good time, for happiness, but could not find it. I tried, unsuccessfully, to be popular. I tried out for sports, but did not make the teams. (Now I realize that even those who were popular and successful at sports were not much happier than me.)

I finally found true happiness 44 years ago. I looked into *Lubavitch* and found there happy people. I decided to try it out. I started to learn Torah and do *mitzvahs*. As it says in Psalm 19: “The Torah of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul... The precepts of the Lord are just, rejoicing the heart. The mitzvah of the Lord is clear, enlightening the eyes.”

One mitzvah that brings me a lot of happiness is “Love thy neighbor”. When I am able to help someone, to cheer up someone, they feel better. And I also feel much better, that I was able to help them. Now I go five days a week to the geriatric ward of our local hospital to help these people to pray, to give them hope and cheer them up. Their happiness is my happiness. And nothing makes me happier than giving one of my children or grandchildren a big loving smile, and getting an even bigger smile back.

## To a Happy and Healthy New Year

BY SHAINA HERRING

The New Year is the perfect time to set new goals about our fitness and nutrition, but it is often challenging to do so because of the lavish meals that are traditionally associated with the holiday. Now, with *Rosh Hashana* behind us, *Sukkot* provides us with time to relax and enjoy the crisp fall air, eat delicious seasonal foods such as pumpkin and squash, and look toward the year ahead. In addition, *Sukkot* is a holiday filled with physical rituals – we use all of our strength to build the *sukkah* structure, eat and sleep in it, and shake the *lulav* and *etrog* – so what a great opportunity to reflect on how we can nourish our body in the upcoming year.

Along with these and other physical rituals, there are many time-honored Jewish teachings which emphasize healthy living. For example, Deuteronomy 4:15 implores us to be “extremely protective of [our] lives,” from which the rabbis derive the concept of *shmirat haguf*, or protecting one’s body. Today this is viewed to include the protection of physical, mental, and spiritual health.

In addition, the rabbis in the *Talmud* emphasize the importance of exercise and caring for the body, which they view as a container for the soul. Similarly, Maimonides stresses the importance of staying healthy, since humans are made in the divine image. He teaches that “by keeping the body in health and vigor one walks in the ways of God.” Given the historical Jewish emphasis on caring for our health, our Jewish community is an ideal setting in which to work towards living a healthier lifestyle.

Yet, this is typically not the case. While we



Every mitzvah that we do makes the world into a better place. This is another way that doing mitzvahs makes me happy. I know that I am making the world better for all of us.

It is now up to each of us to do more mitzvahs in order to complete the job of making the world better and thus bring our complete and final redemption. Then *Moshiach* will help us to make the world completely good and wipe out all evil.

Let us start by doing the mitzvahs of the festival of *Succos* and dancing and rejoicing with the Torah on *Simchas Torah*.

We wish all of our readers a happy holiday and a good and sweet and happy year. We want *Moshiach* now!

*Rabbi Cohen lives in K'far Chabad, Israel. He can be reached by email at bzcohen@orange.net.il.* ✨

might burn some calories dancing the *Hora*, many traditional Jewish activities (like the typical American lifestyle) are sedentary. Also, while food is an important part of Judaism, traditional Jewish foods are not always conducive to a vibrant, energized lifestyle. Shabbat and holiday meals often consist of fatty meats, foods that are high in refined carbs, and sugary desserts.

We might love the taste of deli roll, *kishke*, and *rugalach*, but these foods can have a detrimental impact on our health. Traditional foods don’t need to disappear from our holiday tables, but we should be looking for ways to make them healthier. This might include adding more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains to traditional recipes while reducing the butter or margarine, processed sugar, and fat.

Given the themes of renewal and reflection, which are heard throughout the Jewish month of *Tishrei* (September/October), *Sukkot* provides us with the perfect opportunity to set new goals about our fitness and nutrition. But where to start? Here at the offices of Camp Zeke, the first Jewish camp where kids celebrate healthy living, we have a few tips:

- Go for a brisk walk on *Shabbat* afternoon with your family or friends;
- Pledge to have at least one unprocessed, organic, plant-based *Shabbat* or holiday meal every month;
- Nourish your spiritual health and connect with your body by trying yoga or meditation;
- Switch to whole wheat *challah* for *Shabbat* to increase the amount of whole grains in your diet;
- Try to get into the gym more often or find some fun group fitness classes at a local JCC.

Let’s make a resolution as a Jewish community to encourage and support healthy eating and exercise. Don’t forget to bring your family and friends along too, as studies show that working out with friends is better than exercising alone. Here’s to a happy and *healthy* New Year!

Shaina Herring is a Masters student in the Dual Degree Program at New York University studying Health Policy and Management as well as Jewish Studies. As the program developer at Camp Zeke, Shaina integrates fun Jewish lessons into all of Camp Zeke’s fitness and cooking programs. ✨



## EDITORIAL

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spent. We have reprinted one of his columns on page 6 (and see photo p. 20).

We hope you, our dear readers, will have a *Good, Sweet, and Peaceful* 5774.

Jennie Cohen, September 25, 2013 ✨



# Kabbalah of the Month

BY MELINDA RIBNER

## Time of rejoicing

In olden times, the granaries were stocked up at this time to sustain people through the cold winters. Similarly, during this month of *Tishrei*, we stock up on the blessings of Godliness with each holiday to sustain us for the year ahead.

After being purified and cleansed on *Yom Kippur* – hope you had an amazing awesome *Yom Kippur* – we enter in the holiday known as *Sukkot*. The Torah tell us “You shall dwell in booths (*sukkot*) for a seven day period, in order that your generations shall know that I caused them the children of Israel to dwell in booths when I brought them forth from the land of Egypt.” (Lev 23:42)

The Torah further tells us, “Celebrate to God for seven days in the place that God will choose, since God will then bless you in all your agricultural and other endeavors ... so that you will be happy.” (Deut. 16: 16). Though all Jewish holidays are times of joy, *Sukkot* is the only holiday that is called the time of rejoicing. *Sukkot* transmits to us the secrets of how to live a joyful life, no matter what is happening around us. *Sukkot* began Sept. 18 in the evening and continues unto the 25th.

It seems important to note at this time of heightened tensions in the world, that during each day of *Sukkot*, the Jewish people in ancient times brought offerings in the Holy Temple in Jerusalem in honor of the 70 nations of the world. According to the Torah, 70 nations are the roots of all the diverse national groups and cultures. How beautiful that the Jewish people pray and seek atonement even for their enemies. We still do this holy service in a different form to this day. I wish the world, even our many enemies, would know how the Jewish people pray and work for the well being and perfection of the world.

The main *mitzvah* (commandment) of this holiday of *Sukkot* is to sit and eat in the *sukkah*. Simply sitting in the *sukkah* is to imbibe the spiritual qualities of faith, joy and simplicity. It is a direct experience, much more potent than reading about something. Do we want the experience of love or do we simply want to read about it? If yes, then go out and find a *sukkah* to sit, eat and meditate in.

Sitting in the *sukkah* is a total body experience. People talk about experiencing God’s loving protection, but when we are actually in the *sukkah* we feel it almost

magically. The *sukkah* is a place where it is easy to feel connected to other people and to the Land of Israel.

When we sit in the *sukkah* we are reminded that we are all on journey while we live here on this physical earth. Nothing is permanent.

The book of Ecclesiastes (Koheleth) is read during *Sukkot*. King Solomon who had wealth, women, power, fame, and knowledge, reviews all of these things and concludes that none of them really matter.

“All is vanity.” The only possession that is really important is our God connection. We cannot take anything physical with us when we leave this world. We can only take what we have cultivated in our consciousness.

It seems like each day we hear about a new tragedy – fires in California, floods in Colorado, a murder in the Navy yard in Washington D. C., chemical weapons in Syria. Life feels more fragile. More than ever, we each need the experience of God’s loving protection, symbolized by a *sukkah*. We may build beautiful structures in our lives that give us an illusion of permanence and stability. We can have many accomplishments, we can be rich or we can be poor, but when we sit in the *sukkah* during this holiday of *Sukkot* we learn what is really important in life.

All the externalities that we are concerned about are not really important, they do not make us really safe. They cannot make us joyful. Furthermore, if we identify with them too much they may actually separate us from others, from God and even from ourselves. On *Sukkot*, we learn that it is only our God connection that is the source of true joy and protection. Nothing physical can ever replace that.

As we sit in these fragile cute dwellings during this time, we are also reminded on *Sukkot* that we are guided and protected along our journey called life, just like the children of Israel were as they journeyed in the desert. When you sit in the *sukkah*, take time to receive your personal guidance. All that we really need in life is the faith and joy of *sukkah* consciousness that we can internalize deeply within ourselves, so let’s be happy and grateful for all that we have been given in life.

I want to conclude with a little Torah from my teacher Reb Shlomo Carlebach of blessed memory on *Sukkot*.

*“After Yom Kippur we feel homeless in our own homes. We don’t want to live in a house where the protection is made out of stone or wood. We want to live in a house where it’s clear to us that G-d is protecting us. I don’t want to live in a house where I cannot see the stars in the sky. I want to live in a house where every little star can send me a message of light. I don’t want to live in a house where maybe even one Jew does not*

## COVER

(continued from page 2)

@comcast.net, or call 317-501-3107.

Suzy Friedman creates distinctive, special occasion art using Judaic themes. Each piece reflects Suzy’s love of Judaism and its traditions.

For many years Suzy has been using her artistic talent in media as diverse as mosaics, hand-dyed and painted silk *atarot* for *talitot* and torah covers, cards and invitations, and hand-painted *ketubot*. Lately she has been working in pastels and oils focusing on landscape and still life. She also creates three-dimensional Giclee-process *ketubot* and other Judaic themed prints.

Suzy’s commissioned artwork can be found in synagogues and homes throughout the country. She has taught art to secular and religious school students. She now teaches mosaic classes in her home studio.

Her training includes a BA in Fine Art from Indiana University and a Masters in Art Education from IU-PUI at Herron. ✨



*feel at home. I want to live in a house where every Jew, and eventually the whole world, feels at home.*

*When I was in Russia on Sukkot, two non-Jewish girls in Moscow showed me the way to the synagogue. They stayed with us half the night in the sukkah and then walked me back to the hotel. When they said goodbye, they said something prophetic to me:*

*‘Maybe there shall never be peace in our days – maybe we shall never taste a peaceful world, but we shall always remember those few hours in the Sukkah of Peace, sitting in Paradise in the shade of G-d.’*

*My beautiful friends, every second in the sukkah, you can taste Paradise in the most eternal way. Once a year we sit with our holy Mothers and our holy Fathers in the sukkah. I bless you and me, let it also be with our children – all the children of Israel and eventually all the children of the world.”*

Transcribed by Rabbi Samuel Intrator, Brooklyn, New York; Original version in *Connections Magazine*, Volume IV Number 1 – Succos 5749 Copyright (C) 1988; The Inner Foundation.

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# Gather the People



BY RABBI MOSHE  
BEN ASHER, PH.D.  
AND MAGIDAH  
KHULDA BAT SARAH

## Holding us before God's Presence

What is *Shemini Atzeret*?

The shortest answer to this question is that it is one of the *moadim*. *Moeid*, from the root *yud-ayin-dalet*, means a fixed time; it is our national meeting time with God. Think of the *moadim* (as Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel did of *Shabbat*), like palaces in time – palaces in which festivities take place, in which we are forbidden to work. And clearly this eighth day – that's the *shemini* part – does not belong to the Sukkot festival, but is an independent *moeid* of its own. (*Succah* 48a)

But why do we need it?

After all, we've been doing nothing but meeting with God, it seems, since the beginning of *Tishrei*. *Shemini Atzeret* is seemingly not characterized by any special mitzvah. And the seventh day of *Pesach* is also called *atzeret*. So how is this day different from any of those days?

The scripture (*Vayikra* 23:36) says about it: *Atzeret hi*. The root *ayin-tzade-reish*, seems to mean holding together and concentrating. And, as Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch (1808–1888) teaches, if we look at the places in *Tanakh* where the root *ayin-tzade-reish* is used, we will find that in the majority of cases it has the meaning of holding onto – persons, things, or forces – to guard against their becoming lost.

But what exactly is it that we are in danger of losing?

Rabbi Hirsch answers that *Shemini Atzeret* is not a day to bring new lessons and new truths for us to accept. It has instead the mission to hold us before God's Presence. But how is that possible?

Rashi (Rabbi Shlomo ben Yitzchak, 1040–1105) tells the story of a king who invited his children to a feast for a certain number of days, and when the time came for them to leave, he said: "My children, please, stay with me one more day, it is difficult for me to part with you."

Most of us know this feeling (at least with our own children). Perhaps even Moses himself knew this feeling coming down the mountain from his meetings with God. Is it possible to hang on to the *Shechinah* and still live in the real world?

Imagine that your boss gives you the



## Wiener's Wisdom

BY RABBI IRWIN WIENER, D.D.

## Sukkot gives meaning, purpose to our lives

Sukkot is one of the pilgrimage holidays – a time set aside to reconnect to our roots. A time to come together to rejoice and give thanks for all that we are and all that we have. And much more.

It is different from the other two pilgrimage holidays Passover and *Shavuot*. Passover commemorates the concept of freedom. *Shavuot* acknowledges the purpose of our existence, our religious identity. Sukkot, on the other hand, incorporates the meaning of the other two and adds a significant dimension: Sukkot emphasizes the tenuousness of our lives, the fragility of our existence and the temporariness of our sojourn here.

Sukkot is also a reminder of G-d's protection. Just as the *sukkah* we erect gives shelter, G-d attempts to shelter us from the consequences of our choices. Just as the temporary dwelling reminds us how precarious is life's journey, G-d attempts to guide us through the paths we determine for ourselves. And just as the lodging can disappear without warning,



assignment of traveling to another world to observe a certain phenomenon in a very limited amount of time. Upon your return, your boss immediately presses you for details. What would your response be? Most of us might say something like: Wait a minute! I have to have time to think about this. I need a day to reflect on what I saw and heard.

And so it is with us at this time of the year, at the end of the cycle of festivals. We need a day to think back on the meaning for our own lives of what we have learned. We need to ask ourselves: how do we not become lost in the craziness of life, when the world wants so very much of us, when the world demands our time, our energy, and even our souls? *Shemini Atzeret* brings the gift of time.

The words *atzeret hi* tell us that to save ourselves from being lost, we must accomplish two acts. We must remain with God, and we must hold on to the learning we have acquired. But we can really only do the former when we have accomplished the latter.

G-d reminds us how fleeting our existence is and comforts us in our time of need.

The holiday is known by several names, my favorite being "*Z'man Simhateinu*" – a time for celebrating. We have just completed our High Holiday observance, and we are satisfied that our expressions of contriteness and our wishes for a better tomorrow have been accepted. It is certainly a cause for jubilee.

Additionally, Sukkot gives us the opportunity to succeed in our efforts to understand that all is not good nor is everything bad. We need to learn that good and bad are connected, and we are the link that can separate them enough to give meaning to our lives.

Sukkot enables us to comprehend the true meaning of life, to be thankful for all the harvests of our days. And G-d is where G-d should be in our hearts and minds, in our deeds and actions, in our relationships and understanding of each other.

Sukkot should help us realize that we are responsible for each other and that there can be no true jubilation without this moral standard. The rabbis loved to demonstrate this with the story of a man sitting in a boat filled with many people. All of sudden the man began drilling a hole under his seat. The other passengers were outraged and admonished him for doing something so foolhardy. His reply was that he was drilling the hole under his seat and could not understand the commotion. Everyone exclaimed that if he continued to drill the hole, the boat would fill with water and everyone would drown.

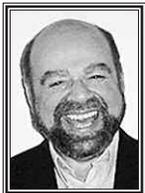
(see Wiener, page 6)

*Shemini atzeret* calls upon us to gather up all the spiritual treasures that we have collected during the days of the Festivals, so that we can step over into the course of our ordinary lives, prepared to use them to transform the ordinary into the holy. In that respect, we are like travelers from another time, who hold on tightly to the treasures they have found in another world but which they intend to put to use in this world.

The day called *Shemini Atzeret* comes to tell us, once again, to impress what we have learned upon ourselves so deeply that it becomes a part of us, a part that cannot become lost in the vicissitudes of this dimension. If we can do that, then we can live in the real world in the presence of the *Shechinah*. *Chag sameach!*

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Rabbi Moshe ben Asher and Magidah Khulda bat Sarah are the Co-Directors of *Gather the People*, a nonprofit organization that provides Internet-based resources for congregational community organizing and development ([www.gatherthepeople.org](http://www.gatherthepeople.org)). ★



## Posting the Past

BY BERNIE DE KOVEN

### Higher fun

Dear Funsmith,

With all these holidays – Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Simchat Torah – I was wondering if you could say something about the one you think, from the fun perspective, has the most to teach us about fun. ~ Sue Kkot

Dear Ms. Kkot (if that is really your name),

I'm just guessing here, but I think you might already know my answer.

So, instead, I thought I'd tell you a little story about another funsmith. It's from the well-loved, unwritten and entirely apocryphal "Stories of Simcha Dick."

It was right after *Rosh Hashanah*, and Simcha Dick, the taste of honey still in his body, the echo of the *Shofar* still resonating in his soul, asked himself the very same question you just asked me. And he, being far more steeped, tradition-wise, and far higher, steeply speaking, decided that he would meditate significantly during the next few weeks on the kinds of fun each of the three holidays to come had to offer him, and which of holidays had the deepest lessons about life and fun and joy and stuff.

To prepare himself, he spent every day until *Yom Kippur* noticing the kinds of fun he was given to enjoy, the daily fun that came just from being alive. At first he was a little bit sorry that he didn't start earlier, for *Rosh Hashanah* was in deed full of fun – sweet tastes, sweet moments with family and friends and community, the joy of a renewed commitment to the holy. But, being true to his name, regret wasn't something he spent much time doing until *Yom Kippur*. So, instead, he looked to each new moment of fun that the days between had to offer him. And many were these moments – from washing his face in the morning, saying the *brachot*, walking to *shul* in the early fall – the days still warm, the trees just beginning to show the first intimations of color, and then, in *shul*, winding the *tefillin* around himself, wrapping himself in the *tallit*, davening with the *minyan* – so many kinds of fun, so many deep delights.

And when it finally came to be *Yom Kipper*, a new kind of fun started opening to him, and he to it. Eating a very careful selection of foods (nothing too salty or heavy) in preparation for a night and day of fasting, he felt like he was getting ready to embark on a voyage to the very gates of

heaven. Lighting the candles, dressing in his finest clothes, he began to sense himself preparing for a kind of fun that was truly and uniquely *Yom Kipperdik* – the fun of devoting yourself totally to G-d. Forget work. Forget eating or drinking. Give yourself over entirely to your relationship with the divine. To making yourself pure enough to join with your peers, acknowledging to each other the very basic of base humanity – the sins, the mistakes that we have all made, the holiest of us, the weakest of us. To absolute, total regret – not just for all your own failed intentions, but for a whole congregation-worth of broken promises. Together, every Jew, wherever, acknowledging, before G-d, our very human limits.

Ah, thought Simcha Dick, this is a special kind of fun in deed – not your laughing kind of fun, not your sweet, silly fun, but a fulfilling, transcending, out-of-body kind of fun. A oneness kind of fun, all these Jews, together, clean enough, pure enough, finally, at least for this moment, to stand together before G-d.

And then, almost immediately after the final blowing of the *Shofar*, hungry, thirsty, tired, but infused with the incredibly deep joy of connection and absolution, Simcha Dick found himself thinking about the kinds of fun Sukkot will bring.

Ah, Sukkot fun – a fun as vivid as camping, as playing house. Building the *sukkah*, decorating the *sukkah*, the kids making their paper chains and paintings, the parents and their friends building the walls, making a roof that really isn't a roof, that never allows them to think of the house they are building as anything other than temporary. Day by day, taking shape, the *schach* and hanging fruits creating their own, sweet, *Sukkahdik* incense. The beautiful table, sumptuously spread, the food glowing in the candle light. Everybody in the family making it happen, together. What thorough, magical fun. And everyone a magician.

And the singing. And the tasting. Even the *Lulav* and *Etrog*, ancient beyond understanding, bringing a smell and sound that embraces everyone.

Even the outsider who finds himself welcome and wanted and celebrated.

And then a week of visiting each other's sukkot. Everyone delighting in the delight they can bring to everyone else. Ah, thought Simcha Dick, this is full-bodied fun, this is total body fun.

Out-of-body, full-body, *oy*, such fun lessons in fun.

Even before he had a chance to taste the fun of *Simchat Torah*, Simcha Dick was convinced that the Sukkot kind of fun was in deed the fun that he, personally, cherished above all others. Such accessible fun. Fun that even the kids could

### WIENER

(continued from page 5)

We are responsible to others for our actions and for the consequences that will result. We are responsible to G-d for those things that relate to our spiritual well being. We are responsible to ourselves to ensure that our lives will have meaning and purpose.

Our lives are tenuous, our existence indeed fragile, and the gift of life so temporary that we must take the time to celebrate, rejoice, and give thanks. Then the ultimate blessing of the season – *sukkat shalom* – peace, in our homes, which translates into peace in our lives, will be our reward.

Rabbi Wiener is spiritual leader of the Sun Lakes Jewish Congregation near Phoenix, Ariz. He welcomes comments at [ravyitz@cox.net](mailto:ravyitz@cox.net). His new book *Living with Faith* can be purchased at [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com). Reprinted from 9-23-09. ★



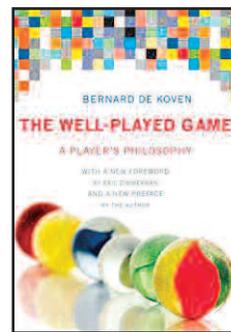
understand. Fun that everyone could share, cross-age or abilities or language or understanding. Simple, thorough fun, that touches everyone, that welcomes everyone, that everyone can understand and rejoice in together.

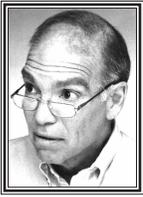
And then, just as Simcha Dick was absolutely certain he had found the holiday that had the most to teach the most of us about the most meaningful, most penetrating kind of fun, came *Simchat Torah*. And Simcha Dick, dancing with the Torah, knowing the kind of complete, entirely, totally rejoicing fun – the dancing fun that we usually think of as belonging only to children unwrapping the one gift they've wanted ever so longingly long – a fun as deep as *Yom Kippur* fun, a fun that somehow reaches as high as even the highest of holidays.

And Simcha Dick, despite his most profound efforts, despite his most searching introspection, when he tried to determine which fun he thought to be the most meaningful – from the sweet fun of the new renewal of *Rosh Hashanah*, to the out-of-body fun of *Yom Kippur*, to the fun of whole-body fun of Sukkot to the sacred dancing fun of *Simchat Torah* – just couldn't come to a conclusion.

Fortunately, since this is just a story, it can.

Bernie De Koven (see photo p. 20) is the author of *The Well-Played Game: A Player's* (see De Koven, page 9)





## Shipley Speaks

BY JIM SHIPLEY

### Another shot

I don't know, maybe it is age, but the years roll around awfully fast (yeah, it's age). Was it a full year ago we were preparing for the High Holy Days? Okay – so we know that Jewish Holidays are never “on time”.

“Oy! Didn't *Yom Kippur* come early this year?” “Passover is when? Too late this year!”

The drill is the same. Ten days to figure out who you really wronged over the past year and make amends. That is highly subjective. Did I really wrong him? “Ah – he deserved it and besides he wouldn't even notice!”

That's not the idea and he probably did – both things. This according to our sages is not enough. You know when you were wrong and you know to whom. So, ‘fess up and make the call.

Tough one is the second half. Standing before God with an empty stomach and coming to grips with your personal failures over this past year. That's tough. You are being asked to identify your own failures. And, in theory you are facing a being, a philosophy, an omniscient “God” that already knows what the real failures were this past year.

Probably does not involve money, much as you may think different. It is, I am afraid, not so much the things we have done as much as the things we have not done. As the world has gone digital, one of the victims has been the daily newspaper. Not only do we do so much reading online, we do a lot without checking the reliability of the source.

So we can so easily spread “*Lashon Harra*” – false accusations and gossip that appear as credible as the truth when they drip from the computer screen.

How many times in this past year did we engage in “*Tikkun Olam*” the duty of every Jew to “Heal the World”? There remains so much misery and injustice in the world that there certainly is enough for all of us to do – and most of it without any great sacrifice on our part.

Tikkun Olam reaches beyond faith, color, nationality. Wrong is wrong. And righting wrong is what healing the world is all about. Chances are you cannot take off for Israel on short notice and find a project in need. Money – yeah, there's always that.

Stand before your God and tell him (or her) that you dispensed money to this or that cause. And that's good! But where

was your personal involvement? What emotions or passions did this involve. Do you actually know the life or lives of those toward whom you wrote that check?

We Jews have always been at the forefront of the Civil Rights Movement. First of all because we are intimately involved. Anti-Semitism in today's world? Damn straight! But what have you done about the Voter Suppression Acts that are roiling states across the nation?

Have you voiced concern to your state or national representatives? Attended a town meeting? Blogged? Jews have always been leaders in any movement for positive change. This is no time to stop and this time of year is a great one for reflecting on what our true responsibilities are as Jews.

Hey! Did not mean to get “preachy” but as I contemplated this column I looked inward and decided – you know, I am not fully taking my responsibility as a Jew – not enough. So, this is for me at least as much as for you, dear reader, to reflect on.

The world is in at least as much chaos this year as last. As Jews we look at what was called the “Arab Spring” and see what that has wrought. Nations that were cobbled together by European interests after the first World War breaking apart, as they had to eventually.

Egypt, the largest of them in such turmoil as our new year approaches, we wonder what new Pharaoh will emerge. The Muslim Brotherhood was not and is not a friend to Israel or any Jew. But what will the crackdown bring? More Jihadists?

Look to Syria and realize this is not a civil war as much as a religious battle between various types of Islam. What possible good can this do Israel?

Israel remains strong and resolute. Its new government is wrestling with a number of internal issues and hey, they are all Jews, so the arguments go on.

Look, be a good Jew this year. Tell God you will take care of your own little corner. Based on what I just wrote, it is apparent that he has enough on his hands without your *kvetches*.

*Shana Tova* to all of you. May this indeed be a sweet year and one where we gather those who count around us and bask in the joys of belonging to such an amazing people.

Looking at history, I guess we have no right to be still here. But here we are. And next year at this time let us be able to tell God that, yeah, we did good.

*Jim Shipley has had careers in broadcasting, distribution, advertising, and telecommunications. He began his working life in radio in Philadelphia. He has written his JP&O column for more than 20 years and is director of Trading Wise, an international trade and marketing company in Orlando, Fla. ✪*



## Jewish Educator

BY AMY HIRSHBERG LEDERMAN

### Sukkoth: Coming together under one roof

The holiday of Sukkoth (which means “booths” in Hebrew) was not a big one on the Holiday Hit Parade in the town where I grew up. I did not know that it marked the season of harvest for Jews in ancient times or that it was the third pilgrimage festival after Passover and *Shavuot*. Not one single person I knew built a *sukkah* in their back yard, so when my own son came home from our synagogue preschool and asked if we could have one, my initial response was less than enthusiastic.

“Why don't we just go and pick pumpkins instead?” I asked, hoping that Halloween might be a bigger draw.

“I want a *sukkah*!” Josh responded with gusto. “We can eat in it every night and sleep in it, too. It's a *mitzvah*,” he concluded, as if he knew that would clinch the deal.

And so, we dragged palm fronds from the alleyway and built a small lean-to in the back yard with sheets nailed on to three sides. It wasn't fancy, but it was a *sukkah* in every sense of the word. A fragile, temporary structure that a strong wind could have destroyed, our first *sukkah* withstood the weight of my children's expectations as well as that of the numerous gourds and ears of dried corn that we hung from its thatched roof.

As the years passed and my family's commitment to Jewish tradition grew, so did the size, shape and durability of our *sukkah*. I will never forget the proud look on my husband's face the year we lived in Jerusalem and he built a *sukkah* the size of my first apartment (and decorated in much better taste!). Strings of bright colored lights and paper mache pineapples, strawberries and apples dangled over our heads as we dined with our friends for seven glorious nights.

Sukkoth is the start of the rainy season in Israel and prayers for bountiful rain, called *Hoshanot*, are recited every day of the holiday. It must work, because the very first night of Sukkoth, the sky unleashed a storm so great that it caused the reds and yellows of our paper fruits to bleed onto our T-shirts and chairs in a colorful pattern that no amount of bleach would remove.

As Jews, we are commanded to dwell  
(see Lederman, page 9)



## Spoonful of Humor

BY TED ROBERTS

### An idol's mind is the devil's workshop

A *midrash*, you know, is a story, a parable – maybe told by an identifiable rabbi – maybe only an anonymous tale, gray with age. Of all the great and inspirational *midrashim* told by our rabbis, the one I like least is that story of Avram and his father, Terah. There's no question that the profession of Terah, father to the inventor of monotheism, was an embarrassment. He was in the idol business. You remember.

“So, Avram,” asked his Hebrew school pals. “What’s your papa do?”

“Oh, he’s got a Hobby Lobby franchise over on the highway. Pottery, carving, ya know.”

Long, long ago when most of us were in Sunday school kindergarten we heard the *midrash* about Terah. We’re talking circa 2000 BC – pre-Sinai, pre-Torah. A time when the dictionary of professions was limited to five categories – merchant, shepherd, farmer, soldier, and cadaver due to starvation. According to this bizarre *midrash*, Terah was a merchant and his goods, his inventory, was idols. What a strange line of merchandise for the father of He who founded monotheism. It’s as though Henry Ford’s pop was a dealer in horses. Or Alexander Graham Bell’s father had an exclusive line of megaphones.

The *midrash* tells us that Terah leaves Avram in charge of the store and the young man, in a fit of righteousness, smashes the idols. His explanation when Pop returns? “Oh, the clay figures we call idols had a heckuva fight – and only this big guy is left!” If you’re an idol worshiper you gotta believe the story, right? But it reflects badly on Father Terah and it fails to explain his son’s sudden insight.

Since I, too, am the father of a righteous son, I prefer the following version. Okay, Terah has this glitzy store in downtown Haran and one day leaves young Avram in charge. Sorta scary, thinks the child. It’s dark and rainy outside and the gloom of the store is packed with dozens of dusty shapes who, according to their clientele, can bring life or death, riches or poverty. Often Avram was in charge. Like a good son, he helped his father.

How often had the boy heard his pop’s sales pitch? “Avram, bring me that special mantelpiece carving of Gulak. So powerful

it requires minimal sacrifice. Notice, too, his pleasing shade of blue goes with almost any interior.” And never did Terah consider the damage to this dutiful son’s soul.

Today Terah appoints his son temporary manager of Idol Mart. “Watch the store,” says Terah as he goes out the door.

What’s to watch, thinks the young seller of idols. I’m alone in here. So, he cracks open a long papyrus scroll – it’s a best seller, *When Schmu-el Met Rachel*. Appropriately, he has hidden it behind an idol of Astarte the Goddess of Love.

But no sooner has he unrolled it to line 387 – that’s where Schmu-el tells Rachel that he likes her better than honey cake – when an idol speaks up. I said an IDOL! Who one month ago was soggy earth beside the riverbank! The molder of the universe has decided to take the pulpit in the education of Avram.

Says the clay figure; “Why am I priced at only two handfuls of copper coins when shimshak over there by the door has a price tag of ten pieces of silver?” He was followed by a chorus of idol voice – all loudly complaining. This one too cheap – this one overpriced. And a lot of complaints about shelf space and location. Everybody wants center aisle, front door.

Young Avram, the only human in this room full of angry pottery was also the only one with a zipped lip. He is awed by the garrulousness of his father’s clay and wood products. “Papa wouldn’t believe this,” he muttered to himself. “You’re only merchandise to dress up a pagan living room or decorate an otherwise drab and desolate bedroom. You have no powers to bring rain, make the sheep fertile, grow the lush ears of corn, or push the river over its banks. Something else does that. Who or what, I know not, but I strongly suspect it’s not a clay figurine on a shelf. But how is it that I hear you talking? And such silly fiddle faddle as your price and location, and. . .”

Just then the door opened and in walked Terah, back from his errand. His son rushed into his arms. “Father, Father, the idols were talking like you and me. I was frightened. They talked like humans. Just now, the store was full of their voices.”

Terah looked deeply into the face of his only son whom he loved. This idol business was a good living, but not good enough to justify the corruption of this promising, but naive child who listened too closely to his old man’s sales pitches. Dramatic maybe, even skillful. But harmless. Or so he thought. He was a marketer, not a worshiper of idols.

Meanwhile, his son continued to rant about these products of the village potter and their complaints. “Yes, Papa, they all wanted to stand by the door.”

“Well, let’s help them,” said the father of

## IU seeks Modern European Jewish History scholar

Indiana University – Bloomington invites applications from outstanding scholars in the field of **Modern European Jewish History** for the *Alvin H. Rosenfeld Chair in Jewish Studies*, an endowed Chair established to honor the founding director of the Borna Jewish Studies Program. The successful candidate will have a joint appointment at the **full** or **associate** rank in the Borna Jewish Studies Program and the Department of History. Ph.D. or equivalent required. Review of applications will begin **Nov. 1, 2013**. The review of applications will continue until the position is filled.

Interested candidates should review the application requirements and submit their application at: [indiana.peopleadmin.com/postings/479](http://indiana.peopleadmin.com/postings/479). For additional information on the Borna Jewish Studies Program, please see [www.indiana.edu/~jsp/index.shtml](http://www.indiana.edu/~jsp/index.shtml) and on the Department of History at Indiana University please see [www.indiana.edu/~histweb/](http://www.indiana.edu/~histweb/). ✨

Avram. “Baal! (He was the biggest of the clay figures and priced accordingly.) Go stand immediately to the right of the entrance to the shop.” If Baal could have heard, he would have said “yes sir” and occupied the premier position. But since molded clay figures are deaf, dumb, immobile, he took not a step.

“How disobedient,” said Terah. “Let’s give him a push.” So he did and all six feet of Baal fell flat on the floor and broke into three dozen pieces. “Maybe he was sick,” said Terah; father and teacher. So, next he picked Delmonte, god of corn, beans, and vegetables.

“Here, let me help,” he said. Another push – another job for the lady who swept out the store. On and on until the floor was ankle deep in pottery shards.

“Avram, they are only clay figures. Idols are for selling, not worshipping,” which to skip four millennia and several dimensions of realty, reminded me of my old boss, who owned a liquor store. I, while attending college, was the night clerk. “Teddy,” he said, “whiskey’s for selling, not drinking.”

*Roberts is a syndicated Jewish columnist who looks at Jewish life with rare wit and insight. Check out his Web site: [www.wonderwordworks.com](http://www.wonderwordworks.com). Blogsite: [www.scribblerontheroof.typepad.com](http://www.scribblerontheroof.typepad.com). His collected works The Scribbler on The Roof can be bought at [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com) or [lulu.com/content/127641](http://lulu.com/content/127641). ✨*



# As I Heard It

BY MORTON GOLD

## My kind of service

There is much discussion these days concerning such things as creativity in the synagogue, especially in the area of music. As usual I have my own ideas on the subject and since I am free to state what I think without being concerned what some *machers* (movers and shakers) may think, I will do so.

First of all it would be fair to state that I am distressed at the music I hear sung to most of the prayers. It is not necessarily the tunes that I object to but the thinking behind their usage. It should be a given that there should be a relation between the prayer and the music. While that is or should be obvious, these days it is not. Tunes are used that are either Ukrainian market songs, albeit with Hebrew words, always with syncopated rhythms to make them appealing to pre-adolescents and their parents as well. Some melodies by R. Sholomo Carlebach would illustrate this idea.

Mindless hand clapping with a lot of ai-ai-ai's frequently meld with these tunes. Then there is the commercial rock type of tune, albeit again with Hebrew text. These lend neither an air of spirituality, religious feeling nor anything remotely suggesting something connecting the service. Music found on many CD's performed NOT by *hazzanim* but by musical personalities ought be to put under *cherim* (a Jewish version of being banned, or having the equivalent of a fatwa placed against their usage in the synagogue. So much for what I am against.

(There is more!) What I would like to see is bringing back the idea that the cantor (*Hazzan*, NOT reader) is the musical representative of the congregation and not merely the leader of congregational melodies. He or she should sing, all by him or herself at least one setting of a prayer of his or her choosing each service.

I should like to see the preliminary service shortened substantially. Three (plus) hours is far too long for a service, at least it is for me. I should like to see congregational and rabbinic discussion of the Torah portion either eliminated or held before the service itself starts. When it is stated that a service starts, say at 9 a.m., it should really start then, not when one feels like actually showing up. We could take a lesson from our non-Jewish friends in this regard.

## DE KOVEN

(continued from page 6)

Philosophy. See more on [deepfun.com](http://deepfun.com). He was a regular columnist for this newspaper from 2009–11. This column is reprinted from Sept. 23, 2009. You can see his other columns in past issues on our website under Archives. ✨



We should also encourage the creation of mixed choirs comprised of people from the congregation. At first they might simply provide a few modest amen's, but then could (should) branch out to perform real compositions, created for use in the synagogue.

What should the congregation do you may ask? They should listen! This should enhance the religious as well as musical experience one should feel during a service. A service is not, should not, be simply a social gathering with a discussion as the central and time consuming portion of the service. One should encourage concerts of Jewish music by indigenous members of the temple rather than bringing in outside attractions.

These may raise money but will do nothing to encourage neither creativity nor performance by members of the congregation itself. One should also bring back the use of the organ as the accompanying instrument. We are not in the desert these days, nor at an outdoor campfire.

I suppose that if one cannot find a capable organist, one might (in extremis) use a pianist or even (sigh) use an individual playing an acoustic but never an electric guitar. (UGH!) I would like to see contests not for a new (upbeat?) song, but rather a new setting for any prayer used during a service. What about a new work for piano solo, clarinet, any chamber group? And so on.

I would like to see in addition to choral groups, instrumental groups formed, and by this I do not mean Klezmer style groups. There is so much more to Jewish music than Klezmer style music. It is out there even though it is not in vogue these days.

I should also love to hear any setting of *Adon Olam* that reflects the spirit and meaning of the words and not merely be a lively way of concluding the service. Do I want too much? I want to have a service that is a service and not merely an excuse for us entertaining each other! Something to think about? I also wish my readers a happy, healthy and prosperous new year. *L'Shana Tovah*.

*Dr. Gold is a composer/conductor and an arts reviewer for the Post & Opinion. He was the recipient of the Kavod Award by the Cantors Assembly and a retired educator. ✨*

## LEDERMAN

(continued from page 7)

in the Sukkah (Leviticus 23:42-3) and to "take the fruit of the citron tree (etrog), the branches of date palms, twigs of a braided tree (myrtle), and willows of the brook (combined to make the lulav), and rejoice before the Lord for seven days" (Leviticus 23:40).

The basic commandment is to take these four species in your hand and shake them while reciting certain blessings. But why these four items rather than an orange, banana or peanuts? We find answers in the Jewish *midrash*, interpretations of Biblical passages. One such midrash views these four items as symbolic of parts of our body. The etrog is our heart, the willow is our mouth, the myrtle represents our eye and the date palm branch is our backbone. The idea is that we can reach our highest potential as humans and honor God best when we bring our heart, mind and body to the task, just as the four species are brought together during the holiday of Sukkoth.

My favorite midrash suggests that the four species represent four types of Jews, each one in a different relationship with his or her faith and commitment to Torah. Some Jews are knowledgeable but do not act in ways that reflect Jewish values like compassion and justice. Others may lead with their hearts but have no formal Jewish training. Some may "feel Jewish" but not know how or where to begin to become connected to their Jewish roots. And others may have both the knowledge and the commitment to live their lives according to Jewish laws and values, becoming our role models and inspiration.

Sukkoth is an annual reminder that each one of us is unique and different but that together, we form the Jewish people. We all begin at different starting points; we encounter different challenges and are blessed with different strengths. We live in different cities and countries, we have different family compositions and we encounter the world with different eyes, hearts and minds. When we dine together in the sukkah, we are called upon to create a time and place to honor these differences. For only when we are able to bring all Jews together under one roof, will we be able to reach our highest potential as human beings and as Jews.

*Amy Hirshberg Lederman is an author, Jewish educator, public speaker and attorney who lives in Tucson. Her columns in the AJP have won awards from the American Jewish Press Association, the Arizona Newspapers Association and the Arizona Press Club for excellence in commentary. Visit her website at [amyhirshberglederman.com](http://amyhirshberglederman.com). ✨*



# Jewish Theater

REVIEWED BY IRENE BACKALENICK

## Soul Doctor and Oblivion

A brand new rock musical has arrived on Broadway. Well, perhaps not so new, since *Soul Doctor* follows the fortunes of a rabbi-turned-jazz musician. Shades of Al Jolson's landmark film of the 1920s – *The Jazz Singer!*

But *Soul Doctor* is actually based on a true story, focusing on one Shlomo Carlebach (who wrote music and additional lyrics for this show). This is a potentially moving tale, even if it was preceded by that famous film. Carlebach and his family – Orthodox Jews – escape Hitler, leaving Vienna in the late 1930s. His father, once the Chief Rabbi of Vienna, sets up shop in Brooklyn, raising his two sons to carry on the family business.

But Shlomo, early on, hears music in his head, as he struggles with his inner conflict between his strict Jewish faith and a contemporary beat. He is strongly influenced by the black singer Nina Simone, whom he meets by chance in a bar.

The tale is strong, with adversaries lined up on either side – his father, brother, and former Yeshiva teacher pitted against the world of modern music. Shlomo himself will never abandon his faith, though it takes a different turn. He goes on to become a successful recording and performing artist, even as he maintains his own hippie congregation through the 1960s and 1970s.

In this particular Circle in the Square production (directed by Daniel S. Wise and choreographed by Benoit-Swan Pouffer), the music is indeed authentic and mesmerizing (though often repetitious). And the story moves ahead with brio, backed up by a hard-working chorus. Unfortunately, at its core is a pleasant but bland Shlomo (played by Eric Anderson). Where is the charisma necessary to draw in so many followers to his congregation?

But his scene with Nina Simone (portrayed by the excellent Amber Iman) is deeply moving. At last Shlomo comes vividly to life, and no little thanks is due to Iman, who in fact gives heart, soul, and substance to the show. Other performers are fine – among them Ethan Khusidman and Teddy Walsh (as the young Shlomo and his brother), plus Jamie Jackson and Jacqueline Antaramian (Shlomo's parents)



Cast of *Soul Doctor* starring Eric Anderson (ctr.), with Ian Paget, Teddy Walsh, Ryan Strand, Alexandra Frohlinger, and Abdur Rahim Jackson. Photo by Carol Rosegg.

and Ron Orbach (his ornery teacher).

*Soul Doctor* inevitably recalls, not only *The Jazz Singer*, but *Godspell* and *My Name is Asher Lev*. But even Shakespeare borrowed heavily from earlier sources, and repetition can be forgiven if the story gets a fresh slant. *Soul Doctor* may have its failings, but the interweaving of modern music with the Jewish faith is indeed intriguing.

### Oblivion

A new Jewish-American writer is making her mark among today's playwrights – one Carly Mensch. And her own background provides the source and inspiration for her current offering – *Oblivion*.

Mensch is several generations removed from traditional Judaism, going back to her grandparents. Her own parents followed the humanistic, secular path. Moral decisions, for them, were based on the effects of human beings on one another, not upon a higher power.

Thus we have *Oblivion*, which played first in the Chicago area and now in the New York area – namely the Westport Country Playhouse in Connecticut. Whether this new play warrants acclaim is open to question – at least for this reviewer.

*Oblivion*, as I view it, is a mixed bag, with deep human issues wrapped up in an all-too-familiar, over-used plot. It is the play itself, not the production, which falters –

which simply does not deliver enough goods. *Oblivion* joins an ever-growing contemporary list of family-issue plays, but adds no new direction to that list.

Yet, to do her justice, playwright Carly Mensch offers lively, believable – even entertaining – dialogue, quickly capturing the audience. It is familiar territory – comfortable, easily recognizable.

Mensch takes on the parent-child relationship embroiled in a clash of beliefs. Parents Pam and Dixon are free-spirited souls, former hippies whose values reflect America's revolutionary 1970s. And when daughter Julie turns to a traditional Christian faith, the mother is appalled. Where did she, as parent, go wrong? "The Bible sounds like a Hallmark card," she summarizes at one point. The parents, it seems, are Jewish, but if Julie had turned to Orthodox Judaism, the mother would have been equally unhappy.

Indeed, this is familiar grist for the playwrighting mill. Children, in teen-age rebellion, (see Backalenick, page 15)



Scenes from *Oblivion* with (left, L-R) Johanna Day, Katie Broad, and Reg Rogers. Photo by Carol Rosegg.

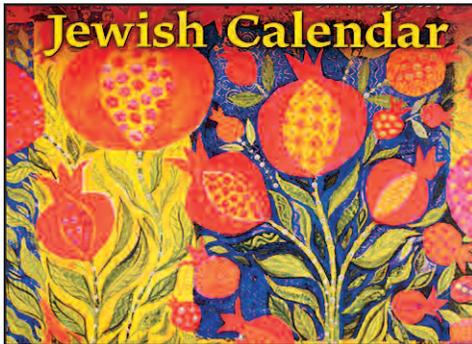
# The Jewish calendar – panorama of a people's history, art, and spirit

BY ROSE KLEINER

Each year, as the new Jewish calendars come off the press, they signal a rediscovery of our people's history, art and spirit. While reminding us of the important dates, in the Jewish year, these calendars take us on a 12-month odyssey, into the amazing world of Jewish culture.

The following 16-month calendars provide us with weekly *Torah* readings, dates of Jewish holidays, and candle lighting times for major cities throughout the continent.

Pomegranate publishers, have two charming calendars this year. Their Jewish Museum Calendar (with works from the Jewish Museum in New York) is graced with images of art works and paintings whose provenance is from many lands, and from many eras of Jewish history. Included too are contemporary works of art. These works communicate the aesthetic values and spirit of their creators, enriching our understanding and appreciation of the Jewish experience through the ages.



There is a Marriage Contract from Isfahan, Persia (1879), a *Chanukah* Lamp from Eastern Galicia (18th century), and a painting by C.W. Eckersberg, Joseph's Brothers Bring His Coat to Jacob (1811).

Among the more recent pieces illustrated is a painting by Arthur Szyk, Jewish Sailors Exporting Polish Products Through the Port of Danzig (1927); an avant-garde rendering of an image from a verse in the *Had Gadya* Suite by Russian artist El Lissitzky, which is engraved both in the Yiddish and Aramaic languages (1919), and paintings by Melissa Meyer (1992), Jack Levine (1938), as well as Dana Frankfort (2007).

Pomegranate's second wall calendar, Jewish Celebrations, with paintings by Malcah Zeldis features joyful, colorful illustrations of such holidays as *Chanukah*, *Rosh Hashanah*, *Purim* and *Pesach*. There is also the celebration of *Shabbat*, of a wedding, and *Bar* and *Bat Mitzvah* in the

brilliant paintings of this family-oriented calendar. Each of these images comes with explanatory notes or commentaries regarding its history and the customs that it represents.

Universe Publishing has both a wall calendar and a desk calendar for the year 5774. Aside from listing all Jewish and national holidays, *Torah* readings, and candle lighting times, the wall calendar lists Jewish holidays through the year 2027 as well. Its beautiful illustrations cover treasures from the Collection of the Jewish Historical Museum in Amsterdam. In this collection there are lovely paintings, such as the Portrait of a Woman by Maijer de Haan of Amsterdam (1882), or the poignant gouache by Charlotte Solomon, The Wedding of Franziska Knarre and Albert Kaan (1940–42).

Among the striking silver ceremonial objects in this calendar (from countries such as the Netherlands, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Russia and Poland), two ultra-modern pieces are of special note. The first is an impressive silver *Havdalah* set, whose curved lines reflect some of today's modern architectural structures, by Yaakov Greenvurcel, Jerusalem (1981). The other is a *Lulav* Stand, by Zelig Segal, of Jerusalem (1983). *Etrog* holders are common, but *lulav* stands are less so.

The Jewish Calendar for the desk from Universe, can serve as an excellent quick reference for navigating one's way, all year, through the many Jewish holidays, feast days, fast days, and other significant dates such as *Rosh Chodesh* (new month) and the counting of the *Omer*. This calendar also lists the weekly readings from the prophets, along with the *Torah* readings. Its unique 'spreadsheet' guide contains columns such as the Theme, Historical Significance, Seasonal Significance, Mood, and Selected Customs of each of



the holidays listed.

In addition to all the above features of this desk calendar, its illustrations depict magnificent objects that will please the eye throughout the year. Such is the unique silver *Torah* Shield from Rhodes, Greece (1859–1860); Ilya Schor's *Mezuzah* Case (1960) and a stunning silk *Tefillin* Bag from 18th-century Italy. One of the unusual illustrations here is a photograph of a pair of '*Mikveh* Shoes', from the Ottoman Empire (c. 1910). All the above items are part of the collection of the Jewish Museum in New York.

One of the most interesting Jewish calendars on the market is My Very Own Jewish Calendar by Judyth Groner and Madeline Wikler (Kar-Ben Publishing). This calendar cum compendium of trivia, anecdotes, stories, historical data, and recipes has been delighting youngsters, and the young at heart, for many years. It always manages to inform and inspire with its lively celebration of Jewish life and traditions throughout the world.

Right from the first Hebrew month, *Tishri*, one is greeted with a quote from the *Talmud*, and a data-filled account of the significance of the pomegranate fruit, so ubiquitous during this time of year – its etymological, historical, biblical, *kabbalistic* and nutritional significance – all in one compact paragraph. Of course, the recipe of the month cannot include anything other than a pomegranate.

Other very simple, interesting recipes are *Injera*, Ethiopian bread; a *Tu B'Shvat* Fruit Fondue; a *Purim* taste change in the form of *Pizza Taschen*. A calendar page on the Jews of India gives an easy recipe for

(see Kleiner, page 18)



## Seen on the Israel Scene

BY SYBIL KAPLAN

# Sifting through 15,000 years of archaeological finds

Among the many people who became our friends when we joined Kehillat Moreshet Avraham Synagogue is Gabby Barkay, Israel archaeologist. When he offered a “do-it-yourself” archaeological experience, including sifting from the Temple Mount, we were quick to sign up.

Hungarian-born Gabby came to Israel at the age of six; he received his Ph.D. from the Hebrew University, and is a recipient of the Jerusalem Prize for his life’s work as an archaeologist of Jerusalem.

In 2005, he and another archaeologist established the Temple Mount Sifting Project, now funded by the Ir David Foundation, a mind-boggling project validating the Jewish connection to the Temple Mount for 15,000 years.

### Background

According to Barkay, the Temple Mount is the “soul, heart and spirit of the Jewish people, first created by the almighty” and referred to as the “house of the Lord.” Until the Babylonian destruction, it was the most significant site of Jerusalem, the Mount Zion and Mount Moriah of the Jewish Bible, 20 times mentioned in the New Testament.



Gabby Barkay points out layout of the Temple Mount and items found through the sifting project.

In 638 CE, it was conquered by the Arabs; in 691 CE a replacement for Solomon’s Temple called the Dome of the Rock was built on this site. Although Jerusalem is never mentioned in the Koran, there is only a reference to Mohammed’s night trip to a “far mosque” as well as a legend of his having gone to heaven on a winged horse from this site.

And so it became of third importance in Islam after Mecca and Medina.

According to Barkay, the Temple Mount is the most significant archaeological site in Israel and the most excavated place on earth, but the Temple Mount was never excavated because of its sensitive political position.

For Jews, all synagogues of the world face the Temple Mount. The outer framework, the retaining walls, was built by Herod 2,000 years ago. Interestingly enough, the Temple Mount was mentioned for the first time by the 8th century BCE prophet, Micah.

### Recent History

In 1967 when Jerusalem was reunited, Israel gave up the right to supervise the Temple Mount to the Islamic Wakf, the Islamic Trust also controlling and managing the Islamic Al Aksa mosque. They declared it open to Moslem prayers but not to others.

In the 1990s, US President Bill Clinton was advised (and had the naive dream) that the Temple Mount was the key to the solution of the Israel-Arab conflict. His think tank suggested sovereignty be split – the underground to the Israelis and above ground to the Palestinians – an impractical, useless, idiotic idea.

In 1996 a mosque or Moslem prayer hall was illicitly built in a subterranean area under the Temple Mount called “Solomon’s Stables” which could hold 10,000 people. In 1998 a subterranean mosque, “Ancient Aksa,” converted into a prayer hall was built instead of an emergency exit for this mosque of a passageway. About the same time, denials that the Temples existed began.

In 1999 Prime Minister Barak gave permission to make the emergency exit; instead, bulldozers were brought in to dig a pit, 131 feet long and 40 feet deep and 400 truck loads were barbarically removed. Earth was dumped, mixed with modern garbage in the Kidron Valley.

Outrage by Israelis ensued, including 82 of the 120 members of Knesset, as well as many other noted people, who signed a petition against this project. The Committee for the Prevention of the Destruction of Antiquities on the Temple Mount was thus created.

The main entrance to the subterranean mosque, “Solomon’s Stables,” was then closed to all non-Muslims.

One day, while teaching at Bar Ilan University, two of Barkay’s students brought him two plastic bags from the dump and urged him to get a license to sift the materials being dumped. After four years and Barkay’s threat to go to the Supreme Court, the Antiquities Authority granted him a license.

A New York lawyer answered his ad looking for funds and gave him the first

funding for the project. The City of David Foundation also adopted the project.

### Come and Sift

On the day we joined the archaeological experience, our convoy of cars took the highway to the Jewish suburb of Maaleh Adumim past the Arab neighborhood of Wadi Joz, heading toward the Mount of Olives, past Augusta Victoria Hospital to the neighborhood of A Tur and the Tzurim Valley. After some twists and turns, we drove down a dirt road by an olive tree grove, and approached Tzurim Valley National Park and the Temple Mount Antiquities Excavation.



The sifting tent. Photographs by Barry A. Kaplan.

Inside the large tent were low stone walls for sitting, a bulletin board on one side holds articles written about the project, and a replica of the Western Wall is in front with each group of stones able to turn to reveal informative material on the other side. On the floor are buckets labeled pottery, glass, bones, mosaic stone, metal and special stones. Next to them are buckets with water and stones.

One takes a bucket and dumps it onto a screen, allowing the water to flow through and the stones to stay on the screen. The bucket is first cleaned with a spray, and then the stones are given a shower. One then spreads out the stones by hand and places potential finds in a six-part plastic cup holder. When done, a member of the staff checks out the contents of the cups and the remaining materials, then the remains are dumped into a wheel barrow.

In the nine years of sifting, small finds like daily objects (e.g., seals, an arrowhead, fragments of figurines and lumps of clay with impressions in Hebrew, called *Bulla*) have been found dating to the First Temple Period. An arrowhead and a seal from a jar handle from Rhodes, stone vessel fragments, combs, tiles, and fresco fragments are among finds from the Second Temple period. Objects have been found dating from then to today. More than 5,000 coins have been found. Fifty per cent of the 250–300 truckloads of material moved here has been gone through by more than

a quarter of a million volunteers as well as Israelis and staff.

At the end of our visit, we looked over finds of the day which included a coin, two glass bracelet fragments belonging to a young girl, glass wall mosaics, a lamp from a chandelier, nails for a horseshoe, bones from animals, a large storage jar handle and a roof tile.

### How You Can Participate

People interested in assisting the process of sifting through 15,000 years of materials can make a reservation through the City of David, \*6033 and specify the language required (Hebrew, English or French). The tent is open year round with tent flaps up and cold water for washing the materials in summer and heating and warm water in winter.

### Hear Dr. Barkay

Dr. Barkay has a US speaking tour Sept. 15–Nov. 15. He will be speaking in Pittsburgh, Villanova, Beaver Falls and Williamsport, Pa.; Princeton, N.J.; Abilene, Dallas, Belton, Waco, Ft. Worth, Lubbock, College Station, and Boerne, Texas; Charlotte, N.C.; Franklin, Tenn.; Springfield, Point Look Out and Kansas City, Mo.; Wichita, Kan.; Deerfield, Ill.; Dubuque, Iowa; Madison, Wis.; Ithaca, Bronx, Croton on Hudson, and New Rochelle, N.Y.; Spafford, N.H.; Stoughton, Mass.; Niagara Falls, Canada; and Omaha, Neb. Check the official website of Dr. Gabriel Barkay for the exact day and city.

## Visiting the Armenian Quarter of the Old City

When you enter Jaffa Gate and bear right, past the police station, you are soon on a very narrow road called Armenian Orthodox Patriarchate Road. In this southwestern part of the Old City, on your left, is a walled area where Armenians, seminary students and functionaries of the church live. Estimates of population range from several hundred to a thousand people reside here.

To be guided through this secluded area by Reverend Fr. Pakrad Berjekian, director of the real estate department of the Armenian Patriarchate is both an honor and a privilege, inasmuch as the public is only permitted into some of these buildings one-half hour a day.

Armenians claim to have come to Jerusalem in 70 CE as soldiers. They were the first nation to adopt Christianity in the middle of the 3rd century CE. In the 3rd century CE, they also established a Christian Armenian community in Jerusalem and flocked to Jerusalem as tradesmen and pilgrims.

The quarter also contains a school, a library and a museum, but our first visit was to the Cathedral of St. James, a Crusader structure built in the 12th century over a 11th century Georgian church. This sits on the site of the beheading of the cousin of Jesus, James, by an order of Herod in 44 CE and the tomb of James, the older brother of Jesus, who was the first bishop of Jerusalem.



*Inside Cathedral of St. James.*

The cathedral is unique architecturally and is built according to Armenian design. It is shaped like a cross with a dome sitting on four central piers and arches. Silver incense lights are everywhere, and there are many magnificent crystal chandeliers hanging from the ceiling; carpets cover the tile floors. The adjoining room has ceramic tiles on one wall done by Armenian artists. In the front pews, seminary students perform their afternoon vespers, and a member of the clergy walks through the church, waving an incense burner.

The Reverend explains that the Armenians, like the Greek Orthodox and the Catholics, live under monastic rule and are guardians of holy places. They wake up at 5:30 a.m., have morning services and then do administrative work until afternoon vespers.

He ushers us into another area, up a steep set of steps, to a long hall with paintings on both sides of the walls. This is the residence of the patriarchate, dating to the 1840s and not generally open to the public. Upholstered designed chairs line the walls under the Royal family paintings. In this room, heads of state and churches are officially welcomed, and on feast days, performances take place in this room. On both sides are the doors of the private living quarters of the patriarchate.

Every moment spent in the Armenian Quarter for us is a fascinating experience because visitors are generally not privileged to see the church buildings of these secluded people.

Many visitors to Jerusalem purchase the blue and white designed tiles and other decorative pottery of the Armenians. Contrary to popular belief, the pottery does not originate in Armenia but was created by Armenians in Jerusalem about

### KLEINER

*(continued from page 11)*

Chicken Curry. An entry about the world's largest *kosher* barbecue event, the Kosher BBQ Contest and Festival in Memphis, Tenn., provides a BBQ Sauce recipe that even kids can put together.

The calendar has various environmental and community entries, with great ideas that children and adults can implement in their own cities and neighborhoods. Among the community projects covered here is Leket, Israel's food bank and rescue effort, which involves thousands of volunteers and even has a Nighttime Food Rescue program.

Who knew that Jews were involved in the art of chocolate making since their sojourn in Spain. After the expulsion from Spain they brought this art to France, Belgium and other European countries. By 1832 it was a young Jewish apprentice chef, Franz Sacher who created Vienna's world famous Sacher Torte. An E-Z Sacher Torte recipe is part of this calendar.

Keeping up with the times the calendar has a Regifting entry where websites are presented for youngsters and adults to donate gently-used toys, clothing, and cell phones. This calendar also has candle lighting times for the major cities on the continent, and a five-year listing of Jewish holidays. ✨



*Official Reception Room of Patriarchate's living quarters.*

100 years ago. In 1917, Neshan Balian, a master potter in Turkey, and Megherdich Karakashian, an artist, were brought to Jerusalem to repair the tiles of the Dome of the Rock. They opened a workshop a few years later to produce pottery.

In 1965, the families split and each continues to produce hand-painted ceramic tiles and pottery – the Balian family in East Jerusalem produce Armenian pottery of Jerusalem, and the Karakashian sons and grandson produce Armenian pottery and tiles including the street name tiles throughout the Old City from their studio on Via Dolorosa.

*Sybil Kaplan is a journalist, food writer, lecturer and cookbook author. ✨*



## Holocaust Educator

By MIRIAM ZIMMERMAN

### Educate to end genocide

If your summer reading list included *Witness to the Storm: A Jewish Journey from Nazi Berlin to the 82nd Airborne, 1920-1945* by Werner T. Angress (2012) or *Children of the Holocaust: Conversations with Sons and Daughters of Survivors* by Helen Epstein (Penguin Books, 1979), you might be a 2nd generation Holocaust survivor. If you live in the San Francisco Bay Area and attended all or most of the Holocaust-themed movies in the recent San Francisco Jewish Film Festival, you are no doubt a 2nd generation Holocaust survivor.

If you are a member of the Facebook group, “Children of Holocaust Survivors” or if you’ve “liked” the “Children of Jewish Holocaust Survivors” page on Facebook, you’re probably a 2nd gen Holocaust survivor.

If your adult children accuse you of having raised the topic of the Holocaust at every family dinner while they grew up, you are probably 2nd gen. If they further accuse you of making Holocaust connections to every current event, every book and every class assignment that they had, then you are definitely “in.” Children can be so critical (sigh). Except for the Facebook connections, I am guilty of all of the above. I am a 2nd generation Holocaust survivor.

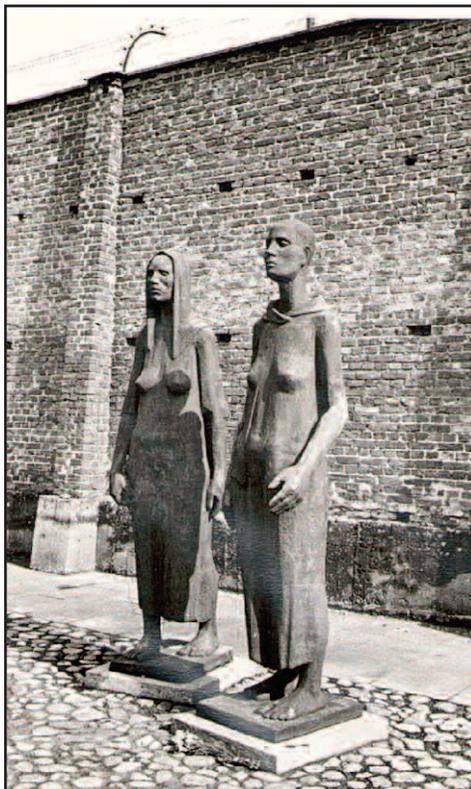
I admit that on my chest of drawers, which I do not share with my husband, stands a picture (at right) of the memorial statues at the Ravensbrück concentration camp in Germany. Ravensbrück was the “for women only” concentration camp, the scene of horrendous medical experiments and brutal torture.

Taken by award-winning photojournalist Ira Nowinski, the black and white picture of two women inmates reminds me daily of the many blessings I enjoy that were denied to a whole generation of Jewish women. Nowinski himself gave me the picture when his photo montage, “In Fitting Memory: The Art and Politics of Holocaust Memorials” was on display at the University of San Francisco when I was teaching there in the 1980s. The photos can be seen in a book with that title, text by Holocaust scholar Dr. Sybil Milton, z”l, former senior historian at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Since 1995, I have had the good fortune to teach a 15-week, three-unit course titled, “The Holocaust,” at Notre Dame de Namur University (NDNU) in Belmont, Calif. When I attend Holocaust education conferences in Jerusalem at Yad Vashem, the Israeli institution dedicated to Holocaust memory, education, and research, other educators express envy that I have so much time to devote to this sensitive curriculum.

As a former faculty administrator at NDNU, I know the importance of keeping curricula current and relevant and very much appreciate my stand-alone course on the Holocaust. Last year, with the blessing of my department chair, Dr. Judy Buller, I applied for and received a generous Faculty Development Grant from the University to record my guest speakers, all of whom are in their 80’s or 90’s.

Herman Shine is not only an Auschwitz survivor, but also one of the few who escaped from Auschwitz-Buna and survived. Read about Herman here: [www.mercurynews.com/ci\\_19256055](http://www.mercurynews.com/ci_19256055). Michael Franzblau, M.D., is an international expert on the Nazi abuses of medical practice. Browse to this link to read his discussion of Nazi doctors: [www.mazal.org/archive/documents/Franzblau/Franzblau01/FRA01.htm](http://www.mazal.org/archive/documents/Franzblau/Franzblau01/FRA01.htm). Rolf Beier is a former member of Hitler youth and the Wehrmacht, but came from a pacifist family. He married an American Jewish woman shortly after the war and in 2001 at the age of 79, became a



The memorial statues at the Ravensbrück concentration camp. Photo by photojournalist Ira Nowinski.

Jew by choice. You can read his story here: [www.jweekly.com/article/full/26983/german-who-fought-for-hitler-happier-man-as-a-jew/](http://www.jweekly.com/article/full/26983/german-who-fought-for-hitler-happier-man-as-a-jew/).

These have been my guest speakers for at least the last five years. It is humbling that for 18 years, student feedback has been almost universal that the best thing about my course is the guest speakers. I dread the day when I no longer have the living voices of those who lived through this era to speak to my class. Fortunately, the digital recordings provided by my grant will help fill in the gaps.

I have also kept my Holocaust course current by incorporating a greater emphasis on genocide. Across the nation, Holocaust Studies Departments are rebranding as “The Holocaust and Genocide Studies.” For the NDNU Founder’s Day faculty presentations, I created a Powerpoint poster display titled, “The Holocaust as a Model for Genocide Prevention.”

My presentation began with a discussion of the definition of “genocide” as coined by Raphael Lemkin in 1944. Lemkin, 1900–1959, was a Polish-Jewish lawyer whose family died in the Holocaust. He devoted his life to getting genocide recognized as an international crime. He persisted despite the inertia of the “international community” at that time and permanently changed how crimes against humanity are viewed and prosecuted.

Defying linguistic protocols which dictate that new terms should derive either from Latin or Greek, Lemkin coined “genocide” from the Greek word, *genos* (race, tribe); and the Latin word, *cide* (killing). Lemkin’s initiative to outlaw genocide and crimes against humanity culminated in the 1948 Geneva Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide. Lemkin was twice nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts.

Students have trouble understanding how the genocide of the Jews could take place in a society as “advanced” as Germany. Over the years, I developed an eight-stage non-linear model that helped students understand the gradual progression from normal society to extermination, as follows: **Identification:** defining who is a Jew, forced wearing of the Star of David; **Discrimination:** political, cultural, professional via Nuremberg Laws; **Dehumanization:** propaganda campaigns, Jews depicted as vermin, sub-human; **Aryanization:** economic deprivation, confiscating businesses, excluding Jews from professions and civil service; **Ghettoization:** physical separation, curfews; **Deportation:** relocation “to the East,” to slave labor camps, transit camps or death camps; **Extermination:** by death camp gassings, disease, *Einsatzgruppen*,

starvation, torture; and **Denial:** death marches, destroying records, revisionism, minimization. These stages of the Holocaust overlap, and many of the earlier stages continued as the momentum toward extermination increased.

My NDNU presentation listed those stages with explanation and compared them with a “generic” model of the stages of genocide, as agreed to by contemporary scholars. I explain to students that the purpose of defining these stages is so that the “international community” can take appropriate steps to prevent genocide from happening.

Students easily notice the overlap between these two topologies, as follows, **Classification:** “Us vs. them”; **Symbolization:** use of hate symbols; **Dehumanization:** Equate “them” with vermin, animals, disease; **Organization:** training of special army units or militias to murder; **Polarization:** Extremists drive the groups apart. Hate groups broadcast polarizing propaganda. Extremist terrorism targets moderates, intimidating and silencing the center; **Preparation:** Victims are identified and separated out because of their ethnic or religious identity. Death lists are drawn up. Members of victim groups are forced to wear identifying symbols. **Extermination:** mass killings may provoke revenge killings (bilateral genocide, e.g. Burundi); **Denial:** burn bodies, intimidate witnesses, blame the victims. Scholars used Holocaust history to forge these stages.

To read the appropriate intervention, at each stage, needed by the international community to stop genocide, read the explanation by Genocide Watch, an NGO whose “purpose is to build an international movement to prevent and stop genocide,” at this link: [www.genocidewatch.org/aboutgenocide/8stagesofgenocide.html](http://www.genocidewatch.org/aboutgenocide/8stagesofgenocide.html).

To the extent that recent gassings by Syrian President Bashar al-Assad occurred within the context of Sunni vs. Shi’a Islamists, the gassings constitute an act of genocide. I admit that when confronted by current events such as President Obama lobbying Congress to approve a military strike over Syria to prevent future such gassings, I see the event through the filter of genocide prevention. Within me, the conflict is between my inherent pacifism and my belief that the use of chemical weapons by a tyrant will not stop without outside intervention. It is not an easy decision, whether or not the United States should become militarily engaged with Syria.

I pray that our President and leaders in Congress will find the wisdom to stop Assad from his criminal behavior without creating more warfare and loss of innocent lives. Those of us whose memory of the

Holocaust is ever present know that there is a time when appeasement of tyranny will not work. If the United States will not protect the innocent and vulnerable world-wide, who will? Most of us who are 2nd gen have memory of the time when unspeakable atrocities occurred and the world did nothing. Are we now, once again, at that point?

If a friend emailed you an announcement, “For the first time two major organizations, Generations of the Shoah International (GSI) and the World Federation of Jewish Child Survivors of the Holocaust and Descendants (WFJCSHD) will hold a joint conference for the Holocaust survivor community” from Nov. 1–4, 2013 near Las Vegas, both you and your friend are probably 2nd generation Holocaust survivors. If you are seriously interested in attending, for more information browse to: <http://cts.vresp.com/c/?GenerationsoftheShoa/604b326453/1a9d54629e/6c38b0b17b>. If you clicked on this link, it proves that you are 2nd (or 3rd) generation.

*Dr. Zimmerman is professor emerita at Notre Dame de Namur University in Belmont, Calif., where she continues to teach the Holocaust course. She can be reached at [mzimmerman@ndnu.edu](mailto:mzimmerman@ndnu.edu). ☆*



## BACKALENICK

(continued from page 10)

reverse the values of their parents, whatever they might be. Julie has nowhere to go, when she chooses to rebel, but away from secularism and into religion.

Mensch adds further complications between husband and wife – she is successful in her career, while he struggles and fails as a writer. Added to the mix is Julie’s friend Bernard, an aspiring filmmaker, whose confused creative efforts focus on Julie as his star. All four, to do Mensch justice, are sharply-drawn characters.

Moreover, director Mark Brokaw directs briskly, supported by a first-rate cast. In the hands of Brokaw and his talented cast – Katie Broad, Johanna Day, Aidan Kunze, and Reg Rogers – *Oblivion* provides an entertaining evening. Characters play off each other with intensity, and the drama comes to life.

But *Oblivion* could have offered so much more – if the underlying ideas had leaped out of the page – fresh, original, and provocative.

*Theater critic Irene Backalenick covers theater for national and regional publications. She has a Ph.D. in theater criticism from City University Graduate Center. Her book East Side Story – Ten Years with the Jewish Repertory Theatre won a first-place national book award in history. She welcomes comments at [IreneBack@sbcglobal.net](mailto:IreneBack@sbcglobal.net) and*



## Yiddish for Everyday

BY HENYA CHAIET

## Childhood memories in the sukkah

**Ah gooten un gehzunter yor alleh meineh Yiddish lehenershaft un frynt.** (A good and healthy New Year to all my Yiddish readership and friends.)

**Ich vil eich dertzalen vegem mein zaydes sukeh.** (I want to tell you about my zayde’s sukkah.)

**Yeder yor glych nauch Yom Kippur fleckt der zayde tzuzamen shtelen zein sukeh.** (Every year right after Yom Kippur my zayde would put up his sukkah.)

**Err haut dos gehmacht fuhn bretter un zeh flegen zich tzuknaytzen tzu avet laygen.** (He made them from wooden boards and they would fold up to store.)

**Mein baubeh fleckt bah shanen dee sukeh mit ah forhang ahf dos klehneh vindeh un klehneh eppelach fuhn zayer baim.** (My grandmother would beautify the sukkah with little curtains on the window and she hung crabapples from their tree.)

**Yeder nacht flegen zeh einladen ayn tauchter un eareh kinder essen in zayer sukeh.** (Every night they would invite one [of their five] daughter[s] and her children to eat in their sukkah.)

**Shabbos, nauch shul, flegen dee gantzeh mishpokhe zein tzuzamen far Kiddish in der zaydes sukeh.** (*Shabbos*, after *shul*, the entire family would have *Kiddish* in zayde’s sukkah.)

**Mein zayde fleckt essen un shlaufen in der sukeh.** (My grandfather would eat and sleep in the sukkah.)

**Daus zeinen meineh gooteh zichroyes fuhn dem leiber yomtov sukahs.** (These are my good memories of the loving holiday of *Sukkos*.)

*Henya Chalet is the Yiddish name for Mrs. A. Helen Feinn. Born in 1924 ten days before Passover, her parents had come to America one year prior. They spoke only Yiddish at home so that is all she spoke until age five when she started kindergarten. She then learned English, but has always loved Yiddish and speaks it whenever possible. Chalet lived in La Porte and Michigan City, Ind., from 1952 to 1978 and currently resides in Walnut Creek, Calif. Email: [afeinn87@gmail.com](mailto:afeinn87@gmail.com). ☆*



invites you to visit her website: [nytheater.scene.com](http://nytheater.scene.com) or at: [jewish-theatre.com](http://jewish-theatre.com). ☆



## Media Watch

By RABBI ELLIOT B. GERTEL

### How I Met Your Mother, Rules of Engagement and Necessary Roughness

Last TV season, *How I Met Your Mother* offered an episode called “The Bro Mitzvah” to celebrate Barney’s bachelor party. It seems that endearingly obnoxious Barney (Neil Patrick Harris) has envisioned his ideal bachelor party as a *bar mitzvah*-like ceremony. He has dreamed of wearing “bro-mulkes” and spinning the “bro-del” while listing his wish-list of activities in a Torah-like scroll called a “bro-rah,” written with “he-bro” lettering. Among the items of “wisdom” inscribed in the scroll are “booze,” “cigars,” “strippers.”

Friend Ted (Josh Radnor) briefly questions the tastefulness of Barney’s program with a sarcastic and predictable pun, “Not at all bro-offensive.” But the production crew obviously went to a lot of trouble to produce a facsimile “Torah” and to have Ted toast “*Mazal tov*” at the end, even though none of the characters has been depicted as Jewish (though Radnor and another lead actor are Jewish, and there was a line in one episode which suggested that Ted is “half Jewish.”). The “moral” of the episode, as written by Chris Harris, is that Barney’s friends concocted an “awesome” plan to act out his bachelor party requests in “the most twisted way possible,” making a tongue-in-cheek morality play of his “Torah” list which mocks both the list and morality!



“The Bro Mitzvah” episode on *How I Met Your Mother*. (© CBS)

The episode is not so much about the bar mitzvah ceremony as about the level of “Jewish humor” of the show’s production and writing staff at this point in their lives. Strangely and coincidentally, this was not the only CBS series with bar mitzvah on its mind that night (April 29, 2013). The beginning of the next show,

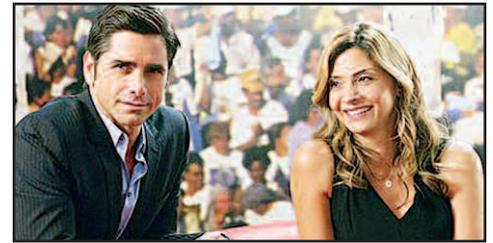
*Rules of Engagement*, featured a line given to the show’s lead character, Jeff (Patrick Warburton), who says to his wife: “You know what else is romantic? The coat room in the boathouse. Don’t act like you don’t remember that bar mitzvah.”

Personally, I hope that *Rules* writer Mike Haukom does *not* join *How I Met* writer Chris Harris in a collaborative bar mitzvah episode.

Did the USA series, *Necessary Roughness*, conclude this summer season with some telling names? The engaging program is about divorced psychologist, Dr. Danielle “Dani” Santino (Callie Thorne), who is trying to pick up her life and her career and to raise her teenage children after her husband’s extramarital affair ends their marriage. She lands on her feet as the counselor to a football team, achieving a modicum of success in advising star player Terrence “T.K.” King (Mehcad Brooks). She encounters intrigue and romance in her relationships and challenges with the team, but even more when she takes a position (in the third season, just ended) at a Manhattan sports and entertainment management firm headed by scheming Connor McClane (John Stamos).

By this summer’s finale we learned that Connor has been conspiring to dope up his sports clients with a cutting edge DNA-changing anabolic hormone that decreases recovery time from injuries. From behind the scenes, Connor almost lures T.K. into taking the prohibited elixir, but Dani, haunted by the suicide of a colleague, has labored with dogged determination to unearth the rot within the firm. Her mysterious love interest helps her to solve the mystery. She has definitely helped T.K. to find his moral compass, and he demonstrates fine, even heroic character both off and on the field.

The firm’s principals have enlisted a Dr. Strauss (William Ragsdale) to be the prime peddler of the illegal, untested drugs. Also, T.K.’s new girlfriend-then-fiancee, a model named Sheera Kane (Kate Miner), is quite open about her hopes that their romance be exploited for a lucrative marketing deal. After T.K. is injured, Sheera disapproves of his refusal to be shot up with the gene-changing dope, especially after she learns that he can only get caught if comparisons can be made to previous DNA readings. Lacking in morality, Sheera vehemently proclaims, “It’s not cheating if no one knows about it.” T.K. has to remind her that “juicing” with the stuff could ruin his health as well as his reputation. When Sheera protests that it is not in her five year plan to be married to a has-been, T. K. declares, “You don’t have a heart, Sheera, and I’m not the wizard. I can’t give you one no matter how



(L-R) John Stamos and Callie Thorne in *Necessary Roughness*. (© USA Network)

hard I try.” He rightly accuses her of regarding love as a tool and breaks off their engagement.

Since *Necessary Roughness* is about a psychologist, I would pose the question: What might be in the psyche of writers and producers who identify no Jewish characters per se, but name their immoral, corrupting personae Sheera (a form of the Hebrew name, Shira) and Strauss? Ironically, they have Dani give TK classic Jewish advice on the importance of a good name: “There’s no greater bling [a term between them] than a man’s reputation.”

While pondering the question posed above, we ought to consider that last summer writers/producers Liz Kruger and Craig Shapiro, who also penned this season’s finale, couldn’t resist exposing Dani to a hard-nosed IRS agent named Darryl Zelman (Marc Farley), who was identified as a “*nosher*.” Zelman, who was insensitive to Dani’s suffering because of the financial and other sins of her ex-husband, is ready to come to “a sort of compromise” when offered a favorite dish which she prepares well, but is then visited by a severe allergic reaction to hazelnuts.

Elderly Jews were mentioned in a sequence in which Dani looks for T.K. in the hospital. Scared that Terrence had passed away, Dani is told by a nurse, “There was a complication. He didn’t make it...Mr. Rothstein was a lovely man.” Clearly, we are supposed to be relieved that Mr. Rothstein passed away and not Terrence. After Dani returns home to find her son in bed with his tutor, a senior at his high school, Dani lets him know, “Mrs. Bernstein’s going to be your tutor now – old, ugly, Mrs. Bernstein.”

Is there some pattern with Jewish names – with name-calling, as it were – in this series, where the young and middle-aged people so named are morally deficient or inconsistent, and the elders are conveniently dead or ugly?

Rabbi Gertel has been spiritual leader of congregations in New Haven and Chicago. He is the author of two books, *What Jews Know About Salvation* and *Over the Top Judaism: Precedents and Trends in the Depiction of Jewish Beliefs and Observances in Film and Television*. He has been media critic for *The National Jewish Post & Opinion* since 1979. ✨

# Book Reviews

REVIEWED BY MORTON I. TEICHER

## Jewish influence in the world of film

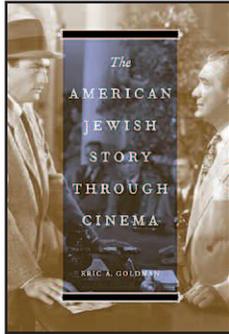
*The American Jewish Story Through Cinema.* By Eric A. Goldman. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2013. 264 Pages. \$25 – Paperback; \$55 – hardcover.

As the title suggests, this book explores American Jewish history by examining movies as reflections of the experiences encountered by American Jews. Author Goldman is well-qualified to undertake this task. He is a teacher in the field of film studies, lecturing at Queens College, Yeshiva University, and the Jewish Theological Seminary.

After an over-view introduction, Goldman devotes six chapters to looking in depth at nine films, beginning with the first talking picture, *The Jazz Singer*, starring Al Jolson, in which the stresses and strains between American Jews and their immigrant parents are explored. Later versions appeared that featured Danny Thomas, Jerry Lewis, and Neil Diamond. Yiddish variations of *The Jazz Singer* were also produced. The immigrant generation is personified in the father, a cantor who is ill or dying just before *Yom Kippur*. The American Jew has inherited his father's singing ability but is using it to become a Broadway star and the conflict focuses on whether or not he will take his father's place in the synagogue for *Kol Nidre*.

*Gentleman's Agreement* and *Crossfire*, both released in 1947, explored anti-Semitism in the United States. Interestingly, several leaders of American Jewish organizations and Hollywood moguls, mostly Jews, were opposed to making these films. It was a non-Jewish producer, Daryl F. Zanuck, who successfully advocated making *Gentleman's Agreement*. Both films were well received and, according to Goldman, they "were part of a coming of age for America's Jews."

A chapter on Irwin Shaw's *The Young Lions* ably examines how this film represents American Jews in the period following World War II. This is followed by a chapter on Barbra Streisand, focusing on *The Way We Were* and *The Prince of Tides*. The last two chapters discuss *Avalon*, *Liberty Heights*, and *Everything Is*



*Illuminated*, concluding rather abruptly without any effort to summarize what has been so ably presented.

This surprisingly unexpected ending detracts from what is otherwise a thoughtful consideration of how American Jewish life has been depicted on the screen. Goldman leaves the door wide open for a sequel on the contemporary Hollywood scene in which he might examine the contribution of the Coen brothers, Steven Spielberg, Holocaust films, Jewish actors today and other manifestations of Jewish influence in the world of film.

## 13th book a superlative spy thriller

*The English Girl.* By Daniel Silva. New York: HarperCollins, 2013. 483 Pages. \$27.99.

Before publishing his first novel (*The Unlikely Spy*) in 1996, Daniel Silva was a journalist, serving as the Middle East correspondent in Cairo for United Press International. He then worked for CNN's Washington office as a producer until 1997 when he left to write full time. His 1996 novel was followed by two more in 1998 and 1999 before Silva began the Gabriel Allon series in 2000 with *The Kill Artist*. *The English Girl* is the 13th book featuring Gabriel Allon, a Mossad agent who, between assignments, works as a skilled art restorer, specializing in Old Master paintings. He is a master spy whose exciting adventures put him in the same category as James Bond and the books about him are popular best sellers, consistently demonstrating Silva's superlative control of the spy thriller genre.

The English girl is Madeline Hart, a rising star in British politics who seems on the way to a seat in Parliament and to a cabinet position. However, she is confronted by a serious hurdle. Madeline is having a secret love affair with the Prime Minister that would ruin them both if it were revealed. The risk becomes intensified when Madeline disappears while on vacation in Corsica. Her kidnappers have threatened to kill her in seven days and, eventually, they demand a ransom payment of 10 million euros. Since the Prime Minister is a wealthy man, this sum is within his means. However, he cannot afford a scandal and so in order to

maintain secrecy while insuring that Madeline is released alive, the Prime Minister enlists the help of Gabriel Allon.

What follows is an exciting series of escalating and intriguingly complex adventures that move from Corsica to Israel, to London, to several different locations in France and England and, finally to Moscow where Allon has many powerful enemies. The Russian oil and gas industry is involved through a Russian energy company controlled by Russia's foreign intelligence service. Killings and narrow escapes keep readers on edge as the story hurtles to a startling conclusion. Some readers will undoubtedly insist that this is Silva's finest story to date.

A final note – throughout the Gabriel Allon series, he has been urged to become the head of Mossad. This pressure comes to a conclusion as the book ends. In an author's note, Silva tells his readers that the Russians are increasing their spying activities. This may be a hint to Allon's future activities, regardless of his status in Mossad. Whatever future adventures Silva has in store for Gabriel Allon, his many fans will eagerly await the next book in the series.

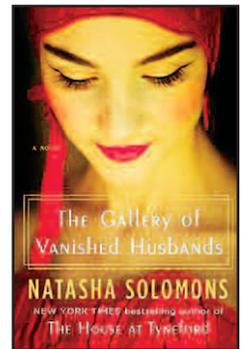
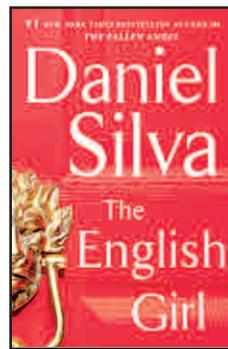
## Novel about woman without "get" (Jewish divorce)

*The Gallery of Vanished Husbands.* By Natasha Solomons. New York: Plume, 2013. 339 Pages. \$16.

This is the third novel written by Natasha Solomons who lives in Dorset, England with her husband and young son. *Mr. Rosenblum Dreams* in English was followed by best-seller, *The House at Tyneford*, which takes place during World War II. All three stories are set in England except for a brief episode in the United States in the newest book.

The protagonist, Juliet Montague, is celebrating her 30th birthday as the story opens in the London suburb where she lives near her observant parents with her two children, Frieda, age 11, and Leonard, age 8. When Juliet was 18, she married George; he left her six years later in 1952. Since he simply disappeared, there was no divorce. In accordance with Jewish tradition, this made Juliet an *aguna*, a chained woman, since George had not

(see Teicher, page 18)





## My Kosher Kitchen

REVIEWED BY SYBIL KAPLAN

### Fish dishes

This is one of my favorite fish casseroles and it's really quick to make.

#### Salmon Loaf

(8 servings)

- 2 lbs salmon (canned or cooked and flaked)
- 1/2 small grated onion
- 4 eggs
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1-1/4 to 1-1/2 cups crushed corn flakes

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Grease a large loaf pan. In a bowl, mix together salmon, onion, eggs, sour cream and corn flakes. Mold into a loaf shape and place in pan. Bake in preheated oven one hour.

#### Cucumber Dressing

- 1 large chopped cucumber
- 1/4 cup dill weed
- 2 cups sour cream

Mix together and serve on the side with salmon loaf.

#### Leftover Chinese-style Tuna Casserole

(8 servings)

- 1 cup Chinese noodles
- 2-1/2 cups water and
- 3-1/3 tsp. cream of mushroom soup mix\*
- 2 cans tuna
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1/2 cup water chestnuts or bamboo shoots or 1/4 cup of each
- 1/2 cup chopped onions
- 2 tsp. soy sauce
- 2 tsp. sherry
- Chinese noodles

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a casserole or rectangular baking dish.

Combine noodles, soup mix, water, tuna, vegetables, soy sauce and sherry and blend. Put in greased baking dish. Bake in preheated oven 30 minutes.

\*You can also use a can of cream of mushroom soup and half a can of milk instead.

#### Fish, Spinach and Noodle Casserole

(8 servings)

- 2 Tbsp. margarine
- 3 Tbsp. chopped scallions
- salt and pepper to taste
- 2/3 cup dry white wine
- 1-1/2 pounds spinach

## New generation of Jewish writers debuts in Yiddish

You can't find today's most exciting young Jewish writers and poets in *The New Yorker* or the *American Literary Review*. They're writing for the newly redesigned *Yugntruf* – and they're writing in Yiddish.

After a five-year hiatus, this Yiddish-language literary journal of poetry, short stories, editorials, and articles has reemerged as a bright, colorful magazine published by *Yugntruf* – Youth for Yiddish, a non-profit dedicated to spreading *mame-loshn* among young people worldwide.

"The *Yugntruf* journal is now the only non-Hasidic Yiddish language magazine written by and for young people," said Jordan Kutzik, who co-edited the reborn publication with recent Harvard graduate Arun Viswanath. "Yiddish writers need to have an outlet for their work; *Yugntruf* is a testament to the continued cultural creativity taking place in the Yiddish language."

Now available in hard copy or as online download at [magcloud.com](http://magcloud.com), this newest issue of *Yugntruf* attracted a flood of submissions from young Yiddish writers in the US, Israel, Germany, Sweden, Mexico and Argentina through the journal's 2012 Literary Competition for Poetry and Fiction.

Forty years of past *Yugntruf* issues have been digitized and can be read at [www.yugntruf.org](http://www.yugntruf.org). For more information please call Jordan Kutzik at 267-257-8555 or email him at [jordank@yugntruf.org](mailto:jordank@yugntruf.org). ★



- 3 cups noodles
- 8 fish filets
- 6 Tbsp. margarine
- 6 Tbsp. flour
- 3 cups milk
- 2 egg yolks
- 3 Tbsp. grated Parmesan cheese

Preheat oven to 350°F. Place fish in greased baking dish with a little water and bake 10 minutes. Remove from oven. Raise temperature to 400°. Place 2 Tbsp. margarine in frying pan. Add scallions, salt, pepper and wine. Cover and cook 10 minutes. Place spinach in boiling water. Cover and cook 2 minutes. Drain. Cook noodles in boiling water 7 minutes. Drain. Melt 6 Tbsp. margarine in a saucepan. Add flour to make a roux then add milk. Add fish liquid. Cook 5 minutes then add egg yolks.

Grease a large casserole. Spoon in noodles then add spinach. Place fish on top. Spoon sauce on top. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Bake in preheated

## TEICHER

(continued from page 17)

given her a get, a Jewish divorce. She remained married to him and was unable to marry another man. The problem of the aguna and the stigma attached to this status has been addressed by contemporary American Jews, especially the late Orthodox rabbi, Emanuel Rackman, with limited success.

Juliet's parents are determined to find George in order to arrange for a get so that she can remarry. They are driven in part by her going out with other men. Several of them are artists who paint her portrait. She decides to open an art gallery, giving up her job in her father's eye glass factory. The gallery is quite successful, making Juliet a wealthy woman and an important part of London's art scene in the 1960s. She has a romantic affair with one of the artists and so, hoping to marry her lover, she is unable to refuse her parents when they succeed in locating George through a private detective.

They obtained a copy of the *New York Jewish Daily Forward* that has photographs of 20 men, including George, labeled A Gallery of Vanished Husbands. For many years, this rogue's gallery actually appeared in the paper several times a week. An address for George in California was identified. To learn what happened subsequently requires reading this first-rate book that concludes with an "Author's Note."

Solomons ends by telling her readers that the actual model for her story is her husband's grandmother, Rosie, who is buried in Glasgow, Scotland. In 1948, Rosie's husband left her with two small children and without any money. She became an aguna who was never divorced and who never remarried. Years later, when she heard that he had died, she was "perturbed." Rosie managed to stay alive long enough to attend the *bar mitzvah* of her grandson, David, who is the author's husband. Although the author never met her husband's grandmother, she heard many stories about her and was "inspired by her" to write this book. She finishes by saying that she hopes her character, Juliet Montague "possesses a dash of Rosie Solomons."

Dr. Morton I. Teicher is the Founding Dean, Wurzweiler School of Social Work, Yeshiva University and Dean Emeritus, School of Social Work, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. ★



400°F. oven 15 minutes. Reduce heat to 350°F. and bake 25 minutes more.

Sybil Kaplan is a journalist, food and feature writer, and author of nine kosher cookbooks. ★



## Book Review

REVIEWED BY  
PROFESSOR ARNOLD AGES

# Reflections on 21st century Judaism

*American Post-Judaism: Identity and Renewal in a Postethnic Society.* By Shaul Magid. Indiana University Press. (Bloomington, 2013) 388 Pages.

It is rather unfortunate that the name of this extravagantly important book has been clouded by a title that reflects rarefied academic jargon – which will serve as a bow wow warning to the non specialist to approach its contents. (The book jacket unfortunately is as disappointing as the title.)



This is a pity because Magid's sober reflections on Judaism in the 21st century is one of the most profound, challenging and irritating studies this reviewer has encountered in years. They deserve to be exposed to a large reading public because of the author's control of classic Jewish sources and his willingness to engage in lateral thinking. This exercise will unnerve some of the book's readers, as they mentally refute many of the author's analyses but the investment in time is well worth the energy required to grasp Magid's universe.

The author is a professor at Indiana University who has spent many years in Israel, has dabbled in Hassidic-mystical lore and had analyzed with unaccustomed acuity of vision the seismic changes in recent years within Jews and Judaism, especially on the American scene. His personal odyssey from Orthodoxy to a more liberal theological outlook (which he does not discuss in this book – a pity!) reminds one of Renan's famous quip that the best person to analyze religion is one who once believed but no longer does.

In a book as detailed and complicated as is Magid's thesis it is impossible to isolate every theme which the author addresses (and he does so magisterially) but there are several that this reviewer at least, has detached for special consideration. They include: the consequences of American democracy for the freedom of Jews to redefine themselves, the examination of

the possibility of expanding our idea of conversion to Judaism, the identification of specific individuals who are leading the charge to rethink the lineaments of Judaism, the success of the Artsroll publishing empire and – new interpretations of the Holocaust.

Magid holds that the sociologists of the 1960s who spoke about America as a great melting pot were actually right on, despite the occasional scorn that was heaped on them when their theories were first pronounced. That melting pot, according to Magid, has blurred the frontier lines between ethnic groups, religious collectives and racial divisions.

Insofar as Jews are concerned, intermarriage is a clear indication that the rigid barriers between Jews and gentiles have been breached and in a peculiarly American way. Magid cites the example of an online organization of intermarried Jews who seek the support of like-minded people who do not see conversion as a solution to a problem. They express warmth towards their non Jewish partners and solicit advice and accommodation within American society.

The author is very audacious in his ideas about conversion suggesting that perhaps the time has come to welcome less stringent norms in the interest of embracing a larger tent of people. Magid, of course, is the theological chess player par excellence and he anticipates every argument the opposition might care to lob at him with regard to this issue. Thus he invokes Zalman Schachter-Shalomi's category of the "*ger toshav*" (the Biblical resident alien) or those known as "*yirei Shomayim*" – God fearing people, as a possible models for the possible softening of traditional standards for conversion to Judaism. Magid knows that this category of non Jews is an inexact model but he nonetheless uses it with quiet gusto to further his argument.

Equality spirited is the meditation Magid supplies anent Holocaust interpretation. He covers the foothills by paying respect to Fackenheim, Greenberg, Rubinstein and some of the other outstanding exegetes of the Jewish tragedy in Europe but he provides even more space to examining the ideas of equally intense commentators such as Jacob Neusner, Henry Feingold and Jeffrey Sandler. Magid is especially respectful of Neusner, who although an expert in ancient Judaism, has written cogently about the Holocaust as an event inducted through the prism of American society. With Feingold and Alexander, the universalizing element of

the Holocaust is deftly dissected to show how the Jewish trauma has produced a global moral equation.

But probably the most rewarding of Magid's observations on this issue comes with his repeated references to Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, the onetime Hillel Director at Canada's University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, for many years a professor at Temple University and a man actively involved in both interfaith activities and Jewish Renewal – of which he has been a leading exponent and to Shlomo Carlebach, the late lamented Hassidic troubadour. This reviewer must confess some surprise at Magid's elevation of these two figures to great heights as the inaugurators of Jewish renewal on the North American continent.

The reasons for the author's enthusiasm for Schachter-Shalomi and Carlebach will not be embraced by everyone but Magid's rationale for his apotheosis of the two deserves a hearing. Although Carlebach is well known for his magnificent musical legacy as a "soul doctor" (in fact there is now a play about him on Broadway bearing that title – see review page 10), he did not write anything about Jewish theology, the Holocaust, or the State of Israel. Magid reports however, that after one of his concerts, he mentioned a propos, a discussion, about the Holocaust and the Torah that "perhaps it was the wrong Torah" that governed Jewish life in pre-war Europe.

This comment leads the author to a lengthy analysis of what exactly Carlebach was driving at when he uttered those words and the explanation comes, in part, from Schachter-Shalomi's surmise that the pre Holocaust generation was an insular one in which the Torah's strictures helped segregate Jews from gentiles and that perhaps it is time to "unsegregate" Jews from the non Jewish world. Magid, of course, is ready with his own rebuttal of this thesis by alluding to the fact that Jewish insularity was caused by centuries of anti-Semitism and not by the Torah. Yet after reading Magid's exploration of the outreach approach that Schachter-Shalomi and Carlebach use and used in their métiers, the reader is left with the disconcerting notion that there may be some merit to Carlebach's offhand remark.

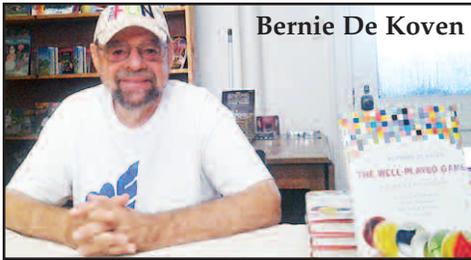
Shaul Magid's book reminds this reviewer of Kafka's idea that a good book is like an ice axe that opens up the frozen oceans of our mind.

Arnold Ages is "Distinguished Emeritus Professor" University of Waterloo, Ontario, Canada and the Scholar-in-Residence at the Beth Tzedec Synagogue, Toronto Canada. ✨



Shaul Magid





Bernie De Koven

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The new waterfall park called Teddy Park across from The Old City in Jerusalem. Photo by Reuven Schwartz (8/15/13).



(Above) Sapling from "Anne Frank's tree."  
(Right) Sukkah I attended. (see Editorial p. 2)