



The University of Oklahoma
The SCHUSTERMAN CENTER
for JUDAIC and ISRAEL STUDIES

Volume 13

Fall 2016

One Center, Four Books

Joseph: Portraits Through the Ages

by Alan Levenson



Who doesn't love the story of Joseph? Individually, we have history's first rags-to-riches tale, a 17 year old braggart transformed into a consummate administrator. On a familial level, sibling rivalry gives way to repentance and reconciliation. Nationally, we see a classic Court Jew serving Pharaoh, but looking after his own family. Theologically, God neither speaks nor directs the hero, but

readers understand that Joseph finds success in fulfillment of divine goals. Questions emerge everywhere. As Goethe wrote, the story is too good to be so short and one wishes to fill in the details. Readers always have. What was Joseph like as a husband and as a father? Did Joseph forgive his brothers — did they accept him? Was Joseph savvy or did he serve the Pharaoh too well — leaving native serfs willing to enslave foreigners? Did he grasp that Judah's descendants, not his own, would eventually rule the nation?

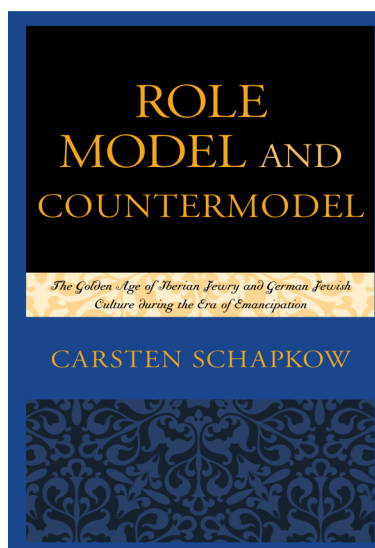
Joseph: Portraits Through the Ages began as a study guide: my questions, with answers provided by readers from the Midrash to modern Bible scholars to my own students.

Good readers in every era will identify characters and incidents that cry out for elaboration. Sometimes a rabbi like Rashi offers the most satisfying response (who was the nameless wanderer that met Joseph and directed him to his brothers?) and sometimes a hard-headed biblical historian does. Who sold Joseph to whom? At times, when the biblical text just won't say, we need a creative leap from the German novelist Thomas Mann, author of a 1,200-page novel.

Joseph: Portraits Through the Ages retells Genesis 37-50, focusing on the characters and incidents that have prompted the most contested responses. I believe Joseph's story has only gotten richer in the re-telling. If you appreciate Joseph's interpreters even more, my book has succeeded.

Role Model and Countermodel: The Golden Age of Iberian Jewry and German-Jewish Culture During the Era of Emancipation

by Carsten Schapkow



Role Model and Countermodel. The Golden Age of Iberian Jewry and German-Jewish Culture during the Era of Emancipation explores the "Golden Age" of Sephardic Jewry on the Iberian Peninsula and its perception in German Jewish culture during the era of emancipation.

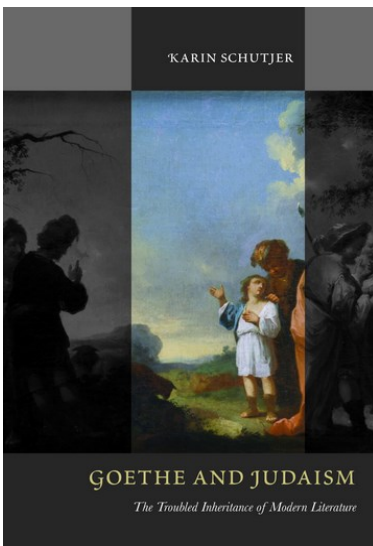
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Faculty Publications (Continued from page 1)

Role Model and Countermodel: The Golden Age of Iberian Jewry and German-Jewish Culture During the Era of Emancipation (Continued)

For Jews living in Germany, the history of Sephardic Jewry developed into a historical example with its distinctive valence and signature against the pressure to assimilate, and the emergence of antisemitism in Germany. Iberian Jewry provided, moreover, a forum to engage in internal dialogue amongst Jews and external dialogue with the German majority society about challenging questions of religious, political and national identity. In this respect, the perception of prominent Sephardic Jews as intercultural mediators was key to emphasizing the skills and values Jews had to offer earlier civilizations. German Jews invoked this past, making their case for a Jewish role in present and future societies, especially in Germany.

Goethe and Judaism: The Troubled Inheritance of Modern Literature by Karin Schutjer



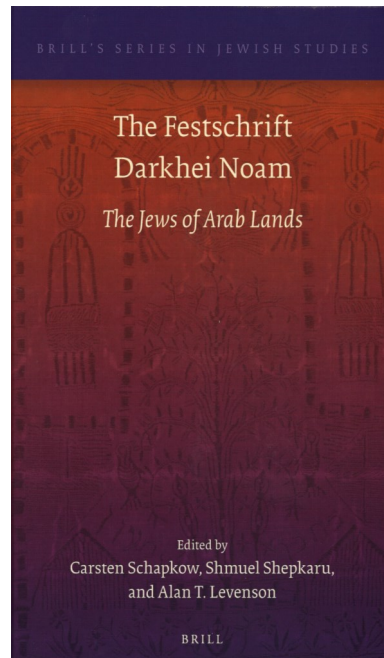
In *Goethe and Judaism*, Karin Schutjer examines the iconic German writer's engagement with, and portrayal of, Judaism. Her premise is that Goethe's conception of Modernity — his apprehensions as well as his most affirmative vision concerning the trajectory of his age — is deeply entwined with his conception of Judaism. Schutjer argues that behind his very mixed representations of Jews and Judaism stand

crucial tensions within his own thinking and a distinct anxiety of influence.

Goethe draws, for example, from the Jewish ban on idolatry for his own semiotics, from the narratives of nomadic wanderings in the Hebrew Bible for his own trope of the existential wanderer, from the history of Jewish exile for his own emergent conception of a German *Kulturnation*. Schutjer thus uncovers the surprising debt to Judaism owed by one the most formative thinkers in German history.

The Festschrift Darkhei Noam: The Jews of Arab Lands

Edited by Carsten Schapkow, Shmuel Shepkaru, and Alan Levenson



Carsten Schapkow, Shmuel Shepkaru, and Alan Levenson edited *The Festschrift Darkhei Noam: The Jews of Arab Lands* in honor of Norman (Noam) Stillman, the founding director of the OU Schusterman Center for Judaic and Israel Studies and holder of the Schusterman/Josey Chair in Judaic History until his retirement last year. Twelve distinguished scholars contributed essays to the volume and Walker Robbins (Ph.D. 2015), a student of Stillman's, compiled a selected

bibliography of his writings. Reprinted here is University of Oklahoma President David L. Boren's foreword.

It is a great pleasure to add a few words to this Festschrift in celebration of Dr. Norman Stillman's service and career to the University of Oklahoma.

Dr. Stillman has been part of our University family since 1995 and has been a tremendous influence on The Schusterman Center for Judaic and Israel Studies.

Throughout his career, Dr. Stillman has published many important books, articles, and has garnered many awards for his work. His scholarly posts have included the editorship of The Encyclopedia of Jews in the Islamic World. In my opinion, his greatest achievement has been on our students. He spent his life devoted to influencing and shaping the lives of students through teaching.

We as a University will never be able to say thank you enough to Norman Stillman for his service and dedication to the University and for the way he helped transform the Judaic and Israel Studies programs here at OU. He had many chances to go elsewhere, but he always chose to stay at OU and make a lasting difference here. On a personal level, his friendship means more to me than I can adequately express.

Professor Yael Lavender-Smith Joins Our Core Faculty



Yael Lavender-Smith

Yael Lavender-Smith joined OU as a lecturer of Modern Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics in August 2016, after teaching at Hunter College, Brooklyn College, Yeshiva University and New Mexico State University. She received her Ph.D. from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, having specialized in the connections between transformation and conversion narratives of the Early Modern and Classical periods.

She currently is working on a short-form monograph about Uriel da Costa, a Jewish convert who lived in Amsterdam in the 17th century, examining his dual commitments to Jewish and Christian societies. Lavender-Smith suggests that during the process of his religious transformation, Da Costa becomes “the other within” and a critic of Jewish society. A native of Israel, Lavender-Smith earned an M.A. and a B.A. in Hebrew and Comparative Literature and wrote her master’s thesis in Hebrew at Haifa University. At OU, she teaches Beginning Hebrew, Intermediate Hebrew, Israeli literature and culture and Jewish Literature. Joining her in Norman are her spouse, Jordan, and their daughter, Ariel (5).

Sara Coodin, Jill Hicks-Keeton and Mara Willard Join Our Associate Faculty

Sara Coodin was raised in Montréal, Québec, where she attended Jewish People’s and Peretz School, one of the city’s Jewish day schools and the only one to offer Yiddish-language instruction in a non-Orthodox setting. She was particularly influenced by the study of the Hebrew Bible and its rabbinic commentaries, a pursuit which translated into a passion for studying the works of William Shakespeare and the extensive critical legacy surrounding his plays. She obtained her masters of arts and doctoral degree in English literature from McGill University, and began working as an assistant professor in the Department of Classics and Letters at the 2010. She moved to Oklahoma with her husband, Kevin Butterfield, who currently serves as the director of the Institute for the American Constitutional Heritage at OU. Coodin’s work has focused on a wide range of philosophical and theological topics in Renaissance literature, including Renaissance Christian Hebraism, virtue ethics in Shakespeare, and early modern emotion. Her forthcoming book, *Is Shylock Jewish? The Moral Agency of Shakespeare’s Jews* (Edinburgh University Press, 2017) examines how Jewish moral agency has been constructed over the long afterlife of Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice* through interpretive elaborations on Hebrew Biblical stories. Currently, Coodin is working on a new book project that examines Yiddish writers’ creative reinterpretation of Shakespeare’s plays for the Yiddish stage, operated as a form of vernacular midrash, enabling writers and audiences to deliberate the changing nature of Jewish identity in the modern world.



Sara Coodin

Jill Hicks-Keeton joined OU as assistant professor of religious studies in August 2015, after teaching for two years at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. She earned her doctorate from the graduate program in religion at Duke University, having specialized in New Testament and Second Temple Jewish Literature. Her first book manuscript, entitled *Rewritten Gentiles: Conversion to Israel’s ‘Living God’ and Jewish Identity in Antiquity*, examines the sociological novelty of conversion in ancient Judaism and earliest Christianity with specific attention to literary strategies of boundary construction and enforcement. In this project, Hicks-Keeton depicts earliest Christianity as a participant in an ancient inter-Jewish debate about the legitimacy of gentile access to Jewish identity. In January 2016, she presented part of this research for the Schusterman Center’s JuSt Lunch Series in a talk titled “Mother and More: The Secret Life of Joseph’s Wife.” Hicks-Keeton has published on a number of ancient Jewish narratives, including the book of Tobit in the *Journal of Biblical Literature* and the *Additions to Esther* and *Joseph and Aseneth* in edited collections and handbooks. Hailing from Mississippi, Hicks-Keeton earned an M.T.S. from Duke Divinity School and a B.A. from Baylor University, where she was a University Scholar. At OU, she teaches Introduction to Religious Studies, Discovering the Apostle Paul, Introduction to the Bible, and Jesus of Nazareth. Joining her in Norman are her spouse, Bart, and their two sons, Luke, 4 and Liam, 1.



Jill Hicks-Keeton

Sara Coodin, Jill Hicks-Keeton and Mara Willard Join Our Associate Faculty (Continued)



Mara Willard

In 2015, **Mara Willard** joined OU as an assistant professor of religious studies, and also was honored to join as associated faculty of the Schusterman Center for Judaic and Israel Studies. Willard received her doctorate in the academic study of religion from Harvard University, with studies focused at the intersection of religion, ethics and politics in modern Europe and America. Prior to arriving at OU, she was a lecturer at Harvard Divinity School and Tufts University. Willard's first book demonstrates how the political and ethical thought Hannah Arendt is deeply informed a self-consciously modern reworking of religious texts, images and myths, both Christian and Jewish. The issues of this work, such as how religious imagination allows for certain kinds of critique and constructive possibilities, also informs her developing academics project. Willard is editing a series of essays on religion in the work of Toni Morrison, titled *Have Mercy*. Willard serves the American Academy of Religion as a member of the Committee on the Public Understanding of Religion. In this capacity, she spoke this past year at Georgetown University on a

panel titled "Religious Scholars and Government Engagement with Religion." Her reviews and articles have been published in the online journal *Religion & Politics*, the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, *Christianity & Literature*, and *Theology & Sexuality*. Willard is a native of Newton, Massachusetts, and holds a master of divinity degree from Harvard Divinity School. She graduated from Swarthmore College with distinction in history, during which time she also completed a semester of wilderness travel with the National Outdoor Leadership School in the Pacific Northwest. A breast cancer survivor, Willard has a particular dedication to women's health. She and her husband, Chris Railey, have 2 active sons, who instruct their parents the correct order in which to shout "Boomer Sooner"!

Kudos and Congratulations



Alan Levenson

Schusterman/Josey Chair and Program Director **Alan Levenson** was one of three organizers of a panel on religion and society, "The Fate of Nathan" at the German Studies Association in Washington D.C. He presented two papers at the Association of Jewish Studies: a biographical take on the "Jewish Mad-men" (also delivered at OU), and "Sage or Despot? The Case of Joseph" on a panel on biblical biography. He was a featured

speaker at a conference at Florida Atlantic University on the nexus of Biblical Studies and Jewish studies and spoke at the Jewish Museum of New York. He continues as section editor for *Wiley Compass*, an online religion journal. This coming year, he will lecture at Spertus Institute in Chicago, serve as Bronfman Distinguished Visiting Professor at the College of William & Mary, and present at the Association of Jewish Studies. He also will be leading an Sightseeing Sooners tour of Israel in March 2017.

Levenson was honored to assist in the funding efforts to establish the Noam Stillman Prize for Excellence in Jewish Studies, awarded to Tryce Hyman at the annual History Department banquet.

Misha Klein (Anthropology) presented a talk, "Kosher *Feijoada*, or Blending Contradictions into Identities," as part of a lecture series about Yiddish language and Jewish cuisine in the Americas and Europe at the University of Florida at Gainesville's Smathers Library Judaica Suite in April 2016. Her 2012 book, *Kosher Feijoada and Other Paradoxes of Jewish Life in São Paulo*, was released in paperback (University Press of Florida). In November, she participated in the "Jewish Life in the Americas" Symposium at the Schusterman Center, University of Texas at Austin. Klein was made a Founding Member of the Working Group for the Study of Jewish Life in the Americas. She also became a member of the international advisory board of the *Núcleo Interdisciplinar de Estudos Judaicos* (Interdisciplinary Center for Jewish Studies) at the Federal University, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Klein presented in the seminar "Anthropology and Latin American Jewish Studies: A Dialogue," and in the roundtable "Language and Ethnicity: Markers of Jewishness in Spanish and Portuguese in the 21st Century."



Misha Klein

In April 2016, she was honored with the University of Oklahoma's Nancy L. Mergler Faculty Mentor Award for Undergraduate Research.

Kudos and Congratulations (Continued)



Ronnie Grinberg

Ronnie Grinberg organized a panel in December 2015 on "American Jews and the Long 1960s" for the American Association for Jewish Studies annual conference in Boston, in which she also presented a paper. She also participated in the Paula Hyman Mentorship program sponsored by the AJS Women's Caucus. Earlier in the year, she presented a paper at the Society for U.S. Intellectual History annual

conference in October (Washington, D.C.). Grinberg also won two fellowships to support her current book project, which examines how gender and Jewishness intersected to shape the New York intellectuals; a Junior Faculty Fellowship from OU; and a Harry Ransom Research Fellowship in the Humanities from the University of Texas at Austin.

Carsten Schapkow published *Role Model and Countermodel. The Golden Age of Iberian Jewry and German-Jewish Culture during the Era of Emancipation* (Lexington Books 2015). He also is the editor together with Shmuel Shepkaru and Alan Levenson of *Darkhei Noam. The Jews of Arab Lands: A Festschrift for Norman (Noam) A. Stillman*. (Brill's series in Jewish Studies, Volume 55, 2015).

Schapkow also co-organized with Lorne Richstone from OU's School of Music a concert on "Once there was a Yiddishland," performed by Elizabeth Shammash with a lecture by Natalia Aleksion from Touro College, New York. He also was the organizer of the panel "German-Jewish Reception of the Great War: Anarchist and Zionist Approaches" at the 39th German Studies Association in Washington, D.C., and presented, among others, a lecture at the Berlin Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften on Henriette Herz and Sephardic Judaism.



Carsten Schapkow



Janet Ward

Janet Ward was appointed the inaugural faculty director of the OU Humanities Forum, a provost-direct initiative. She published "The (Trans) National Question: Nazi Spatial and Racial Planning," in *Cities Beyond Borders: Comparative and Transnational Approaches to Urban History*, edited by Nicolas Kenny and Rebecca Madgin (Routledge/Ashgate, 2015); and co-edited *Social Science Quarterly* 97.1 (March 2016): *Terror, Trauma, Memory: Special Issue Dedicated to the Oklahoma City Bombing*.

Gershon Lewental presented at five different international conferences in the past academic year: the Association for the Study of Persianate Societies (Istanbul), the Association for the Study of the Middle East and Africa (Washington, D.C.), the Association for Israel Studies (Jerusalem), and the International Society of Iranian Studies (Vienna); he also organized a panel and presented a paper at the Middle East Studies Association meeting (Denver). In January, he was appointed the associate editor for the *Journal of Persianate Studies*. When not teaching, editing or at conferences, he kept busy by giving a dozen public lectures on a variety of topics, including radical Islam, current events in the Middle East, Islamic historiography, minorities in the Ottoman Empire and Israeli politics at a number of venues in Norman, Oklahoma City and Tulsa, as well as at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

Rhona Seidelman's work on Israeli immigration was cited by author Dion Nissenbaum of the *Wall Street Journal*, in his widely acclaimed book *A Street Divided: Stories from Jerusalem's Alley of God*. She is completing final revisions of her manuscript *Under Quarantine: The Story of a Fence, Disease and Israel's Immigrants (1949-1952)*. In October, she gave her first public lecture as a faculty member at OU. In this "JuST lunch" talk, she presented some of the findings from her newest research project "Zionism, Tuberculosis and the Making of the Twentieth Century." As a guest lecturer in Mara Willard's class (Religious Studies) she had an enriching encounter with OU students as they discussed the contemporary Jewish experience.



Rhona Seidelman

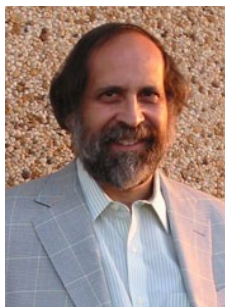


Shmuel Shepkaru

Shmuel Shepkaru co-edited *Darkhei Noam, The Jews of Arab Lands: A Festschrift for Norman Stillman*, eds. Shmuel Shepkaru, Carsten Schapkow, and Alan Levenson (Brill Press, 2015). He introduced the volume Candida R. Moss, *Ancient Christian Martyrdom: Diverse Practices, Theologies, and Traditions* (Yale University Press, 2012), *Reviews of the Enoch Seminar* (2015), 1-5. Shmuel was busy on the lecture circuit this year: he delivered lectures on "Theologizing the First Crusade: A Jewish Response," at The University of Oklahoma in December 2015. "Jewish-Christian Relations from Paul to Paul VI," Wake Forest University (January, 2015). "Can Homily Teach History: The Case of *Midrash Lekah Tov*," at Telling Tales: Manuscripts, Books and the Making of Narrative: The Conference of the Early Book Society, University of Oxford, UK in July 2015.

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Kudos and Congratulations (Continued)



Stephen Norwood

Congratulations to **Andrew Porwancher**, who received a book deal with Harvard University Press to publish, *The Jewish Founding Father: Alexander Hamilton's Hidden Life*. He delivered a paper on this project in October at the Society for U.S. Intellectual History annual conference and was named the Sid and Ruth Lapidus Fellow by the American Jewish Historical Society.

Congratulations to **Stephen Norwood**, who was appointed to the editorial board of the new *European Journal for Contemporary Antisemitism Studies*.

Core Faculty and Their Courses



Alan Levenson

Judaism: A religious History
Genesis Through Jewish Eyes



Norman Stillman

Jews/Christians Under Islam
Spain Under Islam



Shmuel Shekharu

History of Heaven and Hell
Evolution of Martyrdom



Rhona Seidelman

Arab/Israeli Conflict
History of Disease



Carsten Schapkow

Jews and Other Germans
The Holocaust



Gershon Lewenthal

Middle East Through Film
Middle East Since WWII



Ronnie Grinberg

Modern American Women
Jews in Hollywood



Ori Kritz

Hebrew 1 & 2
The Bible as Literature



Lea Reches

Advanced Hebrew



Yael Lavender-Smith

Hebrew 1 & 2
Conversation Hebrew

Associate Faculty

Benjamin Alpers, Honors College

Eve Bannet, English

Ranger Cline, Religious Studies

Sara Coodin, Classics & Letters

Luis Cortest, Modern Languages (Spanish)

Jill Hicks-Keeton, Religious Studies

Misha Klein, Anthropology

Nina Livesey, Liberal Studies

William H. McDonald, English

Stephen H. Norwood, History

Karin L. Schutjer, Modern Languages (German)

Daniel C. Snell, History

Janet Ward, History

Mara Willard, Religious Studies

OU Undergrads Keep Digging...in Israel



Kayleigh Kuyon and others at the dig site

OU students once again studied ancient archaeology and modern Israel during a one-week study tour and three weeks of excavation at Megiddo, a consortium between OU, the Jezreel Valley Regional Project and Tel Aviv University's Megiddo Expedition. Students earned four Religious Studies credits under the guidance of Rangar Cline. Four OU students received Israel Scholarships, which will pay for most of their program expenses and airfare.

Megiddo is a UNESCO World Heritage Site with evidence of human occupation from the Neolithic era to the Roman period. The site, famous as Revelation's Armageddon (Hill of Megiddo) made recent news because of a third-century Christian church, discovered on the grounds of the nearby Megiddo prison.

For the earlier OU excavation at Huqoq under Nina Livesey, see the online article at Bible History Daily: <http://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/biblical-sites-places/biblical-archaeology-sites/huqoq-2015-new-mosaics-unearthed-at-huqoq-synagogue/>

Why the 18s?

"18" is the numerical value of the Hebrew word "life," and it customary to donate in multiples of 18. It's a toast to life (l'hayim) and a harmless bit of folk belief. (It's also a good way of keeping tabs on charitable donations — when the Police Benevolent League says you gave \$36 last year — not \$35 — you can believe them.) Following are some of your favorite JuSt events and what they cost:

\$18 To Show Your Support of Judaic Studies at OU
\$36 To Sponsor a JuSt Lunch Event
\$54 To Buy a Film
\$360 To Sponsor a Student's Travel to a Conference
\$1,800 To be an Honorary Host for an Invited Speaker
\$3,600 To Sponsor Next Year's JuSt Newsletter
\$18,000 To Sponsor a Graduate Student

We welcome all ideas to promote Judaic and Israel Studies at OU! Please call our office at (405) 325-6508 or email katyhall@ou.edu.

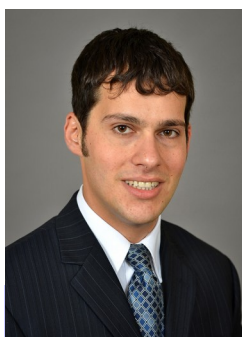
Thank You to Our Generous Donors

Howard and Jane Price
Jim and Mary Ann Burnett
The Late Michael Barlow and Anita Barlow

A special thank you goes out to all the donors for the Norman Stillman Prize. Thanks to your generosity we were able to raise \$36,000 to award our undergraduate students.

Alumni News

Andrea Pemberton (2015 BA, Anthropology major, Hebrew minor) was awarded a Fulbright Grant Scholarship for post-graduate study in Israel during the 2016-17 academic year. Andrea will conduct research on the graduates of the Hand In Hand School, a bilingual, multicultural, integrated Jewish-Arab school in Jerusalem. This research will document the life paths of the alumni since graduation in an effort to evaluate the long-term effects of attending a school with this unique education model and to assess the effectiveness of peace education in the modern Israeli context. She will work under the guidance of Professor Zvi Bekerman of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.



Daniel Reches

Daniel Reches (BA History; BBA International Business, 2010) graduated from an MBA program at Vanderbilt University in the spring. He then began a job at Cracker Barrel as a compensation analyst in their corporate headquarters. The job is located in Lebanon, a suburb of Nashville, so Reches was happy to not have to relocate. Prior to attending Vanderbilt, Reches had been the Interim Executive Director of OU Hillel from 2011-12.

Continued on next page

Alumni News (Continued)



Morgan Creekmore
and Stan Khrapak

Morgan Creekmore received her master's degree in Judaic Studies in 2015. After her graduation, she moved to Denver, Colorado, to pursue a career in public service. When she first moved to Denver, she was a technology teacher at an elementary school. Currently, she shares her love for research and information as a technology librarian in Thornton, Colorado.

Out With the Old and in With the New...Logo

Walker Robins (OU Ph.D. '15) designed our new logo (pictured below) to emphasize our Sooner Pride but keep a distinctly Jewish symbol, the six-pointed star (a.k.a. shield of David) at the heart of the matter. We hated to say goodbye to the blue mastheads, which festooned the newsletter in prior years, but the result looked too busy. You'll still see that blue, taken from the Israeli flag and the traditional Jewish prayer shawl as a highlight color.



Norman and Yedida Stillman designed our old logo (pictured below), which we still appreciate for its wit and learning. The Hebrew characters aleph to tav represent a play on alpha and omega, the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, which means A to Z and everything in between. (In biblical terminology, this is called a merism.) Despite our affection for this logo, we decided it relied too heavily on students recognizing the Hebrew characters and the allusion – many of our students will, but the rest, we will teach.



The Schusterman Center Welcomes Katy Hall



Katy Hall

Katy Hall graduated from the OU in 2012 with a bachelor of arts in art history. After a short time at AT&T, she decided she wanted to further her education and start a new career. She started employment at OU in 2013, and in 2014 finished a master's of human relations degree. Hall is married to a high school band director and they have a 9-month-old daughter. She is thrilled to be a

part of the Judaic Studies team, and she looks forward to helping the Schusterman Center continue its good work at OU.

Goodbye from Valarie Harshaw

"It has been a pleasure to work with you these past 4+ years. I have really grown in my knowledge of the Jewish people and their history, which has whetted my appetite for more. You have not seen the last of me!!"

The Schusterman Center would like to thank Valarie Harshaw for her dedication and hard work.

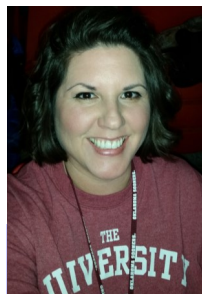
Undergraduate Student Spotlight



Rachel Hernandez

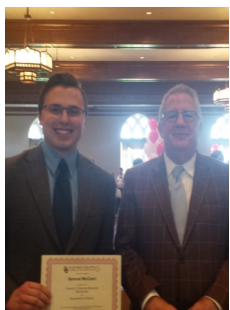
Rachel Hernandez was inspired to study abroad in Israel after taking a course on the Arab-Israeli conflict with Gershon Lewental. After OU, Hernandez hopes to work for an organization that encourages strong relations between the United States and Israel and/or for an NGO that helps improve the lives of Bedouin women in Israel.

It is my hope that this covenantal approach to Christian theology could help improve Jewish-Christian relations." McCann graduated in 2016 and will attend the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary this fall.



Rita Thompson

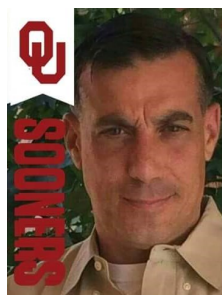
Rita Thompson completed both her colloquium and capstone courses with Alan Levenson, in which she wrote two excellent papers dealing with Jewish history. One focused on an anti-immigrant sentiment in the United States in the early 20th century, particularly on how anti-Irish sentiment affected the choice of Bible translations in public schools. The second paper examined the misrepresentation of the origins of Nazi anti-Semitism in documentary films. Thompson is a history major minoring in Judaic studies.



McCann with Professor Jamie Hart, History Chair

Samuel J. McCann was awarded the Horace C. Peterson Memorial Scholarship for most outstanding history major at OU. In Alan Levenson's course on the Bible since the Enlightenment, McCann wrote an excellent paper on Karl Barth's reappraisal of the Old Testament as a break from the broader Neo-Marcionista Protestant theology. McCann was inspired to research this topic because of "my experiences as a Presbyterian confronting broader

Protestant sentiments of estrangement from the Hebrew Scriptures. As someone going on to seminary, I feel that if Christians truly want to heal our historically violent relationship with Jews, we must confront theologies that devalue the Jewish roots of our faith and assert our grafting onto God's covenant with Israel.



Robert Ciarlante

Robert Ciarlante, a decorated veteran who honorably served his country for nine years, is in his final year of undergraduate study at OU. Ciarlante was awarded a Schusterman Scholarship to travel to Israel in the summer of 2016 to take part in OU's archaeological excavations at Megiddo. As a proud veteran, he is excited about having the opportunity to meet members of the Israel Defense Force.

Special Congratulations

We would like to congratulate OU psychology major Alex Brodsky for his work with Hillel and AEP, and Eric Sundby, economics/international business major, for his leadership with Holocaust Remembrance Week and many other OU initiatives. **Both received the Schusterman Study in Israel Scholarship and will study at Hebrew University – Sunby for the summer; Brodsky for an entire semester.**

Congratulations to Our 2016-2017 Scholarship Winners!

The **Rosalyn W. Price Memorial Scholarship** of \$1,000 was awarded to **Rita Thompson**.

The **Zarrow Family Scholarships** of \$2,500 each were awarded to **Tryce Hyman** and **Leah Pace**.

The **Esther Rose Shnier Scholarship** of \$3,000 was awarded to **Kaitlyn Maddox**.

The **Norman Stillman Prize** of \$1,800 was awarded to **Tryce Hyman**.

The **Schusterman Study in Israel Scholarships** of \$5,000 each were awarded to **Robert Ciarlante**, **Tyler Dang**, **Kayleigh Kuyon** and **Jennifer Williams**, all of whom went to the Jezereel Valley dig site. **Rebecca Galor**, **Julie Harth**, **Dijoun Newman**, **Ciara Ray**, **Abraham Revah**, **Eric Sandby** and **Brian Smith** received \$5,000 each to study at Hebrew University during the summer.

Graduate Student Spotlight



Hailey Franks

Hailey Franks received her bachelor of arts in history from OU and currently is working toward her master of arts in Judaic Studies. Her research interests are in Medieval anti-Judaism. She was awarded a Schusterman Scholarship to study in Israel for the entire 2016-2017 school year! Franks hopes to teach history at the college level, but also loves dogs and has been working at a doggy day care for the last year.

Tryce Hyman is a master's student in history and Judaic studies. Last year, he also served as media director for the Schusterman Center. He presented a paper titled "Israel's New Historians and the Identity Discourse of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums*" at the Phi Alpha Theta conference in Shawnee at Oklahoma Baptist University. He was awarded a Zarrow Family Scholarship and the inaugural Noam Stillman Prize for Excellence in Judaic Studies.



Tryce Hyman

Jacob Lackner completed his doctoral exams in the fall of 2015. His dissertation examines the conversion of Jews to Christianity in the High Middle Ages from both Jewish and Christian perspectives. He received an honorable mention for the Snell Prize from the European history branch of the Southern Historical Association, awarded each year to the best graduate student paper. In May, he presented "Violent Men and Malleable Women: Gender and the Conversion of Jews to Christianity in Thirteenth-Century Sermon *Exempla*," at the 51st Annual International Congress on Medieval Studies in Kalamazoo, Michigan. An article of the same title has been accepted for publication in *Nashim: A Journal of Jewish Women's Studies and Gender Issues*. The OU History Department also awarded Lackner the Anne Hodges and H. Wayne Morgan Dissertation Fellowship. He taught two classes at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute: "Medieval Jewish-Christian Relations" and "Holy War: A History of the Crusades." Lackner travelled to London this summer to conduct archival research at the British Library.



Jacob Lackner

Leah Pace is in her final year as a master's student. Last year she studied with Carsten Schapkow and wrote a paper for him titled "The Influence of Enlightenment on German Jews in America," which examined the connection between German Jewish immigrants in America and their European past. Her research focuses on American Jewish history, particularly Jewish women's involvement in the civil rights movement. She was awarded a Zarrow Family scholarship to support that research.



Leah Pace

Walker Robins completed his doctoral degree in history in December 2015. His dissertation, "Between Dixie and Zion: Southern Baptists' Palestine Questions," received the Provost's Dissertation Prize in the Social Sciences, Education, and the Professions at OU. An article derived from the dissertation, "American Cyrus? Harry Truman, the Bible, and the Palestine Question," is forthcoming in the *Journal of Church and State*. In the realm of teaching, the website he developed for the course, "How the Holy Land Became Holy," was a finalist in the category of "Best Course Website" at the OU Center for Teaching Excellence's Creative Awards. It was named the "Fan Favorite" after winning the most votes in the category.



Walker Robins

Jesse Weinberg is doctoral student researching Middle Eastern antisemitism in the 19th and 20th centuries. He spent the 2015-16 academic year studying in Israel.



Jesse Weinberg

Maggie Willetts graduated with her master's degree in May. This past year, she received the Alfred B. Sears Award for most outstanding student in British history at OU. She conducted thesis research at the Church Ministry among Jewish People archive at Oxford University. Her thesis, "Glory and Empire: The London Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews and the Road to the Balfour Declaration," examined the development of Christian Zionism during the 19th century, and how it was a central part of the Evangelical culture that helped legitimize Britain's imperial interest in Palestine. Her paper, "Britain's First World War Centenary: 2014 a Snapshot of Memory," won first place in the graduate non-American category at the Oklahoma Phi Alpha Theta conference. In May, Willetts commissioned as an ensign in the U.S. Navy.



Maggie Willetts

16th Annual Yedida Stillman Memorial Lecture



Mark S. Wagner

Mark S. Wagner, an associate professor in the Foreign Languages and Literature Department at Louisiana State University, delivered the annual Yedida Kalfon Memorial Lecture on Feb. 25. Wagner's talk, "Jewish Lawyers in Islamic Courts," explored various ways in which Jews in the late 19th and early 20th centuries negotiated life in Yemen, a traditional Muslim society in which Sharia law provided the over arching government framework. By examining Jewish merchants and their interactions with the Muslim elite, including the imam himself, Wagner provided an insightful window into the daily social, economic and political life of Jews in Yemen. He showed how Jews had recourse to non-Jewish courts and the various creative ways they were able to engage the Islamic legal and social system. The talk was well attended by students, faculty, and the wider community.

Wagner's teaching and research focuses on Jewish-Muslim relations and classical Arabic literature. He earned his doctorate from New York University in 2004 in Classical Arabic literature, Arabic vernacular literature, Islamic law, and Muslim-Jewish relations. His first book, *Like Joseph in Beauty: Yemani Vernacular Poetry and*

Arab-Jewish Symbiosis, was published in 2009 by Brill. His second book, *Jews and Islamic Law in Early 20th Century Yemen*, from which this talk was drawn, was published in 2014 by Indiana University Press. Wagner also is the author of numerous articles and essays that have appeared in respected journals and edited volumes, including the *Journal of Judaeo-Yemenite Studies*, *Journal of Semitic Studies*, and *Middle Eastern Literatures*.

The Memorial Lecture was established through the generosity of family, friends and colleagues to honor the memory of the late beloved teacher and world-renowned scholar Yedida Kalfon Stillman, who died in February 1998. The first Memorial Lecture was given in February 2001, by Paula Sanders of Rice University, introduced by OU President David Boren, who shared his personal reminiscences of Yedida Stillman. The memorial lecture has since become a major campus event. The lecturers have all been distinguished scholars in fields related to the late Stillman's wide-ranging interests in Middle Eastern and Sephardic history and culture. Sorely missed was husband Noam Stillman, already in Jerusalem, and the late Yedida K. Stillman's children, Mia and Einan.

Save the Date: Upcoming Events

2016-2017 Brown-bag Lecture Series Continues Diverse Offerings:

- Sept. 7** Alan Levenson, "The Brothers' Hatred of Joseph and Other Challenges of Bible Reading"
- Oct. 5** Sara Coodin, "Midrash from the Margins: Reinterpreting Shylock for the Yiddish Stage"
- Dec. 7** Yael Lavender-Smith, "Fictionalized Identities: The Transformation of Uriel da Costa and *Don Quixote*"
- Feb. 1** Melissa Stockdale, "Fantasies of Treason: Russia's Jews in World War I"
- Mar. 1** Carsten Schapkow, "Role Model and Countermodel: The Golden Age of Iberian and German Jewish Culture During the Era of Emancipation"
- Apr. 5** Ori Kritz, "Lea Goldberg and 'The Difficulties of a Hebrew Poet'"
- May 3** TBD

New location for brown-bag lunches: **Heritage Room in the Oklahoma Memorial Union**

Other Lectures:

Feb. 17 2017 — The 17th annual **Yedida Kalfon Stillman lecture** will be delivered by Professor John Efron, University of California, Berkeley, on *German Jewry and the Allure of the Sephardic* (Princeton 2016).

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute Courses:

- Fall 2016** Alan Levenson, "A Few Good Jews: Heroes and Antiheroes in the Modern Novel" at OU
- Fall 2016** Jacob Lackner, "Holy War: The History of the Crusades" in Oklahoma City
- Fall 2016** Jacob Lackner, "Medieval Christianity" at OU

JuSt OU is published by the Schusterman Center for Judaic and Israel Studies, a unit of the College of Arts and Sciences, Department of History, 455 W. Lindsey St., Rm 305D, Norman, OK 73019-2004. This publication, authorized by the Schusterman Center for Judaic and Israel Studies was printed by OU Printing Services at no cost to the taxpayers of the State of Oklahoma. The University of Oklahoma is an equal opportunity institution. www.ou.edu/eoo.

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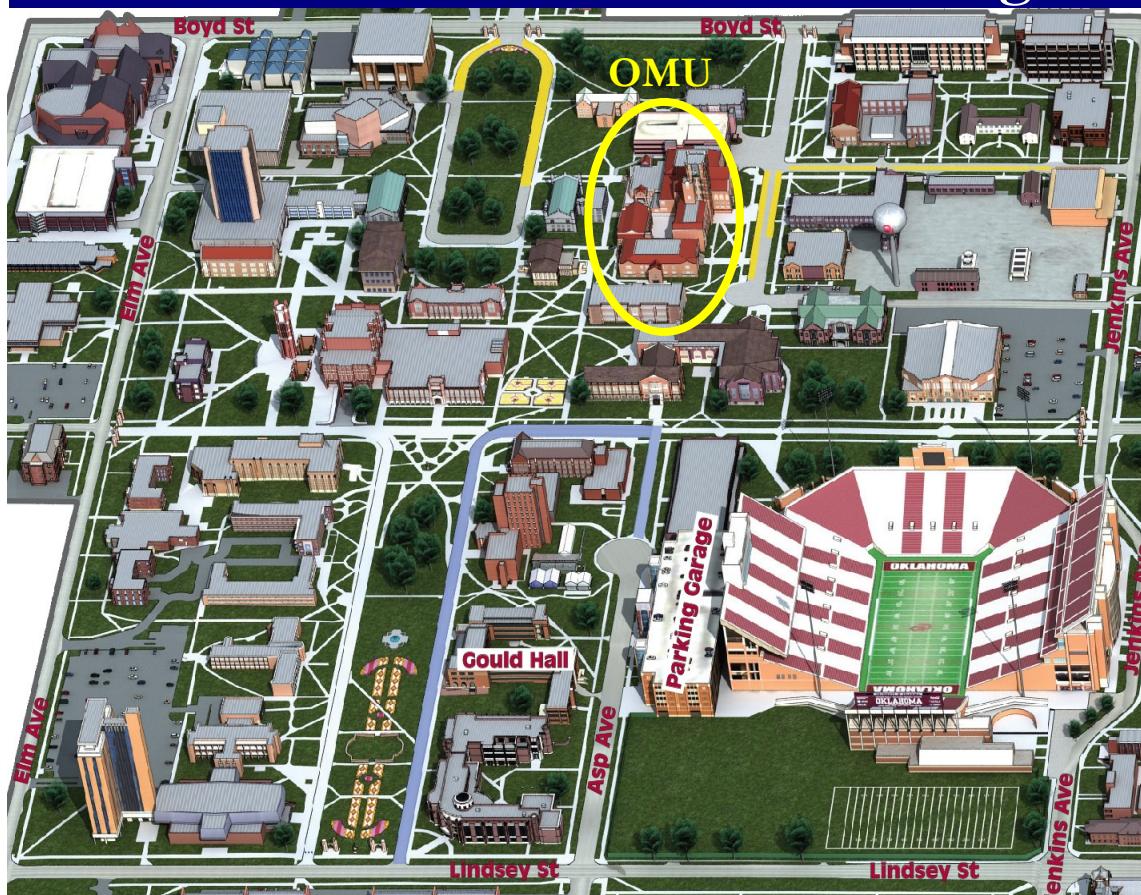
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New Location for Brown-Bag Lunches



The parking facility is directly north from the Oklahoma Memorial Union.

Contact Katy Hall at (405) 325-6508 or katyhall@ou.edu for a **complimentary one-day parking pass** to be mailed to you.

We look forward to welcoming our faithful regulars from Oklahoma City, and new friends, too!