



DODGE FAMILY COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
**THE SCHUSTERMAN CENTER
FOR JUDAIC & ISRAEL STUDIES**
The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA

JUST OU ANNUAL 2025

VOLUME 22



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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

RHONA SEIDELMAN

SCHUSTERMAN CHAIR

IN MODERN ISRAEL STUDIES



This year we celebrate 30 years of Judaic and Israel Studies at the University of Oklahoma and the establishment of the Schusterman/ Josey Chair in Judaic History in 1995. It is a remarkable celebration in dark times.

We have finished yet another unbearably painful year, with no sign of it becoming easier any time soon. The Middle East conflict – which touches the lives of so many in our community – rages on and the unimaginable toll on innocent people mounts with every day. Political upheaval in America and in Israel continues, while antisemitism across the world remains alarmingly high. Some of the loudest of these voices have been people who conflate the worst of Israel with all of Israel, people who conflate the worst of Zionism with all of Zionism and people who hide their antisemitism behind a socially acceptable guise of anti-Zionism.

In this difficult climate, the work we do in our center is more important than ever. We persist in our commitment to independent, open-minded and critical scholarship and education and in our commitment to community. We can find incredible relevance in Jewish history's stories of resilience, confronting injustice and finding hope in difficult times.

We move into the fall semester with record enrollment numbers in our courses, with outstanding attendance at our events, with faculty members who consistently produce superb research, with generous donors who continue to show their support for what we do and with hard working and open minded students who challenge and motivate us.

I am deeply proud of and grateful to our entire community for the myriad ways everyone contributes to our success.

In this year ahead we have another roster of fascinating events of the highest intellectual and creative caliber, ranging from a book talk from the prominent Hebrew language author Maya Arad to a discussion on the physiological impact of visiting the United States Holocaust Memorial and Museum, to a webinar on the history of Jewish humor.

And so, there is so much to learn and much to be grateful for even – or especially - amidst the darkness.

The adage for Rosh Hashanah is appropriate for this important anniversary: *May our merits multiply like the seeds of the pomegranate.*

Along with peace, that is my wish for all of us in this new year.

R. Seidelman

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Cover photo provided by Oklahoma Hillels.

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Hadas Cohen (Israel Institute Teaching Fellow)

continues to teach a wide variety of popular classes and represented the Schusterman Center in speaking engagements on Israeli politics in local, national and international venues, including *Ha'aretz*

and Israeli radio programs. OU and Israel Institute signed a three-year renewal last year. We are delighted to have her here at least until 2027 (but hopefully longer). Cohen's most recent article "Sex and the City in Berlin - Female Jewish Israeli Immigrants between Heteronormativity and Singlehood" was published in the book *The Modern Israeli and Palestinian Diasporas* this past spring.



Ronnie Grinberg earned tenure last year, and spent the 2024-25 academic year on sabbatical travelling for research for a new project and delivering talks in support of her blockbuster book, *Write like a Man: Jewish Masculinity and the New*

York Intellectuals (Princeton University Press, 2024). The book has received wide critical acclaim in venues such as *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post* and *The Times Literary Supplement*. It has also been recognized for several prestigious awards, including longlisted for the National Book Critics Award, honorable mention for the Saul Veiner Book Prize from The American Jewish Historical Society, and a was a finalist in two categories for the National

Jewish Book Awards (American Jewish Studies and Women Studies).



Alan Levenson

Alan Levenson was been on sabbatical during the spring 2025 semester. His latest book, *The History of Jews and Judaism: Facts and Fictions* (Bloomsbury/ABC-CLIO), came out this past March. Over the summer Levenson taught a study abroad version

of the course "The Artists' Bible," taking OU students on a tour of biblical art in Italy. He is on the national CCAR editorial board for the new Torah translation and commentary and served as board member and on the program committee of the Western Jewish Studies



THE HISTORY OF JEWS
AND JUDAISM

FACTS AND FICTIONS

ALAN T. LEVENSON

BLOOMSBURY

Association, which we hosted at OU in 2022. He spoke on his broad range of publications to numerous invited groups and conferences nationally and internationally. Additionally, Levenson added a vital, expert voice to the public sphere in Oklahoma, publishing Op-Eds in local news outlets on such issues as bibles in American public schools. He will deliver the first JuSt Lunch of spring 2025.



Carsten Schapkow

Carsten Schapkow

organized the annual series of film screenings in collaboration with Evelyn Preuss in the Department of Modern Languages, Literatures and Linguistics. His course “Jewish History in Germany Since 1945”

was granted General Education Core IV credit approval by the provost and his course “Antisemitism” was extremely well received by students. Schapkow also served as an editor on the recently published *Sephardic History Beyond Europe*. Schapkow will deliver our October 2025 JuSt Lunch and will again be hosting our series of film screenings this spring.



Rhona Seidelman

Rhona Seidelman was appointed director of the Schusterman Center in the summer of 2024. In this role she regularly answers media requests regarding Israel-related activities on campus and Center events. Seidelman has focused on robust

programming, community building, working with Center faculty to grow the majors and

strengthening relationships with Israeli institutions. This is in conjunction with her research and teaching on Israeli history and the history of medicine. Seidelman has been chosen for the 2025-2026 cohort of the Provost’s Leadership Development Program, which aims to develop the next generation of OU’s academic leaders.



Shmuel Shepkaru

Shmuel Shepkaru

published a review of Alexander Fidora and Matthias Lutz-Bachmann’s *Christian Readings of Rabbinic Sources in Medieval Polemic* for *The Medieval Review*. He continued his scholarship on medieval

Jewish history while teaching the capstone course “Dying for God” in the fall, which doubled as a graduate seminar for our M.A. fellows. He was active in university service, as part of the undergraduate committee in history and scholarship committees for both the center and for the history Department. Shepkaru represented the center at the WJSA conference in the spring, delivering the paper, “Sacrifice and Sarcasm in Israeli Cinema.” He also presented “The Meaning of Sacrifice in Israeli Cinema” for the South Central Modern Language Association in New Orleans.



Liran Yadgar

Liran Yadgar’s first year saw improvement in Hebrew enrollments, and he also initiated several exciting efforts to increase student engagement and promotion of the Hebrew minor, including a screening of the film

Ushpizin, gatherings at Bizzell Memorial Library's Bookmark Café with Hebrew students, and in-class cultural activities. We are thrilled to have with us so dynamic and erudite an addition to our center. Yadgar also presented last October's JuSt Lunch Lecture, "The Arabian Jews in Benjamin of Tudela's Travelogue: Looking at the Origins of a Jewish Myth."

ASSOCIATED FACULTY UPDATES



Kathleen Brosnan

Kathleen Brosnan published "Forum Introduction: Global Wine at the Intersection of Climate and Culture" and "From Temperature to *Terroir*: Wine Research at the University of California," both in *Environmental History* last July. She was awarded Collaborative Research Faculty Fellowship by the OU Dodge Family College of Arts and Sciences to develop the Center for the American West. Brosnan was also awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities grant with co-investigators Emily Burns and Kalenda Easton, which was unfortunately terminated by DOGE this April. She delivered several talks, including our first JuSt Lunch last year, "Harvesting the Desert: Viticulture in Palestine and Israel." Brosnan was elected vice president of the International Consortium of Environmental History, and was appointed to the board of editors at *Western Historical Quarterly* for 2025-2027.



Rangar Cline

Rangar Cline published the article "The Power of Love in Roman Magic," in the winter 2024 issue of *Biblical Archaeology Review*. He will also begin a well-deserved sabbatical this fall semester.



Daniel Simon

Daniel Simon gave a talk, in conjunction with his work as editor-in-chief of *World Literature Today*, on "The Multilingual Literatures of Israel" for the JuST lunch series; had his new book of poems featured on *The Slowdown* and *On the Margin* podcasts and had several poems, translated into Arabic, appear in *Jadaliyya*; worked with Liran Yadgar to bring Yale scholar Jonas Elbousty to campus for a talk, co-sponsored by the Center for Middle East Studies and Modern Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics; helped establish the new OU Student Translation Prize, awarded for the first time in March 2025; and finalized the manuscript of the *WLT* centennial anthology, which is forthcoming from Restless Books in spring 2026.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW ASSOCIATED FACULTY

The Schusterman Center is very pleased to have welcomed four new scholars to our associated faculty over the last year:



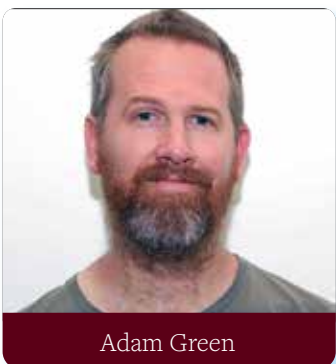
Katerina Akarepi (School of Music) is a historical musicologist, specializing in the musical cultures of the Middle East. In 2024 Dr. Akarepi received a Faculty Development Grant from the Israel Institute, which she has used to expand the unit on Israeli music in her very popular courses on Middle Eastern music. She is scheduled to deliver our March 2026 JuSt Lunch.



Kathleen Brosnan (Department of History), Travis Chair of Modern American History, is a pioneering scholar of environmental history and a prolific publisher. As part of her current project, she conducted research on winemaking in Israel and presented her scholarship at our first JuSt Lunch of the year “Harvesting the Desert: Viticulture in Palestine and Israel.”



Paul Feller-Simmons (School of Music) is a musicologist whose research studies the sonic and musical cultures of the early modern Western Jewish and Iberian worlds, and will deliver our final JuSt Lunch of 2025 in December. His current book project is titled “(Re)sounding the Hebrew Nations: Music and Sephardic Community in the Dutch Republic.”



Adam Green (Department of Philosophy) is a scholar of philosophy, focusing on how humans as social creatures changes our approach to questions in epistemology, virtue theory, the philosophy of religion and their intersections. He delivered our final JuSt Lunch last spring, “Bringing Jewish Thought to Bear on Divine Hiddenness.”

NEW HILLEL BUILDING



Over the last year, the old Hillel building at the corner of Elm and Boyd was demolished to make way for a brand new building for Jewish students at the University of Oklahoma to gather and engage with Jewish Student Life at OU. Following a groundbreaking ceremony (see cover image), construction on the cleared site began. The building is scheduled to be completed this fall, with an grand opening ceremony to be held at 11 a.m. Oct. 26. For more information visit their website (oklahomahillels.org). Photos provided by Oklahoma Hillels.





2024-2025 HIGHLIGHTS | 28 EVENTS | 1,500+ ATTENDEES



JuSt Lunch Lecture

"From the West Side to the Concert Hall: Exploring the Music of Leonard Bernstein" with Elliott Wulff



YKS Memorial Lecture 2024

Yedida Kalfon Stillman 1946-1998

"How Did Jews in the Ancient World Understand Diaspora?" with Malka Simkovich



4th Annual Schusterman Centers Webinar

"Israeli Society After Oct. 7th: Art and Archives" A conversation with Amias Mendelsohn and Raquel Ukele



Students and community members gather at the center's first annual

FALL 2025 EVENTS SCHEDULE



SEPT. 3
JuSt Lunch



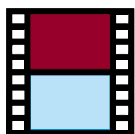
SEPT. 25
Rosh Hashanah
Reception



OCT. 1
JuSt Lunch



OCT. 9
Margaret Boyle
Special Event



OCT. 16
Film Screening



OCT. 22
Maya Arad
Special Event



NOV. 5
JuSt Lunch



DEC. 3
JuSt Lunch



Annual Rosh Hashanah Reception. Photo by Tryce Hyman

SAVE THE DATE!

SUPPORT THE SCHUSTERMAN CENTER

ENDOWED PROGRAM NAMING OPPORTUNITY AT THE SCHUSTERMAN CENTER \$3,000,000

A named, endowed program within the Schusterman Center will propel OU to the forefront of Jewish and Israel Studies. This investment will endow a professorship - bringing a leading scholar to campus - and provide sustainable support for courses, research, public lectures and student engagement in a chosen area of emphasis.

Naming Opportunities (choose one):

- The Holocaust and Antisemitism

Advance research and public understanding to combat hate, with a focus on history, causes and solutions.

- Jewish History in the American West

Illuminate the unique stories and contributions of Jewish communities in this region. This will build on OU's reputation as a national leader in this field, ensuring that Jewish history continues to be represented in this area.

- The Bible in History

Illuminate the Bible's impact on civilizations and culture, drawing on OU's faculty expertise and rare collections to engage students of all backgrounds.

- Israeli History and Politics

Deepen understanding of Israel's past, present, and its role on the world stage.

This program will be a visible, enduring legacy fostering academic excellence, public engagement and national leadership for generations to come.

ENDOWED EXCELLENCE FUND | \$1,000,000

An Endowed Excellence Fund provides the Schusterman Center with the flexibility and resources to pursue academic excellence

and innovation at every level. This fund will empower the center to expand our Hebrew program, recruit top-tier administrative leadership, and ensure that every Judaic Studies student benefits from hands-on learning, creative discovery and leadership development. By giving the director and faculty the ability to seize emerging opportunities and launch new initiatives, this fund will help propel OU's Jewish Studies program to the forefront of the field.

VISITING SCHOLARS

**\$70,000 (annually, one Visiting Scholar)
\$1,500,000 (endowment)**

Bringing leading scholars from Israel, Europe, and North America to OU for short- and long term residencies will connect our students and community with global thought leaders who would not otherwise come to Oklahoma. Visiting scholars will offer workshops, public lectures and develop collaborative research, enriching the academic experience and broadening perspectives across campus. The ability to host a new expert each year will be transformative for the Schusterman Center, creating dynamic connections with top institutions worldwide and ensuring our program remains at the forefront of Jewish and Israel Studies.

UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS IN JEWISH STUDIES

**\$100,000 (annually; 10 student
scholarships)**

\$2,000,000 (endowment)

Scholarships are essential for attracting talented students and growing the Jewish Studies program at OU. By alleviating financial burdens, these awards allow students to focus on their academic passions without the stress of working long hours to cover tuition. Scholarship recipients are more likely to excel academically, graduate on time and participate fully in hands-on learning,

leadership and research opportunities. Increased scholarship support will make OU a destination for high achieving students, expand access for those from diverse backgrounds and help the Schusterman Center to grow our vibrant and thriving academic community.

STUDY ABROAD WITH JEWISH STUDIES
\$50,000 (annually, 10 student scholarships)
\$1,000,000 (endowment)

An endowed fund for faculty-led Study Abroad courses will make it possible for more OU students to experience Jewish history and culture around the world - opportunities that would otherwise be out of reach for many families. This funding will increase the number of students we can send on these transformative trips each year and ensure that faculty support, planning and leadership are fully covered. Students will learn directly from our center's experts in global settings such as Spain, Morocco, Brazil, Germany, Italy and Israel, with courses exploring topics like the Golden Age of Sephardi Jewry, Jewish life under Islam, migration, and the Holocaust. By expanding access and providing robust faculty guidance, this program will enrich students' academic journeys and help grow the Jewish Studies program at OU.

HOW TO GIVE:

Use the included envelope to donate via mail.

To donate online visit:

ou.edu/cas/judaicstudies/donate

Or Use the QR CODE:



THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS!

OU GIVING DAY 2025

Mary Ann Burdett

Hadas Cohen

Marshall Gimpell

Lewis C. Goidell

Adam Gordon

Helene Harpman

Alan Levenson

Shmuel Shepkaru

Enan Stillman

Noam Stillman

Sarah Ann Swift

OTHER DONATIONS

Lewis C. Goidell

Adam Gordon

Michael Korenblit

Alan Levenson

Andy Magid

Paula Sanders

Eric Scott

Steven Weiss

Max Weitzenhoffer

HOLOCAUST RESISTANCE, RESCUE, RESILIENCE

We were honored to again host the Norman location of the Eva Unterman Conferences for Holocaust Education in collaboration with Oklahoma Holocaust Legislation Coalition. This year's conference featured the theme "Unbroken Spirit: Holocaust Resistance, Rescue, Resilience," and was held at the Thurman J. White Forum, drawing Social Studies and Language Arts teachers from across central Oklahoma.



Educators shared meals and conversation. Photo by Tryce Hyman



Alan Levenson greets educators the morning of the conference. Photo by Tryce Hyman



Michael Korenblit, son of Holocaust survivors, author and co-founder of The Respect Diversity Foundation, delivers the keynote talk "Until We Meet Again." Photo by Kyla Lewis



Members of the Holocaust Legislation Coalition, organizers and speakers. Photo by Kyla Lewis

REMEMBERING DAVID LEVY



The Schusterman Center lost an old friend late this summer. On Aug. 9, David Levy (z”l) passed away following a long struggle with cancer. Among the original group of JuSt Associated faculty, he delivered the closing talk of the inaugural year of our JuSt Lunch Brown Bag Lecture Series in December of 1997, a talk titled “Louis Brandeis and American Zionism.” Levy was also among the original donors to the endowed fund supporting the Yedida K Stillman Memorial Lecture, and remained a longtime supporter of the endowment.

In the digital age, Levy delivered the September 2017. JuSt Lunch lecture, “Mark Twain and the Jews,” which remains the most liked and most viewed lecture on the center’s YouTube channel. He also graciously took to Zoom in December of 2020 to deliver the talk “More than JuSt Lunch: Celebrating 25 Years of Judaic and Israel Studies at OU.”

In May of 2025 a reception was held commemorating David Levy’s long career at OU. The reception was attended by over 100 people, featuring remarks from History Department chair Elyssa Faison, former History Department chair Rob Griswold, former Dodge Family College of Arts and Sciences dean David Wrobel, former OU provost Kyle Harper, George Lynn Cross Research Professor of English Ronald Schleifer and the Schusterman Center’s own Alan Levenson.

Below is an excerpt from Levenson’s humorous remarks on his first time meeting David Levy:

When I arrived in Norman in 2008 many people told me I needed to meet David Levy – that I was sure to like him. Now, I bristled at this assumption of tribalism. My animus toward David deepened when he called me and invited me to lunch for Thai food. I didn’t like Thai food on the very sensible basis that it was not Chinese food – Members of the Tribe of Levi observed their minority status with Chinese – this is the 614th Commandment, at least in New York.

Of course I was completely taken with David’s wit, intellectual curiosity, story-telling chops, broad knowledge of liberal arts, and encyclopedic knowledge of anything Oklahoman. Ever since then, meeting David for lunch, for me, was not so much a meal as an occasion.

We at the Schusterman Center will miss Dr. David Levy and remember him fondly. All of us are saddened by his passing but remain grateful for the decades of collaboration and support he gave generously to Judaic and Israel Studies at the University of Oklahoma.

1937-2025



A display of David Levy's scholarly works at a reception in May of 2025 commemorating his career at OU. Photo by Danni McCutchens.



Alan Levenson delivers remarks at a reception in May of 2025 commemorating David Levy's career at OU. Photo by Danni McCutchens.



We were fortunate to have David Levy deliver our 25th anniversary JuSt Lunch via Zoom in December of 2020.

OUR STORY

The Schusterman Center for Judaic and Israel Studies at the University of Oklahoma began as the Schusterman/Josey Judaic Studies Program with the establishment of the Schusterman/Josey Chair of Judaic History and the coming of Noam and Yedida Stillman to OU in 1995. From that modest beginning, Shmuel Shepkaru joined the program in 1997, and a Judaic Studies minor was established shortly thereafter. Ori Kritz arrived in 2003, enabling the establishment of a Hebrew minor in 2005. Carsten Schapkow joined the faculty in 2005 as well.

In 2007, the program expanded to become the Schusterman Program in Judaic and Israel Studies, including the establishment of a Judaic Studies Bachelor of Arts in 2008 and the creation of the endowed positions of Schusterman/Josey Professor of Jewish Intellectual & Religious History, initially held by Alan Levenson, and the Schusterman Chair of Modern Israel Studies.

In 2014, the program expanded again, becoming a center and gaining its present title. Rhona Seidelman filled the Schusterman Chair in Modern Israel Studies in 2015.



Early program logo, circa 2007. Note the letters aleph/tav, a play on “A to Z.”

That same year also saw the retirement of founding director Noam Stillman and the addition of Ronnie Grinberg in American Jewish History. In 2019 the center successfully established a Judaic/Israel History major field for the History Master of Arts program, as well as the Schusterman Center Graduate Fellowship in Judaic/Israel History, which welcomed its first cohort of four M.A. Fellows in fall 2020.



Charles and Lynn Schusterman, circa 1997.



Noam Stillman delivers a JuSt Lunch, circa 1997.

CORE FACULTY AND STAFF



HADAS COHEN

Visiting Professor |
Israel Institute Teaching
Fellow



RONNIE GRINBERG

Assistant Professor |
American Jewish History &
Gender Studies



TRYCE HYMAN

Administrative Support
Specialist



ALAN LEVENSON

Professor | Schusterman/
Josey Chair in Judaic
Studies



CARSTEN SCHAPKOW

Associate Professor | L.R.
Brammer Jr. Presidential
Professor in History



RHONA SEIDELMAN

Associate Professor |
Schusterman Chair of
Modern Israel Studies



SHMUEL SHEPKARU

Associate Professor |
Schusterman Professor
of Jewish Intellectual and
Religious History



LIRAN YADGAR

Lecturer of Hebrew and
Jewish Literature | Hebrew
Program Coordinator

ASSOCIATED FACULTY

Katerina Akarepi
School of Music

Benjamin Alpers
Associate Professor
Honors College

Kaleigh Bangor
German Language Program
Coordinator

Kathleen Brosnan
Travis Chair in Modern
American History

David Chappell
Rothbaum Professor of
Modern American History

Rangar Cline
Associate Professor of
Religious Studies

Luis Cortest
Professor of Spanish

Paul Feller-Simmons
School of Music

Adam Green
Associate Professor
Philosophy

Lee Green-Hall
Arts and Sciences | "Jews
A-Z"

Karlos K. Hill
Regents' Professor, Clara
Luper Department of African
and African-American Studies

William Henry McDonald
Associate Professor of English

Tyson Putthoff
Lecturer | Hebrew Bible

Karin Schutjer
Professor of German Studies

Daniel Simon
Director/Editor-in-Chief of
World Literature Today

Robb Young
Lecturer | Religious Studies

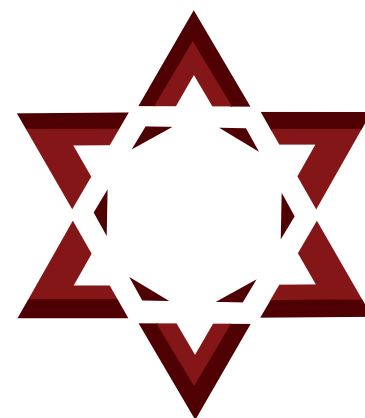
ACADEMICS | 2024-2025: 56 COURSES 1,160 STUDENTS

The Schusterman Center for Judaic and Israel Studies at the University of Oklahoma is a part of the Department of History within the Dodge Family College of Arts and Sciences, and provides students with access to the largest home for Judaic and Israel Studies in the region.

Diverse academic options at the undergraduate level include a **Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)** via the center's home Department of History; a **minor in Judaic and Israel Studies**, likewise via the Department of History; and a **minor in Hebrew language** through the Department of Modern Languages, Literatures and Linguistics.

Students seeking graduate-level work in Judaic and Israel Studies may do so through the Department of History's M.A. and Ph.D. programs. The center offers graduate fellowships to competitive applicants admitted to the **Judaic/Israel History Master of Arts (M.A.)** program.

With partners at OU and internationally, the center offers robust support for students interested in studying abroad in Israel for topics ranging from language and archaeological digs, to industrial technology and dance (see opposite page).



CENTER FACTS

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FACULTY

-14K+ ENROLLMENTS
SINCE 2007

-\$90K+ AWARDS &
SCHOLARSHIPS OPEN
TO ALL STUDENTS
ANNUALLY



2025 winners of the Schusterman Center Prize in Israel Studies: Jude Botwin, Amy Hotchkiss and Eva Morenoff receive recognition at the annual History Department awards banquet and certificates presented by Jane Wickersham.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS

STILLMAN PRIZE FOR EXCELLENCE IN JUDAIC STUDIES

Established in 2016 in honor of the center's founding director, the Norman Stillman Prize for Excellence in Judaic Studies is awarded annually to an outstanding student scholar. Students are nominated by faculty and winners selected by committee.

Congratulations to 2025 winner Serra Bardin!

SCHUSTERMAN CENTER PRIZE IN ISRAEL STUDIES

Established in 2025, the Schusterman Center Prize in Israel Studies is awarded annually to an outstanding undergraduate or graduate student coursework in Israel Studies. Prize winners are nominated by faculty teaching Israel Studies coursework during the academic year.

Congratulations to 2025 winners Jude Botwin, Harrison Dooley, Amy Hotchkiss, Eva Morenoff, Noah Schneiderman and Mikayla Taylor!

DOMESTIC ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS

A variety of competitive academic scholarships and awards are available to University of Oklahoma students pursuing the fields of Judaic and Israel Studies. The Rosalyn W. Price Memorial Scholarship for Judaic Studies is open to JuSt majors. The Esther Rose Shnier XI Chapter of ΣΔΤ Scholarship is open to JuSt majors and JuSt/Hebrew minors. The Zarrow Family Scholarship for Judaic Studies is open to JuSt majors, JuSt/Hebrew minors or any student who has taken at least three JuSt or Hebrew courses.

Congratulations to our 2025-2026 winners: Sarah Balyeat, Serra Bardin, Amy Hotchkiss, Paige Hudson, Suzanna Medina and Paul Roland !

SCHUSTERMAN STUDY IN ISRAEL SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships of \$10,000 each are offered for semester-long study abroad programs in Israel; in addition we have \$5,000 scholarships for those wishing to study in Israel during the summer. Scholarships are open to University of Oklahoma undergraduate and graduate students who have completed a minimum of 15 hours of college coursework by the time of the application deadline.

25 YEARS of the YEDIDA KALFON STILLMAN Memorial Lecture

This year held an important milestone: our 25th annual Yedida Kalfon Stillman Memorial Lecture.

The “YKS” is our premier endowed lecture, reaching an audience of students, academics and the public. It was born of the vision and generosity of family, friends and colleagues to honor the memory of beloved teacher and world-renowned scholar Yedida Kalfon Stillman, z”l (above center). The YKS has enriched OU and our community by bringing leading scholars of Jewish history



“Things You Didn’t Learn About Maimonides in Hebrew School.” Through this event we are able to bring Yedida Kalfon Stillman’s intellect, vision and scholarship to a new generation of audiences.

In a time when it can feel as though

the world is consumed by hatred, war and devastation, forums like this remind us of the nobility of the human condition. How fortunate that we can take a moment to come together as a community to share ideas, honor the memory of a transformative scholar and teacher, and to learn from someone who has dedicated their life to learning about different cultures and peoples. It is the center’s privilege to be a part of this endeavor.



Paula Sanders

and culture, especially of Jews in the Middle East and North Africa.

This milestone year brought the YKS full-circle with the return of inaugural speaker **Paula Sanders**, who delivered the lecture

Below is a reprint our 2001 newsletter’s article covering the inaugural YKS. This issue and the full pre-2012 run of *JuSt OU Annual* were recently rediscovered and are being digitized to preserve them for posterity.

Renowned Scholar Delivers Inaugural Lecture

A renowned scholar of Middle Eastern Studies delivered the inaugural Yedida Kalfon Stillman Memorial Lecture Feb. 22 in Oklahoma Memorial Union.

This lecture will be given annually to honor the beloved professor who played a major role in establishing the university’s Judaic Studies and Hebrew language programs.

Following opening remarks by President David Boren, Professor Norman Stillman introduced the featured speaker, Professor Paula Sanders of Rice University in Houston, who gave a lecture titled, “Was Maimonides a Sexist?” Sanders is an associate professor of history, director of the Program for the Study of Women and Gender and a Fellow at the Center for the Study of Cultures. She is the author of one book and editor of another and has written

numerous articles on medieval Islamic and Jewish history. She collaborated with Yedida on the article “Tiráz,” for the new *Encyclopedia of Islam*. Sanders was Yedida’s dear friend and colleague.



From left to right, professors Joseph Ginat, Paula Sanders, and Shmuel Shepkaru

UPDATE FROM JERUSALEM

NOAM STILLMAN

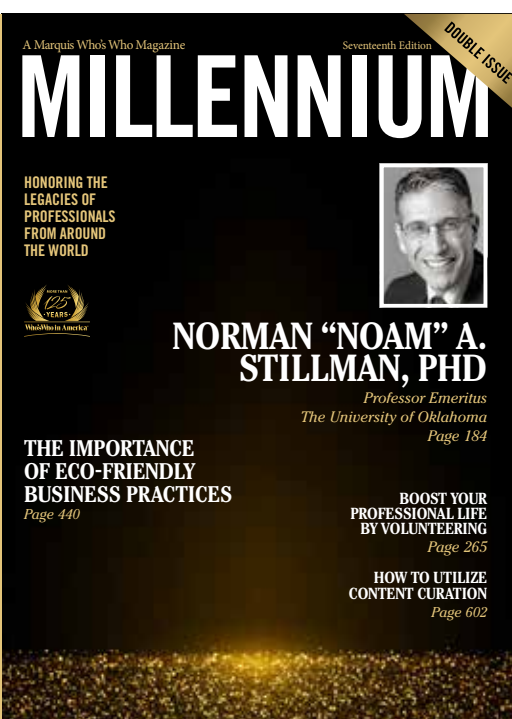
Emeritus Professor & Founding Director



Other than the occasional take-cover warnings when hostile missiles are fired towards us from Yemen, Iran, or Lebanon, life in Jerusalem continues rather normally.

However, there are even less international students coming than last year, and this year most of the large lecture courses – including mine – were cancelled. I still give frequent webinars, for Facing History (US), Harif (UK) especially for Lockdown University (South Africa), all of which are recorded online. Two international conferences at which I spoke here in Jerusalem at the Ben-Zvi Institute were particularly moving. The first one was on the subject of Jewish Material Culture in the Islamic World. The first day's panels were dedicated to the memory of my beloved colleague/wife, Yedida, who was one of the greatest scholars of material culture. Menachem Ben-Sasson, the Rector of the Hebrew University, spoke eloquently about Yedida and her work, and I delivered the opening lecture on “A Garment to Wear: Clothing and Textiles in the Cairo Geniza.” The second moving conference was one in honor of the 125th anniversary of my great mentor, S. D. Goitein's birth. I spoke on “My Mentor, S. D. Goitein – Personal and Professional Reflections.” It was additionally moving, because the speaker following me was Prof. Paula Sanders, who gave the both the first and the 25th memorial lecture at OU

for Yedida. I attended and lectured and was a commentator at several other conferences as well – here in Israel in person and in the U.S. via Zoom. I have two major articles (one in French and one in English) which hopefully will appear in the near future. I continue to advise students and researchers in various countries and also continue in my role as editor of the *Encyclopedia of Jews in the Islamic World*, which has expanded upon line enormously since the original five-volume printed edition appeared in 2010. I was honored and touched to have been selected by Marquis Publications last year for inclusion in *Who's Who in the World*, and now have also been chosen for *Who's Who in America* for 2025. Because of *Who's Who*, I had much to my surprise, biographical features in a number of periodicals, including *Time Magazine*, *Fortune*, *Millennium*, and the *Wall Street Journal*.





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**THE SCHUSTERMAN CENTER
FOR JUDAIC & ISRAEL STUDIES**
The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA

**455 W. Lindsey, DAHT 403A
Norman, OK 73019-0001**

**(405) 325-6508
judaicstudies@ou.edu**

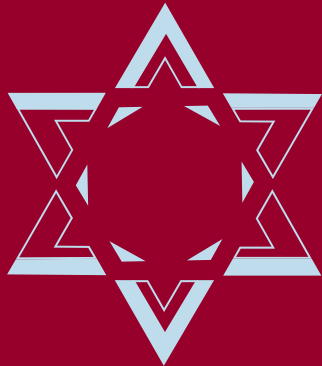
**Rhona Seidelman, Ph.D.
Director**

**Tryce Hyman, M.A.
Administrative Support Specialist**

@OUJudaicStudies



judaicstudies.ou.edu



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