



Max and Tessie Zelikovitz Centre for Jewish Studies CARLETON UNIVERSITY

Newsletter | Fall 2020

Director's Message



Along with other professors around the world, I found myself spending the summer preparing to teach online and trying to re-imagine completing research on zoom calls. With online Winter courses on the horizon as well, the Fall semester has raced by while also trying to plan for more online teaching. I'm excited to be offering a new Jewish studies course, RELI 3840: Judaism and the Body: Food, Sex and Death as a fully asynchronous online course. It has been a rewarding challenge to put together content that will allow students the opportunity to explore Jewish history and Jewish practice through this theme that will allow us to delve into everything from anti-Semitic fantasies of the Jewish body, to Queer mikvehs, to Iraqi Jewish identity through cookbooks, to Zombies in Jewish law.

Like so many other organizations, the Zelikovitz Centre for Jewish Studies (ZC) has found itself reorganizing and reimagining its mission as the pandemic continues. With courses and programming at Carleton online at least until Summer 2021, the ZC continues to move forward to support students, faculty, affiliated researchers, to

*“Two are better than one because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow; but woe to him that is alone when he falls, for he has not another to help him up.”
(Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) 4:9-10)*

develop programming on campus and in the community.

As we wrapped up the Winter semester last Spring, discussions were already in place to reorient ZC programming to a Zoom friendly format. A major part of these discussions focused on outreach to other institutions. In the spirit of Kohelet that “two are better than one”, the ZC is excited about its renewed partnership with the Vered Jewish Canadian Studies program (University of Ottawa). In talks throughout the summer with its co-ordinators Hernan Tesler-Mabé and Natalia Vesselova, plans were made to share information about each other’s programs and to produce joint programs. Discussion is under way to collaborate on Zoom presentations, on a joint course, and to develop an online student journal. The ZC has welcomed Vered to co-sponsor its annual student conference which will take place April 16 (save the date).

The ZC welcomes back senior student staff (Michaela Bax-Leany, Shaked Karabalnikoff, and Belle Riley Thompson) and new student team members (Dana Fischman and Maddy Deveau). (see p. 2 for more details). These digital native students have been invaluable to helping us move fully online this year.

Holocaust Education Month (HEM) looked a little different this year. All programming was over Zoom (see CHES section p. 11) CHES launched HEM with a special video illustrating its inception and its activities for the past 5 years.

A number of you attended the very successful Pop-Up Museum held at Temple Israel in November 2018. This year the ZC and CHES introduced the Virtual Pop Up Museum which is populated by many of the artifacts that were displayed at the original event. The ZC was very pleased that Robert Ehrenreich, who spoke at the Pop-Up Museum in 2018, was able to speak with us again about the importance of objects to the study of the Holocaust. He was joined by Sara Shor who is the manager of the Artifacts Department of Yad Vashem’s Museums Division who spoke about examples from the Yad Vashem collection. This event was recorded and can be found at <https://carleton.ca/jewishstudies/videos/>.

As part of HEM, Professor Adara Goldberg, Director of Kean University’s Holocaust Resource Center/Council on Global Education and Citizenship (Union, New Jersey) presented “Making Present

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Join the ZC mailing list to receive updates invitations to our future events. Please send an email to: jewish_studies@carleton.ca

Director's Message

the Past: The M.S. St. Louis Apology and Canadian Jewry's Pursuit of Refugee Justice." Her talk, which took place November 19, at 7:30 pm, explored the changes that had occurred within Canada since the rejection of the M.S. St. Louis, in 1939, to the welcome given to the fleeing Hungarians (1956), Ugandans (1972), Vietnamese (1979-1980, and most recently the Syrians (2015-2016). She also discussed the apology given by Prime Minister Trudeau to the Canadian children of survivors of the M.S. St. Louis, and to the Jewish community.

Save the Date! Zelikovitz affiliate, Dr Rohee Dasgupta will be presenting "Cosmopolitics and Holocaust Education", Sunday, January 24, 2021 at 7:30 pm. Her research interests are in the areas of Jewish identity, Israel Studies and Holocaust education. She has been a fellow at the USHMM, Washington DC; Summer Institute for Antisemitism and Global Policy, University of Oxford and an EHRI fellow at the Institute of Holocaust and Genocide Studies (NIOD) Amsterdam. She is presently editing a book on Jewish Anthropology in the 21st Century (with Dr. Yulia Egorova, Durham University,

UK). Information on registering will be forthcoming.

We are also delighted to announce a new partnership with the Jewish Public Library in Montreal and the Montreal Holocaust Museum. Our first programming was held during HEM on November 18th, 2020, at 7 pm: "Relations, Resistance, Resilience: A Workshop Presentation of Rare Books and Holocaust-era artifacts from Three Centuries of Christian-Jewish Relations." For those who were not able to attend the workshop this is the link to the recorded event <https://carleton.ca/jewishstudies/videos/>.

Please join us in January for an exciting online talk with newly elected Green party leader Annamie Paul. Organized by the Religion program as part of a series on Religion and Public Life and co-sponsored by FASS and the ZC, Paul will be speaking about the intersection of religion and race in Canadian politics. More information about the date and registration will be forthcoming.

As proud as I am of what we are doing at the ZC and Carleton, we know that people are also struggling. The challenges that the pandemic presents to us are wide-ranging

and cumulative. We wish to remind students, faculty, and researchers that we are here to support you in any way we can, including collaboration on projects, networking, and support for Jewish Studies research and teaching. "Two are better than one," please do reach out!

One of the important tasks that keeps me busy as Director is advocating that Anti-Semitism be integrated in our institutional thinking as our university develops policies around equity, diversity and inclusion and develops programs that engage issues of racism. I am very grateful that the Centre's advisory board members and members at large have provided substantive feedback as policies and projects advance and that our interventions have been warmly welcomed and implemented by University leadership.

While we will not be able to physically welcome you to the ZC offices this year, we do hope you can "drop by" our Zoom Open House. The Open House will take place Tuesday, December 8 at 4 pm. We do kindly ask that you email us for the zoom link for security reasons.

Please email michaelabaxleaney@outlook.com and join us!

The ZC is pleased to welcome back Michaela Bax-Leaney, Shaked Karabelnicoff and Belle Riley Thompson



Michaela is in the final year of her program: a Combined Honours in Journalism and History at Carleton. Her interests are wide-ranging. She is looking forward (post graduation) to having the time to explore opportunities in food, arts, and culture writing and public history. Until she graduates, Michaela is the ZC's Communications Coordinator, responsible for maintaining the ZC website as well as assisting with the ZC's Zoom events.

Shaked is now in her final year majoring in Journalism, with a minor in Religious Studies. She is the ZC's Social



Media Coordinator, promoting and posting ZC and CHES events on ZC's facebook page.

Belle is in her final year in the Bachelor of Journalism and Humanities program at Carleton. This year she was awarded a Student as Partners grant to assist Dr. Butler with her winter course Judaism and the Body. Belle and Dr. Butler have worked closely on various successful endeavours in the past and have developed this course surrounding the themes of food, sex, and death. This course is wholly online, and Belle has assisted Dr. Butler in some online elements as well as



syllabus development. In her spare time, she works as a Carleton tour guide and is the president and editor-in-chief of Carleton's Her Campus publication.

The ZC is also pleased to welcome two new staff, Dana Fischman and Maddy Deveau.

Dana is the final year of her undergraduate program in Global and International Studies where she specializes in Global Development. She hopes to pursue this interest in graduate school.

Dana is working with Dr. Butler to de-

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velop key resources that will assist the teachers at the Ottawa Catholic School Board (OCSB) to strengthen their in-class Holocaust education program. This is a wholly new position that has been created in response to the pandemic. Each year CHES, led by Director Mina Cohn and her team of volunteers, offers teacher training for teachers interested in teaching about the Holocaust. Because of COVID, these workshops are not able to be offered this year.

With this gap this year, Dana is contacting the OCSB to offer support to

teachers by developing curated online Holocaust-related content that might be useful. The grant is for the current semester.

Maddy is currently doing her undergraduate degree in social work, with the hopes of pursuing a master's degree in counselling and spirituality to eventually work with individuals struggling with issues around their spirituality/religion as well as issues with identity, beliefs, and trauma. This past summer Maddy was in Dr. Butler's Introduction to Judaism course. Her creation of a video for her fi-

nal assignment persuaded Dr. Butler that short animations relating to class content would be a fun learning aid. Maddy's video is posted on the ZC website as Featured Student Work <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tqX6jFY2ZoE>. She is very excited working with Dr. Butler to create Moovly videos (an online video animation maker) for RELI 2110R Judaism which is a fully asynchronous online course. Maddy was awarded a Student as Partners grant to pay her salary for the current academic year.

Congratulations to Talya and Shaked

Talya Stein was granted an I-CUREUS award (Internship-Carleton University Research Experience for Undergraduate Students) to work with Professor Deidre Butler and Professor Betina Appel Kuzmarov's on their SSHRC research project, Jewish divorce in Canada.

Talya moved to Ottawa to enroll in the Carleton program Public Affairs and Policy Management. Leaving behind a close Jewish community (Vancouver), she has been searching for ways to incorporate her Jewish identity and cultural ties into her life in Ottawa. Now in the second year of her program, she is specializing in International Policy. Learning about, as well as experiencing Jewish culture and customs is something that Talya takes great pleasure in doing. This research project allows her to combine her interests in Jewish customs along with her academic pursuits of international relations and law. Her work on their SSHRC project as an I-CUREUS researcher will focus on the understanding of the transnational effects of Israeli laws on Jewish divorce and how it directly impacts the Jewish laws of divorce in Canada.

Shaked Karabelnicoff, Religion minor, Provost scholar, and Zelikovitz Centre for Jewish Studies Social Media Coordinator, has been awarded her third I-CUREUS award to continue to work with Professors Deidre Butler and Betina Appel Kuzmarov on their SSHRC project.

During the summer Shaked developed a



media survey on the ways in which Jewish divorce, gett abuse and agunot are represented in Canadian media. Recipients of the I-CUREUS Grant are required to share their work which may include a report, blogpost,



social media, or other acceptable ways of reporting. Shaked wrote an End of Term Report about her summer experience as a research assistant. Below is Shaked's report:

I-CUREUS Summer: End of Term Report Shaked Karabelnicoff

This summer I had the pleasure of participating in the I-CUREUS Internship Program, working as a Research Assistant on an interdisciplinary project about Jewish Divorce in Canada led by Dr. Betina Appel Kuzmarov and Dr. Deidre Butler. The research project, titled "The Troubling Orthopraxies: A Study of Jewish Divorce in Canada" is an SSHRC funded ethnographic project that addresses a lacuna of Canadian ethnographic research. The project significantly reframes the question of the Agunah (Jewish women who cannot secure a religious divorce, called a "Gett") by placing it within the larger Jewish communal context, focusing on the particularities of the Canadian experience, and in approaching the question through an interdisciplinary

lens. The general goal of the research is to provide, for the first time, a context for Gett abuse by developing an ethnographic account of Jewish divorce in Canada that describes how women, men and children actually experience the religious divorce process.

I played two main roles in the project: supporting the larger project and contributing my discipline-specific key outputs. My independent research contribution to the project is an ongoing, comprehensive media literature review of Jewish divorce in Canadian media. Through methodical, concentrated research in Jewish newspaper archives, I developed a rich database of articles that relate to Jewish Divorce and the question of the Agunah. In analyzing these articles,

I was able to provide perspective on how the Canadian public views Jewish divorce in Canada, and what information was historically and contemporarily circulated regard-

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ing matters of the Agunah in the media. Through this research, I was able to identify important trends about the frequency of Agunah being discussed in the media, key years where discussion spiked, and the language and manners used to describe Jewish divorce. This research, exploring the treatment of Jewish divorce in Canadian media, is wholly unique to the study of Jewish divorce in Canada, and will be useful to the general project. Furthermore, my research supports the project's overall understanding about Canadian perceptions on the problem of Agunah and provides an overview of this subject as it is represented by the media.

Additionally, my media literature review unintentionally allowed me to develop an exhaustive list of human sources, such as stakeholders, activists, rabbis, and lawyers, who were historically involved in these is-

ssues and thus were mentioned in the media. This list of sources combined seamlessly with my second main contribution to the project which was conducting interviews and recruiting interviewees. As a Journalism and Religion student, I was able to bring a unique perspective to the project. I am both knowledgeable about the religious background of Jewish Divorce and experienced in the ethics and practice of interviewing vulnerable subjects.

Over the summer, I was able to begin training with Professor Appel Kuzmarov and Professor Butler to conduct interviews independently for the project. I am looking forward to staying on as a research assistant throughout the current academic year to continue supporting the project through interviews.

In closing, I am proud of the research and

outputs I have contributed to the Troubling Orthopraxies project through the I-CUREUS summer internship and am grateful for knowledge and experiences I gained. This summer was certainly unique due to the global pandemic which forced our project to adapt. Nonetheless, we were able to successfully pivot and conduct research completely online. From remote interviews to regular mentorship and communication using video conferencing, the project transitioned smoothly and embraced digital tools. As the summer came to a close, I looked forward to continuing my work on this important research project over the academic year and to keep gaining more valuable skills and learning lessons along the way.

Faculty Members' Corner



Professor Mitchell Frank has been teaching at Carleton since 2001. He is co-appointed between Art History and Cultural Mediations, an interdisciplinary PhD program

His scholarly research focuses on nineteenth-century German art and art histo-

ry. He is the author of *German Romantic Painting Redefined: Nazarene Tradition and the Narratives of Romanticism* (2001) and *Central European Drawings from the Collection of the National Gallery of Canada*, (2007). He co-edited *German Art History and Scientific Thought: Beyond Formalism* (2012) and *History and Art History: Looking Past Disciplines* (forthcoming, 2021). He is at present completing a book about the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and their engagement with popular art education in the postwar period. He has published essays in various scholarly journals, including *Word & Image* and *The Oxford Art Journal*. Since 2019, he has also been the editor-in-chief of the Canadian art historical journal *RACAR* (*Revue d'art canadienne / Canadian*

Art Review). This month, he published an essay on the Jewish-German artist Max Liebermann, "Max Liebermann: Assimilation and Belonging," *RACAR* 45.2 (2020): 97–110 < https://www.racar-racar.com/uploads/5/7/7/4/57749791/%E2%80%A2_racar_45_2_05_frank.pdf>.

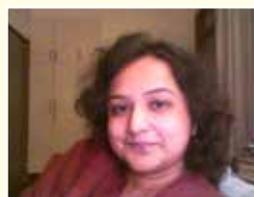
Emerging Academics

The ZC is happy to post and share exemplary undergraduate and graduate student work in Jewish Studies on its web site - especially suitable are links to projects or short descriptions. The link to Emerging Academics' webpage is <https://carleton.ca/jewishstudies/academics/emerging-academics/>

Save the Date

Sunday, January 24, 7:30 pm

Dr Rohee Dasgupta will be presenting on "Cosmopolitics and Holocaust Education"



Faculty Members' Corner

Presentations and Publications

Publications:

Professor Sarah Phillips Casteel

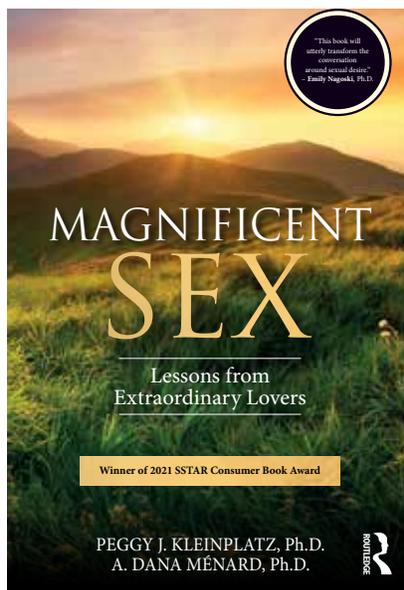
2020 (September) "The Caribbean." *Handbook of Anglophone World Literatures*. Ed. Stefan Helgesson, Gabriele Rippl, and Birgit Neumann. De Gruyter Press. 395-414. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110583182-025>

"Teaching Blacks and Jews in Transnational Perspective." *MLA Options for 2020 September - Teaching Jewish American Literature*. Ed. Rachel Rubinstein and Roberta Rosenberg. New York: Modern Languages Association. 90-98.

2019 (July) "Caribbean Literature and Global Holocaust Memory." *Holocaust Memory and Racism in the Postwar World*. Ed. Avril Alba and Shirli Gilbert. Wayne State UP. 240-71.

Zelikovitz Affiliate **Peggy J. Kleinplatz**, Ph.D. is a Professor in the Department of Family Medicine and School of Epidemiology and Public Health, Faculty of Medicine at the University of Ottawa. She is Director of the Optimal Sexual Experiences Research Team of the University of Ottawa and has a particular interest in sexual health in the elderly, disabled and marginalized populations. Please see optimalsexperiences.com. Her research, writing, teaching and clinical work have been intended to challenge, expand and diversify the field of sex therapy. Kleinplatz studies the farthest reaches of human sexuality and has published five books, including *Magnificent Sex: Lessons from Extraordinary Lovers*, co-authored with A. Dana Menard, Ph.D., which was released in April, 2020. *Magnificent Sex* is based on the largest study ever conducted with people who are having extraordinary sex. Her team has tried to offer accessible and evidence-based guidance for lovers and therapists alike. The book is replete with the wisdom of mainstream and marginalized folks in every kind of relationship who have experienced the peaks of erotic intimacy and have much to teach about how to enhance sexual relations over time. Her research team has applied the implications of the findings to develop a model that effectively tackles the common problems of low desire and frequency. As such, they are con-

ducting clinical trials on "curing" low desire by creating optimal erotic intimacy (see optimalsexperiences.com). *Magnificent Sex* is winner of the Society for Sex Therapy and Research 2021 Consumer Book Award. On the other end of the spectrum of human experience, Kleinplatz' current study, examining the life-long consequences of hidden pharmacologic interventions during the Shoah on survivors and their descendants, is supported by The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany. In September, 2020, Kleinplatz presented some of the findings from her interviews with survivors, average age 95, at the annual meeting of the Canadian Society for Jewish Studies entitled "Why Didn't Anyone Ever Ask?": Women's Infertility After the Shoah. She continues to interview survivors and their descendants in English, French, Hebrew and Yiddish. For further information or for testimonies, please contact Kleinplatz at 613 563-0846.



In 2015, Kleinplatz received the Professional Standard of Excellence Award from the American Association of Sexuality Educators, Counselors and Therapists.

Professor Mira Sucharov

2020 (September) *Borders and Belonging: A Memoir*. London: Palgrave Macmillan <https://www.palgrave.com/us/book/9783030537319>

2019 (June) *Social Justice and Israel/Palestine: Foundational and*

Contemporary Debates, Edited by Aaron J. Hahn Tapper and Mira Sucharov. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. <https://utoron-topress.com/ca/social-justice-and-israel-palestine-2>

Presentations:

Professor James Casteel

2020 (October 1-3) "Migrant Memories: Narrating Post-Soviet Migration in Germany" for panel "Migrants and Refugees in Postwar Germany: Contesting Space and Memory," German Studies Association, Washington, DC. Presented Virtually

2019 (September 16-18) "Narratives of Victimization among Post-Soviet Migrants in Germany," International Conference on "Narratives of Forced Migration in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries," University of Stirling, Scotland, U.K.

(July 9) "Migration and Transformation of Berlin's Jewish Community: from Postwar to Post-Soviet," Leo Baeck Summer University (invited lecture).

(June 6) "Post-Soviet Migrant Memories: Russian-Jewish and Russian-German Commemorative Narratives in Germany," Selma-Stern Zentrum für Jüdische Studien Berlin-Brandenburg (Selma Stern Centre for Jewish Studies Berlin-Brandenburg), (invited lecture).

Professor Sarah Phillips Casteel

2019 (December 15-17) "Blyden and Pissarro on St. Thomas: Pan-Africanism, Zionism and the Sephardic Caribbean," in the panel "Jewishness and Caribbean Literary Culture," Association for Jewish Studies, San Diego, CA.

Professor Mira Sucharov

2019 (December 15-17) "Op-Ed Writing and Social Media Workshop," Association for Jewish Studies, San Diego, CA

"Teaching Palestine in the Context of Jewish Studies": Roundtable. Association for Jewish Studies, San Diego, CA.

2020 (March 4) "The Jewish Experience in Canada Today," Solway Jewish Community Centre, Ottawa, Ontario.

Spotlight on our External Research Affiliates

The Zelikovitz Centre for Jewish Studies (ZC) recognizes the need to develop opportunities for scholarly collaboration. We regularly invite emerging scholars, graduate students, and faculty at other universities, as well as independent scholars to partner with the ZC and our researchers. Although Research Affiliate positions are unpaid, the ZC offers scholars a place to share their work-in-progress, and their completed research and publications, to encourage the cross-fertilization of ideas and approaches. Where possible, the ZC invites scholars from off campus to present to the public, and participate in Carleton courses.



The ZC welcomes its new research affiliate Carrie Bettel

Carrie Bettel is in the PhD program in Humanities at York University (Toronto). She is also Chair of Membership, Executive Member of the Canadian Society for Jewish Studies.

She has just started the writing phase of her thesis: its tentative title is *Images of Beauty: The Conceptualization of Beauty in Israeli Cultural Production*. Her research focuses on Israeli cultural production, specifically film and art, in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century. She uses film and art to explore the diversity of voices existing in Israel, including but not limited to Jewish immigrants to Israel, native Israelis, Palestinian citizens of Israel, men and women, soldiers, and more.

Images of beauty are viewed as a counterpoint to the negativity engendered by the conflict both internally and externally. This balance will help viewers contemplate a variety of issues that citizens of Israel face today, such as morality, fear, war, terror, and more. Her recent publication is “The success of Adi Nes’s fictional photographic portraits: figures of alterity and the utilization of memories in visual self-portraiture”, *Images: The International Journal of European Film, Performing Arts and Audiovisual Communication*. vol. XXV, no. 34. Poznań 2019. Adam Mickiewicz University Press. Pp. 45–55.

<https://pressto.amu.edu.pl/index.php/i/article/view/21755>

The ZC Welcomes Research Affiliates

All Research Affiliates have full online and on-site access to Carleton University libraries. In exchange, incumbents are expected to participate in one conference or event over the course of their 3 year term. If you know of anyone who might be interested in becoming an active member of the Jewish Studies research community at the Zelikovitz Centre please encourage them to contact us.

Interested candidates should email jewish_studies@carleton.ca with a letter of introduction, CV, photo, and short research statement, noting areas of interest as they pertain to Jewish Studies, which will be made public on our website. Applications should contain subject line: ZC Research Associate.

External Research Affiliates Publications and Presentations



Dr. Judith R. Cohen

Publications:

Dr. Judith R. Cohen is a performer and ethnomusicologist specializing in Judeo-Spanish (“Ladino”) Sephardic songs. Obituaries and memories of Solly Lévy 1939-2020. *Institut Européen de Musiques Juives* (Paris):

2020 (May) *El Amanecer* (Istanbul) “Muestro Solly Lévy mos deshó,” p. 24.

Professor David Koffman holds the J. Richard Shiff Chair for the Study of Canadian Jewry at York University.

2020 (March) “Roundtable on Anti-Semitism during the Gilded Age and Progressive Era,” with Hasia Diner, Jonathan Sarna, Eric Goldstein, and Beth Wenger. Edited by David S. Koffman, *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era*. 1–33, 2020. Published online by Cambridge University Press: 17 March 2020, pp. 473-505.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537781420000055>

This link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZUsidW5Yef8> will take you to the Association for Canadian Jewish Studies (ACJS) youtube page. Here you can view David Koffman discuss his recent book *The Jews’ Indian: Colonialism, Pluralism, and Belonging in America* < <https://www.ubcpres.ca/the-jews-indian>

Dr. Jeremy Maron

2020 (May) “The Barrier in Experience: The Holocaust Films of Canadian Survivor Jack Kuper,” *CineAction* (Issue 100) <<https://cineaction.ca/current/the-barri->



Professor David Koffman

[er-in-experience-the-holocaust-films-of-canadian-survivor-jack-kuper/>](#)

With COVID, Zelikovitz affiliate Dr. Maron, like most of us, has been working from home. He noted that several of the exhibits he curates at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights are touch-screen (interactive) and therefore temporarily closed at the moment. He is working on developing and updating content for the interactive exhibits in anticipation of the restrictions eventually being lifted, as well as a forthcoming exhibition on artistic responses to mass atrocities.

In October, he gave a workshop remotely that pre-COVID would have been an in-person. The workshop was part of a program co-sponsored by the Jewish Heritage Centre of Western Canada and the Centro Caboto Italian Cultural Centre. The program is on the Racial Laws and Antisemitism in Fascist Italy. There were two virtual moderated discussions, and Dr. Maron hosted one of them, with a focus on Life is Beautiful and unconventional Holocaust representation.

After Dr. Maron’s workshop, there was an online screening of *Figli Del Destino* (Children of Destiny) with the introduction by Director, Marco Spagnoli.

Professor Seymour Mayne is now a retired emeritus professor of Canadian literature, Canadian studies, and creative writing at the University of Ottawa. However, retired is just a word that loses its meaning when twinned with Seymour



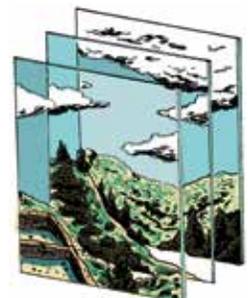
Dr. Jeremy Maron

Mayne. A prolific writer, his new book of poetry, *Perfume: Poems and Word Sonnets*, was released recently <https://www.ronaldpfrye.com/>.

This publication marks fifty-six year since the publication of his first collection of poetry *That Monocycle the Moon* was published in Montreal by Catapult in 1964. He is the author, editor and/or translator of more than seventy books. His latest collections include *The Old Blue Couch and Other Stories*, *Cusp: Word Sonnets*, and *In Your Words: Translations from the Yiddish and the Hebrew*.

Professor Mayne has lectured widely in Canada and abroad on the unique word sonnet he innovated, a fourteen-line poem with one word set for each line: for example, his poem *Message*:

This
is
the
body’s
message:
am
slowly
giving
up
but
not
ready
to
surrender.



Perfume
Poems and Word Sonnets

Seymour Mayne

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External Research Affiliates Publications and Presentations

One of my favorite quotes about Professor Mayne (as it truly reflects the range of his poetry) is in a profile written by Toronto-based journalist, author, and publisher, Bill Gladstone <http://www.billgladstone.ca/profile-poet-seymour-mayne/>. Gladstone quotes the literary critic Arnold Ages, who describes Seymour Mayne's writing gifts as follows: [with] Mayne's "attachment to and love of pure poetry, Jewish tradition, the Hebrew Bible and Canadian Jewry," [he] has transformed that which is dear to his heart into a universal poetic language."

Perfume includes work that is a distillation of his writings of a decade and more. Selections from this volume have already appeared in translation in French, Hebrew, Irish, and Romanian journals, and magazines. The collection also offers a sequence of his renowned word sonnets that have been translated into numerous languages.

Presentations:

Carrie Bettel

2019 (June) "The 'New Jew', The 'Placeless Palestinian', The 'Hybrid Israeli-Palestinian':

Exploring Identity in the Contested and Shared Space of Israel and Palestine,"

Canadian Comparative Literature Association, Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences, University of British Columbia, Vancouver BC.

"From 'Old Jew' to 'New Jew': Exploring Meir Shalev's Family Memoir," "Canadian Society for Jewish Studies, Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences, University of British Columbia, Vancouver BC

2020 (October) "Tragic Love Stories in Israeli Cinema," Midwest Jewish Studies Association, 2020 Virtual Conference



Professor Barry Steifel

Prior to the pandemic **Dr. Judith R. Cohen** participated in several conferences.

In-Person: 2020 (February) Presentation on Sephardic music and medieval music for Lyric Landscapes Symposium, Indiana University, Bloomington

-----"The Bride underneath the Lemon Tree": Lecture-recital, Moroccan Sephardic songs. Aga Khan Museum, Toronto.

Online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yMYuBK6GECY>

Online:

2020 (May) Sephardic songs, Sephardic Museum of Toledo (Spain)

----- Moroccan Sephardic songs: representing the Cervantes Institute, Tangier, Morocco for the Balearic Online Mediterranean Festival, Spain

<https://youtu.be/twcKQwkVfLc>

2020 (August) "Sephardic Music around the Mediterranean", Hebrew University of Lecce, Italy

(Italy) <https://www.facebook.com/1108880472468013/videos/2885659088197654/>

----- "Everything you didn't know you wanted to know about Sephardic songs", for Temple Shalom, Auburn, Maine

----- "The Mazal of Mr Gerry Neldo", lecture on Moroccan Sephardic songs for online series on Jewish music.

2020 (October) "And for the groom a sardine": Sephardic Women's Songs", JewishLearningWorks.

Professor Barry Steifel

2019 (September) "Contextualizing Slovenia's Synagogue Preservation in East-Central Europe: Considerations for Future Opportunities," Slovenian Jewish Heritage International Conference at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel.

Presently, Professor Steifel is working on an article about Canadian synagogue architecture.

It is being written for the Journal of the Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada which plans to publish a special issue on religious architecture. Jamie Scott of York University will be the guest editor for this publication.

Outside of Canada, books have been written about synagogues in the United States, in Britain, and in Ireland. There are also several books on synagogues that are that are city specific. A number of books written about synagogues around the world, and in Canada, are richly illustrated with minimum text. As yet, there has not been an academic publication on Canadian synagogues. Professor Steifel plans to remedy this with his upcoming article.

The City of Jerusalem: Ideas and Images.

A course developed by Loren Lerner.

“As a recently retired professor, I share with you the lectures I developed for Jerusalem: Ideas and Images, the readings consulted, and the annual student journal I produced which contain the very best essays and works of art by the students in that year’s class.”

- Dr. Loren Lerner



In 2013, as a member of the Advisory Board of the Azrieli Foundation and after a sabbatical in Jerusalem, Dr. Lerner developed this art history course for the Minor in Israel Studies, the first and only undergraduate program of its kind in Canada.

In developing the course, Dr. Lerner wanted to give a course that looked at Jewish, Christian, and Muslim art, archaeology, and architecture. She also wanted to provide a longitudinal study that covered many centuries.

Over the centuries, Jerusalem has

been called Shalem, Yerushalayim, City of Melchizedek, City of the Great King or City of David, prototype of the Heavenly Jerusalem, Bayt al-Maqdis or al-Quds, and City of Peace. Her lectures consider these different attachments to Jerusalem through visual perceptions and artistic representations at the religious, social, and political levels. They examine Jerusalem’s multifaceted religious narratives, allegiances, and believers’ ideas since the time of the Hebrew Bible.

Beginning with the Bronze Age and the First and Second Temple periods,

these lectures cover the city’s history: the Roman period, Byzantine Jerusalem, the Arab, Crusader, and Mamluk periods, the years under Ottoman rule

(1517-1917), the British Mandate (1917-1948), Jerusalem’s division and reunification (1948-1967), and Israel today.

This course is available to the public.

http://jerusalemjournal.concordia.ca/jerusalem_ideas_and_images.html

Remembering Morris Schnitzer

Morris died in Ottawa on June 9 at the age of 98. Scientist, storyteller, teacher, author, inventor, speaker, survivor: Morris was all these.

Morris died in Ottawa on June 9 at the age of 98. Scientist, storyteller, teacher, author, inventor, speaker, survivor: Morris was all these.

He was born Feb. 4, 1922, in Bochum in Germany’s Ruhr Valley, near the industrial centre of Essen. His father, Hermann, had immigrated to Germany from Poland in 1908. The Schnitzer family prospered and owned three small department stores; the family lived above one of the shops.

After Hitler came to power in January 1933, life for Jews quickly deteriorated. Despite the increasing persecution of Jews, Hermann and his wife, Rosa, stayed in Germany, believing in the ultimate integrity of German culture. By 1938, the Schnitzer stores were seized, and Hermann was arrested and sent to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp for a taste of what was to come.

Shortly after his father was released and

returned home, Morris and his brother Eddi were placed on kindertransport – Eddi to England, and Morris to the Netherlands.

German troops occupied the neutral Netherlands in May 1940. For the next four years, Morris moved across the Netherlands, Belgium, and France, with a short foray into Switzerland, avoiding German soldiers and police.

When the Allies liberated Belgium, Morris started working as a translator for the American army. He stayed with the U.S. Army until after the war when he finally found his brother Eddi was in



Montreal, where he joined him in 1947. The next summer he worked as a counselor at a summer camp in the Laurentians and met Leah Paltiel. They married a few months later.

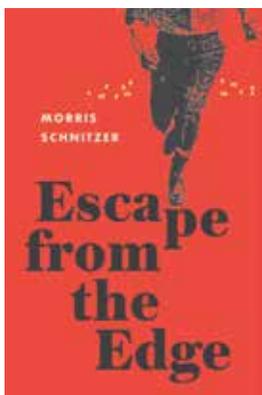
He was keen to return to school. His daughter Eve shared, “He came to Canada because he could study and spent the first few months cramming for his university entrance exams. He was hungry to learn.” He went to

McGill University and, by 1955, earned a PhD in chemistry.

Dr. Schnitzer worked as a chemist for Alcan, then went to work for the Department of Agriculture doing research in soil science at the Central Experimental Farm in Ottawa. He retired in 1991 but

continued to work until his sight failed him. He published hundreds of papers, mentored many visiting scientists, and received major awards, mentored many visiting scientists and received major awards, including a Fellowship of the Royal Society of Canada in 1991 and the Wolf Prize in Agriculture in Israel in 1995.

In 1978, Morris and his wife Leah, with Irwin and Fenja Brodo, were the founding members of Adath Shalom Congregation.



From the beginning, the congregation was egalitarian; Morris encouraged his wife and other women in the community, to lead all parts of the service.

In 2003 Morris shared his story of survival. The book *My Three Selves* was a page turner.

Shortly after its publication, Fred Reed, journalist, author and translator, wrote in his review of *My Three Selves* <http://www.booksincanada.com/article_view.asp?id=3600> that in the “understated pages of his memoir emerges the picture of a man who had learned, or perhaps instinctively knew, how to maximize those meagre chances.”

On October 26, 2003, a book launch was held at the Montreal’s Jewish Public Library. The recording was digitized and added to the audio library in November

2015. Go this link: <https://www.yiddish-bookcenter.org/collections/archival-recordings/frances-brandt/fbr-1788_5783/book-launch-morris-schnitzer-s-my-three-selves-morris-schnitzer>

My Three Selves (renamed *Escape from the Edge*) has recently been republished by the Azrieli Foundation. It is in a new format for students, with a scholarly introduction, glossary, index, and photographs, and also a new Afterword summing up Morris’ life and long career in Canada.

Students and faculty can order a copy of the book or ebook free of charge through the Azrieli Foundation website by going to the Education section of the site (Azrieli Foundation books are always free to students and educators) <<https://memoirs.azrielifoundation.org/education/>>.

The ZC actively reaches out to emerging scholars, graduate students, and faculty at other universities, as well as independent scholars to partner with the ZC and our researchers.

Presently over 40 scholars and researchers with very diverse backgrounds and interests are affiliated with the ZC. A primary mandate of the ZC is to provide opportunities for these scholars to share their work with each other and the larger community in order to

support and encourage the cross-fertilization of ideas and approaches.

For interested affiliates, the ZC has undertaken to create webpages that reflect an affiliate’s research, publications, and interests. A number of affiliates now have their ZC page linked to their faculty page and/or their personal website <<https://carleton.ca/jewishstudies/staff/external-affiliates/>>

We would like to encourage all ZC affiliates to turn your name into an active link.

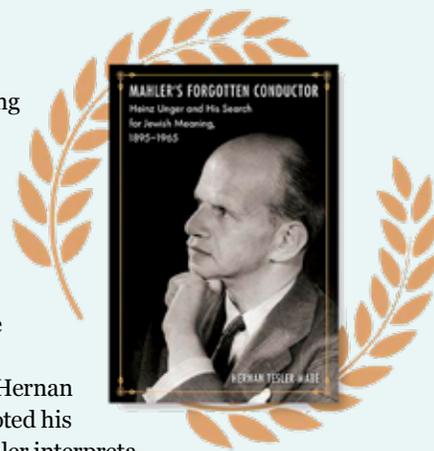
As a number of affiliates have overlapping interests, please browse the webpages already active to seek out and share with colleagues who are engaged in similar fields of research.

If you would like to “activate” your name, all that is required is your permission to create these links as well as the (urls, etc) to make this happen. If you do not have a website, provide the information you would like to share, and a page will be created for you.

Hernan Tesler-Mabé received a CJLA for his biography of Heinz Unger.

The Canadian Jewish Literary Awards is honouring nine outstanding books for 2020. Now in its sixth year, the Canadian Jewish Literary Awards recognizes and rewards the finest Canadian writing on Jewish themes and subjects. “Even during this year of isolation, choosing only nine Award winners from the depth and breadth and quality of the submissions was a challenge,” said Jury chair, Edward Trapunski. “Although the annual Awards ceremony will be online it will show the vibrancy of the culture and the appeal of Jewish themes for fiction and non-fiction writers.” Winners have been declared in the following categories: fiction, biography, Jewish thought and culture, poetry, history, books for children and youth, Yiddish, scholarship, and Holocaust. The Awards ceremony was presented on YouTube, October 25, 2020. For those unable to attend the full ceremony with the winning authors is available for viewing at <http://www.cjlawards.ca/>

Mahler’s Forgotten Conductor: Heinz Unger and His Search for Jewish Meaning, 1895–1965 by Hernan Tesler-Mabé. (University of Toronto Press). The Berlin-born orchestral conductor Heinz Unger devoted his life to the music of Gustav Mahler. In 1948, Unger settled in Canada and was celebrated for his Mahler interpretations with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the Promenade Symphony Orchestra and, most significantly, the CBC Symphony Orchestra. The book explores the way a German Jewish musician understood and expressed his dual identity by way of his allegiance to music and how Jewish cultural values from Europe manifested themselves in Canada.



Words from the Director



Mina Cohn

Faced with the Covid-19 Pandemic and the first lockdown in Ontario last March, the Centre for Holocaust Education and Scholarship (CHES) was forced to cancel live activities and search for new ways to deliver meaningful Holocaust Education Month (HEM) programs through which we honour the lessons and legacy of the Holocaust each November.

By July, three programs were in the early stages of development: *Zikaron BaSalon*, a new concept for our Ottawa audience that would be featured on November 4th; a film telling the CHES story and celebrating our many accomplishments since our establishment five years ago would be premiered on November 8th; and the artifacts of the Pop Up Museum, which were submitted two years ago, would be uploaded to an online platform (<https://carleton.ca/hempopup/virtual-museum/>) and unveiled in a webinar on November 15th.

With the understanding that Zoom, a new medium for CHES, would become the vehicle to reach our audience, the follow-

ing months found CHES committee members busy creating the new initiatives. A sub-committee researched and suggested potential topics for our film, which was entitled *Voices for the Past, the Present, and the Future*. It was time-consuming but rewarding to manage the contract with film maker **Yolanda Papini-Pollock**, develop the script, review to-date, nine versions (called “cuts” in movie terminology) of the film, and provide detailed comments. Important additions to the November 8th program were **Professor Irwin Cotler** and **Dr. Avinoam Patt**, the voices of contemporary expert opinions on Holocaust education in the 21st century,

The launch of the newly named Virtual Holocaust Museum on November 15th was a collaboration between CHES and the Zelikovitz Centre. To augment the 2018 artifacts, a call went out to survivors and members of their families for additional submissions. One additional artifact rounded out the collection which now has 48 artifact posts in nine categories.

For years, researchers were not convinced that artifacts donated by survivors could add anything to Holocaust research, but this attitude gradually changed over time. Therefore, it was fitting to invite Sarah Shor, the manager of artifacts at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, and **Dr. Robert Ehrenreich**, director of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) national academic program, to participate in the webinar. Three local participants in the 2018 Pop Up Museum were invited to share the stories behind the artifacts they submitted.

“Relations, Resistance, Resilience”

On November 18th, the Montreal Holocaust Museum and the Montreal Jewish Public Library were joined by the Zelikovitz Centre and CHES for a collaborative workshop featuring rare books and objects from their collections. These historic artifacts chronicle over 350 years of the complex connections and disconnec-

tions between the Jewish and Christian communities of Europe. The presentation, “Relations, Resistance, Resilience”, focused on rare books and Holocaust-era artifacts from three centuries of Christian-Jewish relations.” (See “Books that Speak to My Grandfather’s Resilience, Page 20). (<https://museeholocauste.ca/en/news-and-events/relations-resistance-resilience/>).

Parliamentary Petition

With the increase in antisemitic incidents in Canada and around the world, **Dr. Art Leader**, a CHES member, worked with CHES members and author and lawyer **Maureen McTeer** to create a petition urging Canada’s Parliament to address the pressing challenges presented by the growing antisemitism, Holocaust deniers, and those who distort the true nature of the Holocaust. **Anita Vandenbeld, MP** for Ottawa West-Nepean, is the petition’s sponsor in Parliament.

Developing Partnerships

During the late summer and fall, we were approached by several organizations seeking collaboration with CHES. These include the Wiesenthal Centre in Toronto, The Centre for Genocide Education in Montreal, Canadian Jewish Holocaust Survivors and Descendants Toronto, and the Jewish Public Library in Montreal. Meetings were conducted in Covid-19 style via Zoom. We believe that working together with likeminded organizations across the country will only strengthen our cause and are excited about the potential for developing projects together.

I want to thank all who joined us for another successful and meaningful month of events and for signing the parliamentary petition. Special thanks go to **Yolanda Papini-Pollock** for her help in producing CHES film *Voices for the Past, The Present and Future*.

Wishing you all an easy and safe winter.

Presenting Holocaust Education Month During a Pandemic: **An Overview of CHES Initiatives**

Sheila Hurtig Robertson



Sheila Hurtig Robertson, Photography by Valerie Keeler, Valberg Imaging

Since 2015, CHES has been bringing year-round Holocaust education programs to Ottawa and environs with Holocaust Education Month (HEM) being the focal point throughout November.

Forced by the COVID-19 pandemic to cancel live activities, the volunteers who comprise CHES were determined to deliver a meaningful HEM that honours the lessons and legacy of the Holocaust. The result was three imaginative and sensitive Zoom events: the social initiative Zikaron BaSalon; an evening with two celebrated speakers and the premiere of a celebratory film commissioned by CHES; and a virtual Pop Up Museum.

November 4th, 1:00 p.m. – Zikaron BaSalon

Zikaron BaSalon, or “Remembrance in Your Living Room” originated in Israel in 2011 and brings together a community of people who choose to commemorate the Holocaust in an intimate and mean-

ingful way. Zikaron BaSalon events typically occur on the eve of Yom HaShoah Memorial Day on 27th Nisan in tens of thousands of homes and communities in Israel and abroad.

Adhering to the traditional Zikaron BaSalon format of three components, the CHES event focussed on “Testimony, Expression, and Discussion”.

“Testimony” featured the remembrances of survivor Kati Morrison; participants in “Expression” expressed their feelings about the Holocaust through a creative lens; and “Discussion” included a facilitated segment focusing on the memory and significance of the Holocaust.

The event concluded with a discussion that built on Kati’s testimony and included lessons that can be learned from survivors about hope, faith, and strength during the Holocaust and in the troubled times we are currently experiencing.

This event was developed in cooperation with AJA 50+ (Active Jewish Adults) and was only open to their members.

Zikaron BaSalon A Powerful Experience

Annette Wildgoose

Sheila Osterer, executive director of AJA, and CHES member Minda Chaikin welcomed over 40 participants and introduced the evening’s program and presenters.

In her gripping presentation entitled “Nothing Will Break Us: Hope in Difficult Times”, Kati Morrison shared her testimony which demonstrates how the human spirit and the belief in human kindness was sorely tested during the Holocaust. She spoke of her family’s traumas in Hungary during

the Holocaust and the essential role her grandmother played in saving Kati and her sister. After her parents were both taken away, her mother to Dachau concentration camp and her father to a work battalion, she and her sister were in the care of her maternal grandmother, the first female ophthalmologist in Hungary, an accomplishment that would save their lives. Forced from their home, they found themselves sharing a two-bedroom apartment with 80 others in a building that housed several hundred Jews. In January 1945, members of the Arrow Cross, a far-right fascist organization, showed up and ordered the residents to line up.

“One Arrow Cross man motioned to my grandmother not to join the line so instead we hid under the staircase. Unfortunately, my aunt, who was screaming for them not to take the children, ended up in the line and she, and all the others, were taken to the banks of the Danube River and shot. We were the only survivors of that action. Why? Because that Arrow Cross man had been my grandmother’s patient. Her profession saved our lives.”

The Holocaust affected most survivors for many years, and it is only in the past 15 years that Kati has been able to share her experiences with others. The survivor strategy of denial and luck was a coping mechanism for many Holocaust survivors. However, Kati suggested that new coping strategies are needed today. “We all must be alert, not be silent and be ready to stand up for human rights for everyone,” she explained.

Guitarist Joel Yan, a member of the Ottawa Simcha Band, performed three musical selections that reflected the

Continued on next page

solemnity of Zikaron BaSalon; Eli, Eli, words by Chana Senesh, music by David Zahavi; Ani Maamin-, Z'l, words from Maimonides' 12th principle of Faith, music by Rabbi David Fastag; and The Partisan Song, words by Hirsch Glick, music by Dmitry Pokrass.

CHES member Hilda Bleyer read a poem by Primo Levi entitled "Shema", a favourite of her late husband, Stephen Bleyer, who had survived Auschwitz as a young boy and greatly admired Primo Levi.

Why Primo Levi?



Hilda Bleyer

I was asked to read a poem for Zikaron BaSalon, an event which was a first for CHES. I knew immediately I wanted to share the poem known as "Shemà" or If This Is a Man, written by my late husband's favourite author of Holocaust literature, Primo Levi.

When Levi describes the process of writing "If This Is a Man", the 178-page autobiographical work that contains the eponymous poem, he speaks of being pushed by the urgency of the memories. "In a few months of work, it was done... I had written the 17 chapters almost precisely backwards... Then I wrote the Preface and in the end I added as Epigraph a poem that was dancing in my head already in Auschwitz, and that I wrote a few days after my return".

Levi the poet forcefully commands you to listen, Shemà. Immediately, the reader is drawn in, involved, implicated, when

he calls out, "You who live safe in your warm houses" and then again shouts to you, beckons, and commands, and implores finally, with threats of dire consequences, all the while fulfilling the vow he took in camp to speak so all will hear and never forget.

In the December 2015 issue of the Atlantic Monthly, William Deresiewicz reminds us that Levi wrote that his one conscious purpose in life has been to make his "voice heard by the German people, to 'talk back' to the SS... and their heirs". In 1961, fourteen years after the book's initial publication, it was translated into German.

Stephen Bleyer was a child survivor of Auschwitz-Birkenau. A tall strong 13-year-old, Steve (Istvan) was directed by his mother to stand with the men upon their arrival in the camps from Hungary. It was the last time he saw her. It took time and his outrage at the denial of the Holocaust to break the heavy burden of silence and allow him to act on his perceived responsibility as a survivor.

Stephen joined others speaking to groups at the Montreal Holocaust Museum and in schools and colleges. In a June 1991 address that he named "Remembering the Holocaust in Museums and Education", he said, "I would like to dedicate this short talk to the memory of my favourite author of Holocaust literature: Primo Levi".

On January 26, 1995, in a piece written for the Canadian Jewish News, he describes himself at liberation 50 years earlier in the makeshift infirmary which "was in effect a waiting room for the dying skeletons" who knew their "lives were hanging on very thin threads". Primo Levi's poem was published alongside. Stephen was then President of the Montreal Holocaust Museum continuing the work he felt was important.

Primo Levi, author, poet, chemist, was born in Turin, Italy in 1919 in a Jewish community, but growing up, he knew little about the practice of Judaism. He was a gifted student and when he graduated from university with honors in Chemistry, his diploma was stamped OF JEWISH RACE. It was an individual

professor who had enabled him to complete his work in spite of the anti-Jewish environment. In Fascist Italy, he had to get a false identity and forged papers in order to find work. After his father died, his sister and mother went into hiding and Levi joined friends as ill-equipped partisans in the hills north of Turin. They were soon arrested and, when the Germans took over, "Levi was sent to Auschwitz (Buna-Monowitz, otherwise known as Auschwitz III, was the largest slave labour camp in the Auschwitz complex); he was 24."

Stephen and Levi were in that huge complex of diabolical camps for some of the same period and were liberated at the same time. Later they ended up in the same city for a short time, Turin. For Levi, it was a return home after a very long journey that is the topic of another autobiographical book, *The Truce or The Reawakening*.

Stephen spent months in the Russian camp hospital before being able to travel back to Hungary to see what family he could find. He found his older brother, and they eventually became refugees in Italy as they waited for a permanent home. Meanwhile, Stephen started his architectural studies in Turin.

Neither Primo Levi nor Stephen Bleyer were recognizable to the first person seeing them upon their return; both write of that moment. Stephen has more to say about getting to see what he looked like at liberation. "I recognized myself only because of the number"; this was his reaction to finding a photograph of himself by chance in the book, "Auschwitz: a History in Photographs". It is the name of the submission for the Pop Up Museum on the CHES website.

Levi's experience as a chemist allowed him to get a "job" in a laboratory in the synthetic rubber factory next to the camp. This meant a little more food, a change of clothing, and some heat in his workplace. He acknowledged what he called his "good fortune"; workers in the camps generally were "disposable" but when Levi arrived, they were in short supply as was the gas and ammunition used for killing.

From the very beginning of his camp experience, Levi admits he was engaged in observing, recording mentally to be ready to tell the world. With directness and simplicity, he tells what he sees, how he survives. He exchanged bread for German lessons from the beginning, explaining how horrible it was for those prisoners who could not even understand the shouted commands with sometimes terrifying results. Primo Levi said, as did Stephen, it was fortunate to arrive reasonably healthy and knowing some German.

Levi describes being in the camp infirmary at the time of Liberation, “fortunate” to get scarlet fever, not too serious an illness, at the right time. Stephen too felt that his infected feet might prove lucky. They both were too weak and sick to join the forced march and were left behind.

In Levi’s methodical report of the last 10 days, he describes how three men, a barely mobile Levi included, work together to care for others suffering from typhus and diphtheria. They hunt for frozen potatoes and clean ice to melt, and “steal” a stove that they manage to repair. As Paul Bailey points out in the introduction to Levi’s “If This Is a Man”, the book ends on a hopeful note. Work is no longer the humiliating drudgery imposed by the SS, instead it is finding and sharing food and healing the helpless. The tired, cold, and hungry, wrapped in the blankets and rags abandoned by those who left on the forced march, or who had died, were now creeping out of the shadows, and slowly becoming men again.

Stephen and his favourite Holocaust author never met. But Stephen was fortunate to have the support of Levi’s words and ideas so deeply infused with humanity as he took up his own efforts to describe the indescribable, to consider his own experience, and to make his contribution. No meeting, but perhaps a meeting of the minds.

Shema Poem by Primo Levi

You who live secure
In your warm houses
Who return at evening to find
Hot food and friendly faces:
Consider whether this is a man,
Who labours in the mud
Who knows no peace
Who fights for a crust of bread
Who dies at a yes or a no.
Consider whether this is a woman,
Without hair or name
With no more strength to remember
Eyes empty and womb cold
As a frog in winter.
Consider that this has been:
I commend these words to you.
Engrave them on your hearts
When you are in your house, when you
walk on your way,
When you go to bed, when you rise.
Repeat them to your children.
Or may your house crumble,
Disease render you powerless,
Your offspring avert their faces from you.

November 8th, 7:00 p.m. – Voices for the Past, the Present, and the Future

CHES was established on the eve of Kristallnacht 2015, and chose November 8, 2020 to reflect on its many accomplishments.

A new film, *Voices for the Past, the Present, and the Future*, celebrates the fifth anniversary of CHES and covers its inception, achievements, programs, out-



reach to schools and educators, symposiums for descendants of survivors, and special events.

The film presentation was followed by an animated and informative discussion featuring **The Honorable Irwin Cotler and Dr. Avinoam Patt**, who are experts in the importance of Holocaust education today.

Irwin Cotler is the Chair of the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights, an Emeritus Professor of Law at McGill University, former Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, and an international human rights lawyer. He spoke about the importance of Holocaust education in today’s world and CHES’ role in this vital work.

Dr. Avinoam Patt is a professor of Modern Jewish History at the University of Hartford and Assistant Director of the university’s Maurice Greenberg Center of Judaic Studies. He facilitated a timely webinar entitled “Obligation and Challenges of Teaching the Holocaust in the 21st Century”, based on his new book, *Understanding and Teaching the Holocaust*, which he and Laura Hilton edited.

Highlights of the Speakers’ Remarks

Marion Silver

Irwin Cotler, just appointed Canada’s first special envoy for Holocaust remembrance and combating anti-Semitism (November 25, 2020), spoke about the importance of speaking out against hatred and intolerance. He has called “anti-semitism an assault on our common humanity.” He stated that Kristallnacht is a sanitised term for the pogrom that was the precursor to the Holocaust. This night, all over Germany and Austria saw the pillaging of Jewish homes, the burning of synagogues, and the rounding up and killing of people who were Jews. The Nuremberg laws which were passed in 1936 served to delegitimize and disenfranchise the Jewish community. Nazism was a regime anchored in antisemitism.

What are the lessons? The imperative of remembrance, *zachor*: Not all victims were Jews, but all Jews were targeted

victims. Unto each person there is a name, each person is a universe.

The danger of silence: This results in complicity with evil itself.

State-sanctioned culture of hate, state-sanctioned incitement of hate. The Holocaust did not begin with the horrors of the camps, but with words, Raoul Wallenberg, as a righteous bystander, demonstrated how one person can confront hatred and transform history.

Antisemitism did not die in Auschwitz but remains the canary in the coal mines of humanity. Never again must we be indifferent to racism and hate, antisemitism, mass atrocity, but we will speak out against all forms of hatred. This day is an act of remembrance.

Where antisemitism is laundered by the far left, progressivism, we must unmask it and expose it for what it is.

Jews have a sacred obligation to remember. The study of genocide allows for memory of a civilization.

The Holocaust is a paradigm for radical evil; antisemitism is a paradigm for radical hate, but indifference or inaction results in complicity with the perpetrator and not the victim.

Dr. Avinoam Patt shared that in the United States young people, millennials, and Generation Z have demonstrated a shocking lack of knowledge and awareness of the Holocaust.

Many could not name a single concentration camp or had ever heard of Auschwitz. Moreover, there was no correlation between states that taught about the Holocaust and students knowing more. In general, students showed an overall lack of knowledge of other historical events as well.

The danger is that there is so much Holocaust denial on social media with rampant misinformation available on all social media platforms.

Teaching the Holocaust demands a great deal of knowledge. My book (*Understanding and Teaching the Holocaust*) offers strategies and key topics of the Holocaust and suggestions to teach multiple facets of the Holocaust as well as integrate aspects of the Holocaust with other areas of the curriculum.

COVID-19 has had an impact on the collective memory of the Shoah. The observance of memorial events has changed due to COVID-19 and Zikaron BaSalon takes place more and more. The war against COVID-19 resembles the fight against antisemitism: both are fought against an invisible enemy.

Children of survivors can relate the experiences of their parents, but their stories are mediated by memory and do not adequately reveal the depth of the trauma

Holocaust education can be used to teach about antisemitism, but we must confront directly, all forms of anti-Semitism.

November 15th, 1:00 p.m. – Virtual Holocaust Museum: The Importance of Artifacts to the Research of the Holocaust

Background

On November 4th, 2018, Temple Israel was the setting for a Pop Up Museum featuring Holocaust artifacts submitted by survivors and their families. The museum, which was the brainchild of Rabbi Rob Morais, featured 47 documents, letters, books, movies, short videos, a Tora Scroll, and a tallit rescued from a Berlin synagogue. The positive response to this event prompted the inauguration of a Holocaust Virtual Museum on November 15th, 2020. All the artifacts belong to Ottawa-area Holocaust survivors and their families. These items have a connection to their experience of the Holocaust and are testimony to survival.

The artifacts allow us to honour the humanity of Holocaust victims. They

reflect family stories and encourage learning and remembrance. The variety of the artifacts reveals the richness and diversity of the lives lost while ensuring that they are not forgotten.

The Holocaust Virtual Museum continues to accept new submission. For information, contact: jewish_studies@carleton.ca

On November 15th, a Virtual Holocaust Museum was launched on the websites of CHES and the Zelikovitz Centre. The first venture, entitled the Pop Up Museum project, was part of HEM 2018 and was created by the Zelikovitz Centre in cooperation with CHES and Temple Israel Synagogue.

Anita Vandenberg, MP for Nepean-Carleton, set the tone for the webinar with impressive and genuine remarks. Although she is not Jewish, she clearly has a deep understanding of the Holocaust and its lasting impact on so many people. A strong and vocal supporter of CHES, she spoke of her roots to the Netherlands, her family's connection to acts of bravery in saving Jews, and of growing up with stories of the war. (See Holocaust Education Petition Addresses Challenges of Growing Antisemitism).

Traditionally based on a theme, a Pop Up Museum welcomes people to share information about an object relevant to that theme. For the launch of its virtual Holocaust Museum, CHES and the Ze-



Birthday Card, Yad Vashem Artifacts Collection donated by Benjamin (Brandt) Kolton, Bellevue WA, USA

likovitz Centre chose the theme of “The Importance of Artifacts to the Research of the Holocaust”. The Virtual Holocaust Museum features over 47 photographs of artifacts, all submitted by survivors and their descendants who live in Ottawa.

CHES website: <https://carleton.ca/hem-pup/virtual-museum/>

Zelikovitz Centre website: <https://carleton.ca/jewishstudies/>

Sara Shor, manager of the Artifacts department of Yad Vashem Jerusalem’s Museum Division, has been involved in in documentation and research for over 30 years. A graduate of the Ontario College of Art and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, she discussed how these items enhance Holocaust research in a presentation entitled “The Importance of Objects to the Study and Research of the Holocaust”. Her presentation was fascinating as she focused on a birthday card found by a survivor as Auschwitz was liberated in January 1945. Sara explained the card’s long journey to Yad Vashem where work began to identify the talented artist who created it and the three prisoners whose names appeared on it, including the one for whom it was intended. Eventually, painstaking research over many years identified the recipient and two of the three men; the man named Jacques has not yet been found.



Brooch from Buchenwald, United State Holocaust Memorial Museum collection

Dr. Robert Ehrenreich, director of National Academic Programs at the USHMM, is the author or editor of four books, an international journal, and over 30 articles and reviews on the Holocaust, Holocaust studies, and European history and prehistory. In his talk, “Viewing the Holocaust Through Objects” he showed how objects, especially groups of items, can provide insights into human nature, community, and interconnections documents and oral histories may neglect, overlook, or suppress.

Robert shared the story behind a brooch that was made for Sala Spett while she and her family were imprisoned in Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. The brooch, made by a young girl from Warsaw who was also an inmate in the camp, was given to Sala by two of her children. The brooch, rich in detail, posed many unanswered questions for researchers, included how the Polish girl was able to get materials for the brooch. Robert stressed the importance of learning as much as possible about such artifacts in order to glean some understanding of people’s lives during the Holocaust. Another example was small fragments of Bakelite taken by survivors as keepsakes of their labour in an ammunition factory.

Three local contributors who submitted personal artifacts described their selections in stirring detail.

Les Grumach spoke of the tallit his father, as a teenager, bravely salvaged from his synagogue in Berlin the day following Kristallnacht. His father survived the Holocaust and eventually settled in Australia. Les also showed a Rosh Hashonah card with a message in German and Hebrew.

Dora Goldman, a survivor from Hungary, spoke movingly about three artifacts. The first was a yellow star made by her mother and worn by her. The second was a worn leather homespun bag that carried her family’s food following deportation from the ghetto. The final artifact was three buttons etched with the edelweiss, Austria’s national flower. These were saved from a dress given to her by an Austrian villager – a woman who worked in the suitcase factory where her mother worked. Dora and the other children were locked in an empty garage while their parent(s) were at work (from 8 am to 6 sometimes 7 pm). “These buttons remind me that even in the most difficult times, I witnessed humanity in people,” said Dora.

Marlene Wolinsky’s story focused on her beloved father, **Arnold Sprecher**, and the dancing puppet he began to create while imprisoned in Dachau and the guitar he made while interned as an alien in Sherbrooke, Que. He hid these and other items in the back of his closet for 50 years, unable or unwilling to speak of his ordeal before finally revealing them to her and her children. A family reunion led to the creation of a wonderfully detailed book entitled “The Sprechers of Cologne: An Intimate History”, which Marlene also displayed.

CHES member **Abigail Bimman**, an award-winning journalist and Ottawa-based correspondent for Global National, emceed both webinars with warmth and professionalism.

This link will take you to the webinar on “The Importance of Artifacts to the Research of the Holocaust”

<https://carleton.ca/jewishstudies/videos>

Holocaust Education Month at Sir Robert Borden High School

Kenra Mroz

This is a very different school year for everybody, one wherein semesters have been replaced by quadesters and the turnaround between classes is quite rapid. With less time in which to cover important course material, club-hosted, school-wide events that are scheduled during instructional time are, of necessity, few and far between. This is why Sir Robert Borden High School's Social Justice Club was thrilled to have been granted approval to organize a "virtual" school-wide DEAR (Drop Everything And Reflect) event to commemorate 2020 Holocaust Education Month.

Our event included a slideshow and video presentation outlining the dangers of hatred and stereotyping. Our intent is to not only highlight representative student voices, but also to educate our school community regarding the many ways in which Holocaust history and legacy continue to be relevant in this day and age. We also prepared optional letter writing and creative response activities for teachers and students to do following our presentation, which are intended to encourage them to continue to reflect upon, connect to, share and discuss what they have learned.

Ultimately, we wish to inspire our school community through a message of hope: that there are no limits to the positive results that a community of kindness, inclusiveness, and caring can achieve.

*The Social Justice Club wishes to express our sincere gratitude to Mina Cohn for the loan of her personal copy of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's publication, *State of Deception: The Power of Nazi Propaganda*.

Holocaust Education Petition Addresses Challenges of Growing Antisemitism

Sheila Hurtig Robertson

Dr. Art Leader, the son of Holocaust survivors and a member of the Centre for Holocaust Education and Scholarship (CHES), was alarmed, and with reason.

In 2019, statistics reported by B'nai Brith Canada revealed that, for the fourth consecutive year, antisemitic incidents in Canada rose to more than 2,000 annually.

Also concerning him was the fact that, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, many Holocaust remembrance events were virtual and, with schools closed nationwide, Holocaust educational activities were halted. He further noted that for working youth, Holocaust education is non-existent. And with the passing of time, decreasing numbers of eyewitnesses who survived the Holocaust are able to share their knowledge and relate their experiences, resulting in minimal awareness of atrocities they witnessed and endured.

Then, in 2020, the National Holocaust Monument in Ottawa was vandalized only two days after International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

Later in 2020, anti-Nazi graffiti on a memorial in an Oakville, Ont., cemetery, which honours the 14th Waffen SS Division, was initially considered a hate crime by Halton Regional Police. Although the police later apologized for using that terminology, it was particularly distasteful to Dr. Leader, whose mother often spoke of the brutality of soldiers from that division and how they assisted Germans in the murder of her entire family.

"Canada has demonstrated a commitment to remembrance and Holocaust education and to fighting the antisemitism and racism that threaten and erode the multicultural and pluralistic nature of our society," says Dr. Leader. "Holocaust education sensitizes Canadians to the role racist ideology and government propaganda played in the systematic murder of millions of Jews and other persecuted

groups and helps youth to understand the dangers of indifference to the oppression of others."

Convinced that the time is right to develop a comprehensive inventory of best practices in Holocaust education and relevant resources offered in Canadian schools and communities, Dr. Leader, working with CHES and author and lawyer Maureen McTeer, created a House of Commons petition urging Parliament to address the pressing challenges presented by the growing antisemitism, Holocaust deniers, and those who distort the true nature of the Holocaust. Anita Vandenberg, MP, is the petition's sponsor in Parliament.

The petition urges the government to build upon its previous investments in Holocaust education, research, and remembrance initiatives; determine the current availability of Holocaust education across Canada; identify new strategies to reach those who are targeted by racist and hate propaganda online; and urgently fund community organizations to preserve the testimonies of Holocaust survivors, thereby educating Canadians about the destructive impact of hate and intolerance on our Charter Freedoms, to the detriment of current and future generations.

Supporters include former Prime Ministers Paul Martin and Joe Clark, members of the Carleton University community including President Benoit-Antoine Bacon, as well as Rabbi Reuven Bulka, Rabbi Idan Scher, the Ottawa Jewish Federation, Kehillat Beth Israel Synagogue, Holocaust survivors, prominent Ottawa lawyer Lawrence Greenspon, and local Members of Parliament,

CHES and the Zelikovitz Centre urge readers to sign the petition and share the link with family and friends. The petition was open for signature until November 19, 2020. Supporters' identities are protected by Canada's privacy laws

Ontario Students Face Critical Gaps in Holocaust Education and Awareness

Michaela Bax-Leaney

In the wake of a widely shared report on low levels of Holocaust awareness in the United States, there are growing calls across North America — including a parliamentary petition in Canada — for what many have been urgently seeking for years: comprehensive Holocaust education in schools.

Splashed across the home page of the Guardian news site on Sept. 16 was a startling headline that read: “Nearly two-thirds of U.S. young adults unaware 6M Jews killed in the Holocaust.”

While the survey probed the Holocaust knowledge of American respondents, Canada is hardly immune to the phenomenon. A study commissioned by the Azrieli Foundation and the Claims Conference in 2018 found 22 per cent of Canadian Generation Z and Millennial respondents haven’t or don’t think they have heard of the Holocaust.

For those who work in Holocaust scholarship, that disturbing picture is one they’ve been trying to draw attention to for years.

While the curriculum for Ontario public secondary schools provides some mention of the Holocaust, it is often left to the discretion of schools and individual teachers to incorporate Holocaust education in the classroom, said Mina Cohn, the director of the Ottawa-based Centre for Holocaust Education and Scholarship (CHES).

“The Holocaust is taught in Grade 10 as part of World War II, with at best two classroom periods dedicated to the topic. However, the amount of time dedicated to the topic varies depending on the interest of the teacher,” said Cohn.

While the Holocaust may be touched on briefly in other courses, those brief lessons in Grade 10 history class is the extent of the mandatory Holocaust education high school students in Ontario will receive.

Those variables mean that for secondary students in Ontario, there is very little consistency in the programming they receive around Holocaust education, and it’s introduced quite late.

Encyclopedia Britannica defines the Holocaust as “the systematic state-sponsored killing of six million Jewish men, women, and children and millions of others by Nazi Germany and its collaborators during World War II.” However, Holocaust educators warn that even this bare-bones summary is not as universally known as one would hope.

“A ‘typical’ high school student’s knowledge of the Holocaust varies tremendously, which points to the gaps in both teacher training and the age of instruction . . . We need to begin Holocaust education at a younger age and provide teachers with appropriate training,” said Melissa Mikel, the director of education at the Toronto-based Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Centre for Holocaust Studies.

Concerns about whether young Canadians are being adequately educated about the Holocaust have grown louder in recent years, particularly as anti-Semitic incidents continue on an upward trajectory.

As B’nai Brith, a Jewish advocacy organization, has reported, 2019 saw anti-Semitic incidents in Canada increase for the fourth consecutive year. Ontario had the greatest increase of any other province, with a 62.8-per-cent rise from 2018.

In fact, in July, CHES member Arthur Leader initiated a parliamentary petition calling on the federal government to improve and expand Holocaust education nation-wide. The online petition, which currently has 642 supporters, will continue to gather signatures until November.

The petition, sponsored by Anita Vandenberg, the Liberal member of Parliament for Ottawa West—Nepean, makes specific mention of the need to better educate young Canadians.

Continued on next page



The main gate of Auschwitz, one of the most infamous Nazi concentration camps. It is in Oświęcim, Poland. Photo licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0 AT

Leader's petition states that Holocaust education helps young Canadians "understand the dangers of indifference to the oppression of others," while noting that as time passes, fewer Holocaust survivors are able to share with us their accounts, and fewer young people are aware of the atrocities committed.

Leader also makes note of the importance of Holocaust education in combating Holocaust deniers, who have found a platform and an audience in the digital age — an audience that could include impressionable young Canadians.

However, even when individual educators incorporate more Holocaust education into their classrooms, it can be challenging.

Mikel notes that because most teachers are not required to provide instruction about the Holocaust, it is not included in their training.

Unless teachers seek out training from organizations like ours, there is no standardized training to prepare teachers for this topic," said Mikel.

"The Holocaust is a very broad topic, and most teachers lack knowledge and do not

know how to deal with the subject," added Cohn. "A new revised core provincial curriculum that mandates teaching the Holocaust, which includes best practices by Holocaust educators across Ontario, is needed."

Cohn and Mikel encourage teachers to make use of the resources available to them. The Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Centre has a best-practices guide for Holocaust education available, and CHES hosts an annual teachers' workshop to help train educators within Ottawa.

The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board, for its part, says it is "committed to ensuring students understand and appreciate the significance of the Holocaust." OCDSB schools will host Holocaust survivors for students to hear from, and the board has also partnered with organizations such as the Simon Wiesenthal Centre.

However, with the Ontario curriculum as the guiding framework, Ontario school boards are left largely to devise their own plan about when and how Holocaust education is introduced.

The consequences of inadequate Holocaust education, Mikel warns, are serious.

"Many children are told that Hitler was crazy, or evil, and learn nothing about the widespread popularity of Nazism, or Europe's long history of anti-Jewish violence . . . We need to equip young people with the tools to think critically about our past if we want them to be engaged citizens in the present."

For Cohn, Holocaust education goes well beyond remembrance, presenting students with questions about morality and human behaviour that still echo today, as well as developing social awareness, empathy, critical thinking, and moral reasoning.

"Many people don't understand that conversations around human rights today were born out of the ashes of the Holocaust," said Mikel, "acknowledging that the post-war reckoning with the genocidal policies of the Nazi regime has radically altered the way we think, discuss, and legislate human rights issues."

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CHES Speakers' Bureau

Marion Silver

An important component of CHES' mission is imparting the legacy of the Holocaust to today's youngsters. This is especially critical in the increasing climate of overall racism and Holocaust denial.

Working in partnership with the local school boards, CHES encourages educators to invite Holocaust survivors, or their descendants, to address their classes. In the academic year 2018-2019, more than 3000 students in the areas of Ottawa and Kingston were given the opportunity to learn about this tragic moment in modern history. The numbers of students were significantly reduced in 2019-2020 due to work stoppages by the teachers and then the onset of COVID-19.

Noting the importance of Holocaust education, one high school teacher recently remarked:

"We have recently finished an intensive Holocaust study unit and the students have been applying what they have learned and developed through this unit towards a greater understanding of the profound and lasting impact of discrimination as well as towards an understanding of how the events of the Holocaust must be recognized and used as a means of promoting positive change in our world. We have made it a point to examine and discuss how the legacy of the Holocaust serves as an important reminder of the need to work towards a culture of inclusion and kindness."

Unfortunately, due to the ongoing COVID-19 virus, it is impossible for in-person school visits to take place. However, by means of Zoom, Holocaust survivors continue to deliver their vital message.

The survivors deserve the highest praise for the crucial role they play in conveying their lived experience to the younger generation. Their stories serve as a wake-up call so that today's students recognize the dangers posed by bigotry and racial intolerance.



CHES members Annette Wildgoose (l) and Marion Silver.

