



Buttrick Hall, future home of the *Program in Jewish Studies*

THE PROGRAM IN JEWISH STUDIES AT VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

Year-End Report (2004-2005)

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June 2, 2005

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THE PROGRAM IN JEWISH STUDIES Annual Report 2004-5

S U M M A R Y

The Program in Jewish Studies (PJS) was formally launched in August 2002, when Provost Nicholas Zeppos appointed Jack M. Sasson to a three-year term as its director and commissioned a committee to shape the program. Now concluding its third academic year, the PJS is set firmly among other humanities programs and continues to contribute imaginatively to Vanderbilt's teaching and research missions.

THIRD YEAR UNDERTAKINGS

Faculty Development

- Filled a junior tenure-track position in Sociology and in Jewish Studies: **Shaul Kelner**, currently Senior Research Associate at Brandeis University's Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies
- Co-hosted, with German and Slavic Languages, **Nina Warnke** (University of Texas – Austin) as visiting Assistant Professor, teaching a course for each
- Received authorization to fill a junior tenure-track position in Jewish Literature

Curriculum Development

- Created a graduate *Certificate of Jewish Studies*
- With Study Abroad Programs, steered approval for Jewish Studies in Prague
- Expanded course offerings through First Year Seminars and development of special courses by Vanderbilt faculty
- Continued discussions on sponsoring Internships and Service Learning courses

Program Development

- Continued to stimulate PJS awareness via faculty lunch- and supper-seminars
- Increased student interest of the PJS via the web, brochures, open-house, and advertisement
- Sponsored a conference: *Maimonides and His Milieu* in Fall 2004
- Supported the funding of lectures in concert with other Vanderbilt units as well as the Nashville Jewish community

FOURTH YEAR PLANS

Faculty Development

- To fill the Jewish Literature position
- To continue the Visiting Professor program

Curriculum Development

- To begin negotiations for a Study Abroad program in Spain
- To stimulate the production of more JS courses taught by faculty from within and without Vanderbilt
- To concretize Service Learning opportunities
- With Peabody College, to create a Master of Education in Jewish Studies program, with multiple foci

Program Development

- To continue seminars for faculty and launch equivalent forums for undergraduates
- To broaden public interest in JS through lectures and conferences
- To move into new quarters in Buttrick Hall

JEWISH STUDIES IN ITS FOURTH YEAR

FULL REPORT

- **NOTICE:** It might help in reading this report to know that materials reviewing this past year's activity are in roman type, *while those pertaining to future plans are in italics and often set off by a bullet.*

INTRODUCTION

The Program in Jewish Studies (PJS) was formally launched in August 2002, when Provost Nicholas Zeppos appointed Jack M. Sasson to a three-year term as its director and commissioned a committee to shape the Program. Unlike most humanities program, the PJS reports directly to the Provost; but it gains its undergraduate focus through harmonious cooperation with the College of Arts and Science and fulfills its commitment to graduate education through the Graduate Department of Religion, an organ of the Graduate as well as the Divinity schools.

During the first year of work, signal progress was made in creating a curriculum, filling the first of three faculty appointments, establishing a community of interest in Jewish Studies and forging communication within and without Vanderbilt. The second year of work carried this program further, with the institution of a Master of Arts in Jewish Studies within the Graduate Department of Religion; the appointment of a senior colleague, Professor David Wasserstein; and the planning of initiatives with Peabody College.

This past year saw further advances in firmly setting the PJS within Vanderbilt academic and intellectual community, with a junior tenure track co-appointment with Sociology, a diversification in undergraduate course offering, a creation of a Graduate Certificate in Jewish Studies, and a fine new crop of MA candidates.

The Program also took pride in graduating in May 2005 its first Major, Ms. Joanna Dilts.



Joanna Dilts

ADMINISTRATION

2004-05 Committee

In its third year, the PJS was directed by a faculty committee made up of the following (in **bold** are appointees in the PJS):

Robert Barsky, Professor of Comparative Literature and of French and Italian
Idit Dobbs-Weinstein, Associate Professor of Philosophy
Amy-Jill Levine, Carpenter Professor of New Testament Studies, Divinity School
Leah Marcus, Mims Professor of English
Beverly Moran, Professor of Law and of Sociology
Michael Rose, Associate Professor of Composition, Blair School of Music
Marcy Singer-Gabella, Research Assistant Professor, Department of Teaching and Learning, Peabody
Martina Urban, Assistant Professor of Jewish Studies and of Religious Studies
David Wasserstein, Professor of History and of Jewish Studies

• **Proposed Committee for 2005-06**

Robert Barsky, Professor of Comparative Literature and of French and Italian

Gregory Barz, Assistant Professor of Ethnomusicology, Blair School of Music

Idit Dobbs-Weinstein, Associate Professor of Philosophy

Cathy Jrade, Professor and Chair of Spanish and Portuguese

Shaul Kelner, *Assistant Professor of Sociology and of Jewish Studies*

Amy-Jill Levine, Carpenter Professor of New Testament Studies, the Divinity School

Jeffrey Schoenblum, Centennial Professor of Law, School of Law

Marcy Singer-Gabella, Research Assistant Professor in Teaching and Learning, Peabody College

Martina Urban, *Assistant Professor of Jewish Studies and of Religious Studies*

David Wasserstein, *Professor of History and of Jewish Studies*

The committee worked well together. There were feisty moments during discussions, but always a sense of shared purpose. The Director takes this occasion to thank Professors Leah Marcus, Beverly Moran, and Michael Rose as they “graduate” from the committee this Spring.

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

It is appropriate to recount the status of appointment in the PJS as developed in consultation among the Provost, the Dean of Arts and Science, and the PJS Director during the Program’s formative period:

1. An appointee holds two titles, one connected with the PJS, the other with the host department.
2. While all personnel actions (tenure and promotion) are vetted within the host department, through its Director or its appointee, the PJS has a voting presence.
3. Search committees are co-chaired by a delegate from the PJS and from the host department, with equal representation from both bodies.
4. An appointee offers courses equally divided between the PJS and the host department, all courses being dually listed.

THE THIRD FACULTY APPOINTMENT, WITH THE SOCIOLOGY DEPARTMENT

The first faculty search concluded in the Spring ’03 with the appointment of Dr. Martina Urban as Assistant Professor of Religious Studies and of Jewish Studies. The second search was pursued jointly with the History Department, and concluded in Spring ’04 with the appointment of Dr. David Wasserstein as Professor of History and of Jewish Studies.



Dr. Martina Urban



Dr. David Wasserstein

In discussions during Spring '04, Provost Zeppos and Dean McCarty supported splitting the single mid-level position available to the PJS into two tenured-track posts, the first to be filled in concert with Sociology. A search advertisement was crafted with the following core:

The Department of Sociology and the Program in Jewish Studies at Vanderbilt University are jointly recruiting for a tenure-track position as Assistant Professor of Sociology and of Jewish Studies for 2005 (pending administrative approval). Candidates must have expertise on the sociology of Jews and Judaism in the Americas. Other areas of specialization are open, although we have particular interest in such areas as: race, class, gender; religion, religious identity; diaspora, ethnicity, immigration; work; health and mental health.

A search committee made up of representatives from the PJS (Jack Sasson, Robert Barsky, and Amy-Jill Levine) and Sociology (Gary Jensen, James Lang, and Ronnie Steinberg) examined about two dozen dossiers, brought three candidates for interview, and submitted its selection of **Shaul Kelner** to the respective units. Kelner received enormous support from all involved and has accepted our offer to be an Assistant Professor of Sociology and of Jewish Studies. His home department will be Sociology, chaired by Gary Jensen.



Dr. Shaul Kelner

Shaul [pronounced: sha-ool] **Kelner** received his Ph.D. in Sociology in October 2002 from the City University of New York, which he attended as a Wexner Graduate Fellow. Currently, he serves as Senior Research Associate at Brandeis University's Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, an applied research institute that studies contemporary Jewish life. Affiliated with the Cohen Center since 1998, he has led or otherwise contributed to numerous research projects about American Jews. His work blends qualitative and quantitative methods to shed light on issues such as Israel-Diaspora relations, Jewish education, adolescent Jewish identity, the professional workforce of Jewish organizations, and gender equity in the Jewish community.

A former fellow of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem's prestigious Institute for Advanced Studies, Dr. Kelner is currently writing a book about contemporary Jewish pilgrimage and tourism to Israel. Based on his doctoral dissertation, the research draws extensively from his research into *Birthright Israel*, a five-year-old program that has sent 70,000 Diaspora, Jewish, college-age adults on free trips to Israel. He is also engaged in an ongoing study of the historical sociology of the Soviet Jewry movement.

Born in Philadelphia and raised in central New Jersey, Dr. Kelner graduated summa cum laude from the George Washington University, where he received degrees in political communication and Judaic Studies. In 1993, after a year of volunteer service in Israel, he moved to New York City to take a job as speechwriter for the Israeli Mission to the United Nations. He worked there during the final two years of the Rabin administration, observing the unfolding Oslo peace process from the unique vantage point of Israel's diplomatic offices at the UN. Dr. Kelner is married to Pamela and they have two children, Boaz (6) and Shoshana (4).

• ***For 2005-2006: The Fourth Search***

After much discussion with the PJS and with colleagues in the College, it was decided that the second of junior appointments to be created from splitting a mid-level position would be in Jewish Literature, a phrase broadly conceived purposefully to attract interest from a large pool of applicants. The Dean has committed to a Fall 2005 search for a junior, tenure-track position to be hosted by an established Arts and Science department, the exact assignment to depend on the specialty of the selected candidate. The Director of the PJS has consulted with the heads of such departments as German, French & Italian, and Spanish & Portuguese, shaping an advertisement with the following core:

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY. The College of Arts and Science and the Program in Jewish Studies invite nominations and applications for a tenure-track Assistant Professor position, beginning Fall 2006, in the literature of the Jewish people. Ph.D. is required and applicants should demonstrate promise of outstanding research and teaching. The successful candidate will hold jointly the title of Assistant Professor in Jewish Studies and, depending on expertise, Assistant Professor in a resident department such as French and Italian, Germanic and Slavic languages, or Spanish and Portuguese as well as participation in the program in Comparative Literature and the Center for the Study of Religion and Culture.

Area of specialization is open, but candidates must be fluent in the languages and cultures of their relevant expertise. We have particular interest in post-Biblical Hebrew and in Yiddish literatures, favoring candidates who are both expert in one and proficient in the other.

VISITING FACULTY APPOINTMENT

Fall 2004

The PJS brings expertise that is not at hand, locally or regionally, to broaden the range of courses available to students as well as to enrich faculty discourse. Dean Richard McCarty continues to champion the cause of this particular enterprise and the PJS is pleased to acknowledge his contribution to it.

During Fall 2004, Dr. Nina Warnke, currently an Assistant Professor at the University of Texas, Austin, taught courses on Yiddish culture and literature. Her visit was co-sponsored with Germanic and Slavic Languages. For the Program, Dr. Warnke taught *Yiddish Culture in America: From Immigrants to the Klezmer Revival*, exploring the meaning of Yiddish culture for immigrants and how it is memorialized and transformed today. For the German department she offered, *Germans, Jews, Theater, and Society*, examining the discourse about Jews in German-speaking countries from the Enlightenment to today through an analysis of dramatic texts and the history of their theatrical productions.



Dr. Nina Warnke

Dr. Warnke received very favorable endorsements by students, graduate and undergraduate, and proved that instruction on an influential aspect of European Judaism can be very inviting at Vanderbilt. Dr. Warnke also played a seminal role in acquiring a grant for Vanderbilt from The Library of America in cooperation with the ALA Public Programs Office and with support from the National Endowment for the Humanities to choreograph a series of presentations during the Fall in a centennial celebration, *Assimilating America: The Life and Stories of Isaac Bashevis Singer (1904-1991)*. In November 2005, she offered a well-received supper-seminar presentation, "Theater under Ban: Yiddish Entertainment and the Czarist Censor." The PJS and Vanderbilt could not have been better served by a visiting faculty.

• Fall 2006

The visit of Professor Sasson Somekh, emeritus at Tel Aviv University, originally scheduled for the Fall 2005 (See Annual Report for 2003-2004), is now postponed until Fall 2006. Born in Iraq and recently a recipient of the prestigious Israel Prize for 2005, Professor Somekh has only just published his memoirs (in Hebrew, The Last Arab Jew, an English version of which is under press consideration). At Vanderbilt, he will teach for Jewish Studies a course on the Literature of Jewish Writers in Muslim Lands and for Comparative Literature a course on Naguib Mahfouz and the Modern Arabic Novel.

- *There is much hope that this joint sponsorship of visiting scholars will continue in the future, but there is now discussion within the PJS to develop a two-year post-doctoral program that calls for applications on a broad array of JS expertise. Alliances with diverse A&S departments will be pursued and opportunities to attract a senior scholar for briefer visits not be neglected.*

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

Since its formation, among the PJS's greatest challenges has been to attract undergraduates to its classes. We have appointed extraordinary scholars and fine teachers, we have multiplied the assortment of courses; we have forged a fine Major and Minor. Yet the PJS is still not fully within the beam of most Vanderbilt students. The lack of tradition in communicating the promise and goals of Jewish Studies on this campus has meant that students reach its roster of courses accidentally or individually. The relative low numbers of students in second-level classes on Judaism has also compromised wider subscription to the PJS roster of classes.

“AXLE” and First Year Seminars

As it enters its fourth year of operation, the PJS is getting better at reaching undergraduate students. It has helped, of course, that there is a thickening in the number of students from Jewish backgrounds. Aside from multiplying the number of available classes with Judaic studies contents –through the increase of JS faculty, the invitation of a visiting faculty, and the commissioning of special courses from Vanderbilt and area faculty– we have taken advantage of AXLE, the recently implemented Arts and Science undergraduate curriculum, with a requirement for students to fulfill their Liberal Arts commitments by taking 13 courses across a broad array of areas. Because of its intrinsic interdisciplinary nature, the PJS could offer courses that fitted nicely within a number of categories: “International Cultures,” “History and Culture of the United States,” “Social and Behavioral Sciences,” and “Perspectives.”

The PJS has also sought to create interest in Jewish studies by aiming a number of its courses to first year students. As a result, enrollment in JS has increased gratifyingly, with a number of the First Year Seminars at capacity.

- *For the coming academic year, the JPS has a number of First Years Seminars on its roster of courses.*

Graduate Courses for Qualified Seniors

The PJS did not neglect students beyond their First Year. With the support of Arts and Science officials, the PJS has worked with the Graduate Department of Religion and with the Divinity School to permit a select number of qualified seniors to access a select number of courses heretofore beyond the reach of undergraduates. To qualify, seniors must have a "B" average and not take more than 15 hours in the relevant semester. A full roster of such courses is available at <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/jewishstudies/Grad-Undergrad%20Courses.html>.

- *During the coming year, JPS hopes to work with the appropriate Deans of professional schools to release, for one course, a faculty with special expertise in Jewish studies.*

Broadcasting the Virtues and Promise of Jewish Studies

Because at Vanderbilt, Jewish Studies is not yet as fully in the consciousness of the undergraduates as better established programs, the PJS has mounted an aggressive effort to promote its Major and to advertise its courses. It has held information sessions to discuss the Major and Minor; it has advertised in *The Hustler* (the student paper) its courses, before and during registrations; it has delivered flyers in mailboxes and inserted them in *InnerVU*, a weekly summary of events distributed to dorm residents; it has participated in information sessions targeting undergraduates and transfer students, including such forums as the *Major's Fair*, *Freshman Parents Weekend*, *A&S Open House*, *MOSAIC*, and opening days at the Schulman Center.

- *The PJS will continue to assiduously pursue all avenues to better promote its program and courses. There is discussion within the committee to arrive at a format for information sessions that would attract broader attention from undergraduates*

PJS COURSES TAUGHT IN 2004-05

A full program of courses that fulfill the JS Major and Minor is available on the PJS website (<<http://www.vanderbilt.edu/jewishstudies/curriculum.html#All>>). Below is a listing of 2004-2005 courses that were specific to Jewish Studies:

Jewish Studies 251. *Mysticism & Myth in Modern Jewish Thought.* Focusing on conceptions of myth and mysticism in modern Jewish thought, this course highlights intellectuals who appropriated mystical ideas, the ecstatic experience, and the crafting of myth to renew Jewish spirituality as well as and those engaged in a scholarly reevaluation of Jewish mysticism. FALL [3] Urban

Jewish Studies 294.01. *Yiddish Culture in America.* From Immigrants to the Klezmer Revival. Multi-media survey of one hundred years of Yiddish culture (literature, theater, film, radio, music) in America. Explores the meaning of Yiddish culture for immigrants and how it is memorialized and transformed today. FALL [3] Warnke

Jewish Studies 294.02. *The Jews of Islam: From Muhammad through the Crusades.* This course explores the Jewish experience under Muslim rule, from the rise of Islam through the Crusades, with close examination and analysis of primary sources. We will discuss the changing legal status of Jews, their economic activities, their religious developments, their cultural contributions, as well as their reaction to the Crusades. FALL [3] Wasserstein

Jewish Studies 115W. 01. *In a Pluralistic Age: Jews, Christians and Muslims in Spain.* Between 711 and 1492 Jews Christians and Muslims created one of the richest and most fertile of medieval civilizations. In this seminar, we shall evaluate the settings and conditions for this culture's extraordinary pooling of talent and attachment to tolerance, but also evaluate the reasons for its eventual end. SPRING [3] Wasserstein

Jewish Studies 244. *Freud and Jewish Thought.* Through an analysis of rhetoric and themes in selected writings of Sigmund Freud as well as of the society and culture of his times, this course explores how psychoanalytic theory developed in response to the traumas of Jewish assimilation and of anti-Semitic repudiation. SPRING [3] Geller

Jewish Studies 250. *The Problem of Evil in Judaism.* Reviews the explanations of the origin, nature, and representations of evil from Scripture through the Hasidic masters as well as reflections of the modern thinkers. FALL [3] Urban

Jewish Studies Course Enrichment

Via the office of the Dean of Arts and Science, a broadcast was sent out in the Fall 2004 to Vanderbilt tenured or tenured-slotted colleagues soliciting proposals for courses with Jewish Studies content. A stipend (plus benefits) was offered to successful applicants that alternatively could be applied for research. The following courses were authorized for 2004-2005:

Jewish Studies 115W.02. *From Einstein to Chomsky: Revolutionary Sciences in Jewish America.* This course will survey the work by American Jews who were interested in "new scientific techniques" aimed at uncovering the structural, mathematical, psychic, poetic or biological basis of language. The impetus for this interest came from an age-old concern with "magical language," a belief that new technologies would require new standardized approaches to language analysis, and a Cold War interest in propaganda, anti-propaganda, decoding, and translating. The fact that so much of this work was being undertaken by left-leaning Jews in university settings adds a whole dimension to this crucial part of our recent history. SPRING [3] Robert Barsky [Comparative Literature; French and Italian]

Jewish Studies 294.01. *Power and Diplomacy in the Modern Middle East.* Examination of the international history of the 20th century Middle East, with an emphasis on the role of the United States in the region. SPRING [3] Thomas Schwartz [History]

• NEWLY DEVELOPED COURSES FOR 2005-6

Jewish Studies 115F.03. FYS: Radical Jews from Karl Marx to Noam Chomsky. *Study of the leading "radical" Jewish intellectuals and writers of the 19th and, moreover, the 20th Century by examining the basic ideas they promoted, and by assessing the approach they take to social issues regarding their Judaism or the Jewish community from which they emerged. Includes Erich Fromm, Lowenthal, Horkheimer, Herbert Marcuse, Theodor Adorno, Zellig Harris and Noam Chomsky – to name a few.* FALL [3] Robert Barsky [Comparative Literature; French and Italian]

Jewish Studies 115F.02. FYS: Music and Identity in Jewish Traditions. *This course focuses on music and identity in global Jewish cultures. An introduction to the cultures, contexts, and historical development and structure of Jewish communities throughout the world and the ways that music is adopted, adapted, and transformed when performed by individual Jewish communities.* FALL [3] Gregory Barz [Blair School of Music]

Jewish Studies 121. Jews Among the Nations. *A survey of major moments in Jewish history from the Hellenistic period to the foundation of Israel, exploring themes of exclusion and participation, identity and emancipation.* FALL [3] Wasserstein

Jewish Studies 155. *Sociology of Contemporary Jewish Life. How Jews, Jewish communities, and Judaism in the US and abroad adapt to a changing world, in light of classic sociological themes as: the relation of the individual to the group; the nature of authority; religion and ethnicity in modern society.* FALL [3] Kelner

Jewish Studies 115F.04. FYS: Civil Rights and Civil Wrongs: Black-Jewish Relations in the 1950s and 1960s. *An examination of historical and literary texts, as well as of visual images, exploring the shared history of Blacks and Jews, particularly in the American context, and focusing on the period of its greatest intensity, the 1950's and 1960's.* SPRING [3] Adam Meyer [Fisk University]

Jewish Studies 115F.05. FYS: Arab and Israeli Poetry and Fiction: Mirrors and Contrasts Across Frontiers. *This seminar focuses on ways contemporary literature and other arts in Israel and surrounding Arab countries have been informed and influenced by religious traditions (primarily,*

Jewish and Islamic) as well as diverse aspects of culture. At the core is the complex relationship between cultures and artistic productions. Issues regarding language, identity, gender, geography, borders, exile and migration, history, homeland, and memory will figure prominently. SPRING [3] Hibbard [Middle Tennessee State University]

Jewish Studies 252. Social Movements and the Jewish Polity. *How social movements shape contemporary American Jewish culture and politics. Explores movements internal to Judaism and those bringing religion into the public sphere. SPRING [3] Kelner*

Jewish Studies 255. Zionism and Its Critics. *History of the Zionist idea from the 19th century, focusing on ideological, cultural and religious issues and examining criticism from within and without the movement. SPRING [3] Urban*

- *The PJS is currently scheduling enrichment courses for 2006-2007, including “Latin American and Caribbean Jewish Writers” to be taught by Paul Miller (Spanish and Portuguese).*

FINE-TUNING THE MAJOR

A change in the PJS Major requirements now gives more flexibility to students who may substitute a Senior Project (Jewish Studies 296) when a Senior Seminar (Jewish Studies 295) fails to draw a minimum number of students.

STUDY ABROAD: CET’S JEWISH STUDIES IN PRAGUE

Jewish Studies in Prague (Czech Republic). The CET Program in Jewish Studies offers students the opportunity to explore the enormous contribution of Jewish life to the culture, literature, arts and history of East Central Europe. This is designed for students who want to take an in-depth look at the rich Jewish history and culture in East Central Europe before the war, its destruction during the Nazi years, and its gradual rebirth after the fall of communism. The city of Prague, where the program is located, is host to the oldest continuous Jewish community in Europe and one of the richest collections of Judaica in the world. Because of a perverse notion by the Nazis to turn the Jewish quarters into a museum for a dead culture, they have remained practically intact. Living in Prague, students will encounter the challenges that the Czech Republic faces in the period of transition between Soviet Communism and the privatization of many political, social and cultural institutions.

- *The PJS will join with the Director of Vanderbilt’s Study Abroad program, Gary Johnston, to revive Study Abroad programming in Israel and, together with CET, will begin discussion on developing a JS program in Spain.*

GRADUATE EDUCATION

Via the Graduate Department of Religion, the PJS initiated a two-tiered Master of Arts in Jewish Studies, a program that is fully described in the Annual Report for 2003-2004 but its features may be easily accessed via the internet at <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/jewishstudies/MA-Info.html>. Because it is a component of a larger unit, the MA in JS cannot accept more than a handful of students per academic year. In the Fall of 2004, the MA in JS welcomed its first students.

Three students will matriculate in the Fall of 2005, one of whom writes of selecting our program over a number of others because at Vanderbilt she will work within a rich array of schools, among them Arts and Science and Divinity.

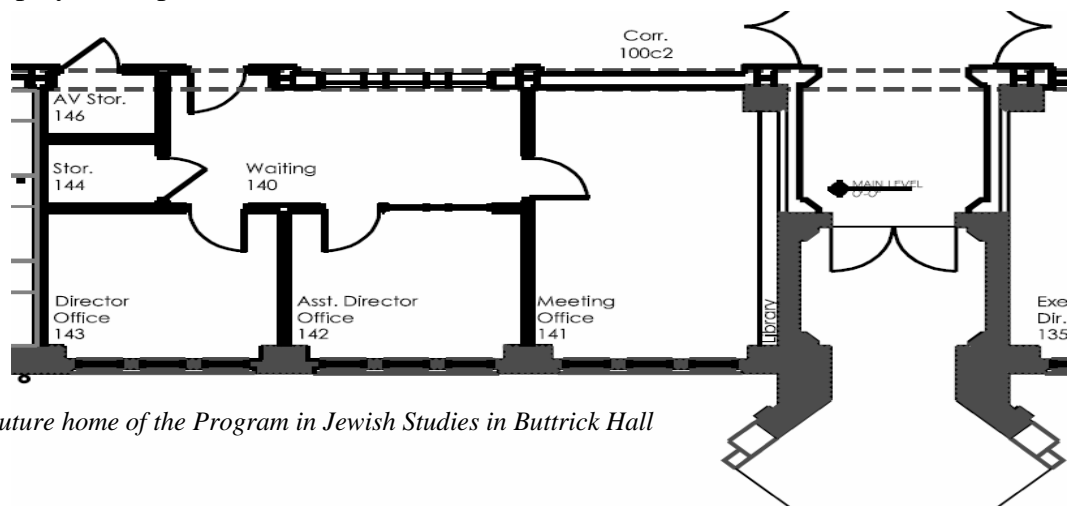
CERTIFICATE IN JEWISH STUDIES

Also via the Graduate Department of Religion, the PJS has created a **Certificate in Jewish Studies**. This Certificate gives graduate and professional students already matriculating in diverse programs at Vanderbilt access to interdisciplinary scholarship in the field of Jewish Studies. The goal is to afford such students valuable professional credentials, strengthening their ability to compete for jobs as well as for national fellowship and postdoctoral awards. Requirements (18 hours minimum) include Jewish Studies 245 (“Major Themes in Jewish Studies”), 15 hours graduate-level courses selected from a number of subfields, and a non-credit final project/paper. More detail is accessible via <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/jewishstudies/Cert%20in%20JS.htm>.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

THE MOVE TO BUTTRICK HALL

With great anticipation, the PJS moves into its new quarters in Buttrick Hall sometime in August. The new quarters include a meeting space and offices for the director and for the Administrator. A waiting area will have space to display a few publications of interest to Jewish studies.



Future home of the Program in Jewish Studies in Buttrick Hall

We wish to thank the office of Associate Provost Lou Outlaw and all those involved in the transfer, including Hans Mooy (Campus Planning), Jane Kaufman, (Procurement), and Ginger Leger, (office of Dean Sweeney) for their help and their many courtesies as we decided on the layout and furnishing of our new space.

- *The PJS is planning a concert of activities to celebrate the move to its new quarters. Plans will be finalized early in the Fall.*

FACULTY SUPPER- AND LUNCH-SEMINARS

The PJS continued to offer Faculty Supper- and Lunch-Seminars, aiming to foster a community of interests in Jewish Studies and its work. The supper-seminars draw on Vanderbilt or regional faculty for their presentations while the lunch-seminars take advantage of visits by colleagues from other universities. For an hour (lunch seminars) or an hour and a half (supper seminars), colleagues from across the campus listen to a presentation, lunch or sup, and then discuss issues of common interest. The following programs took place this year, all well attended.

Supper-Seminars

September 13, 2004 – Joy Haslam Calico, Assistant Professor of Musicology, Blair School of Music

'Jüdische Chronik:' Recalling the Warsaw Uprising in a Commemorative Cantata

November 8, 2004 – Nina Warnke, Visiting Professor in German and in Jewish Studies

Theater under Ban: Yiddish Entertainment and the Czarist Censor

February 7, 2005 – Jeffrey Schoenblum, Professor of Law

Recovering Art Stolen from Jews

April 11, 2005 – Martina Urban, Assistant Professor of Religious Studies and of Jewish Studies
Between Preservation and Innovation: Martin Buber's Translation of Mystical Teachings



Faculty Supper Seminar

Lunch-Seminars

October 14, 2004 – Robert King, University of Texas at Austin

Global Anti-Semitism: a view from France

October 21, 2004 – Rabbi Steven Greenberg, Senior teaching Fellow at National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership (CLAL)

Sociology of Inclusion

February 22, 2005 – Halina Goldberg, Indiana School of Music

National Identity, Assimilation, and Constructions of Jewish Otherness in 19th-Century Polish Music

- *These programs will continue next academic year with the scheduling of minimally two supper seminars per semester plus as many lunch seminars as opportunities arise.*

CONFERENCES

A conference that brought an international team of scholars to Vanderbilt was initiated by the PJS, which also contributed partial funding. The Conference was broadly publicized and attracted a modest audience beyond Vanderbilt.

Maimonides and His Milieu commemorated the 800th anniversary of the death of Moses ben Maimon (1138-1204), the great Jewish philosopher, physician, and jurist. Born in Cordova, Maimonides spent his mature years in Cairo. He was a polymath, the author of ten medical works, three major works of jurisprudence, including the still authoritative Code of Jewish Law (*Mishneh Torah*), and the celebrated *Guide to the Perplexed*.

The conference took place on November 14 and 15, 2004. The presentations ranged from Maimonides' environs in Spain and North Africa, some aspects of his biography, to the abiding impact of his philosophy. Papers considered his thoughts about medicine, law and scripture, psychology, joy and love. Aside from David Novak, the keynote speaker, scholars included Arthur Hyman of Yeshiva and Columbia Universities, Menachem

Kellner of Haifa University, Moshe Sokol of Lander College, Alfred Ivry of New York University, Gideon Freudenthal of Tel Aviv University, and Paul Mendes-Flohr of the University of Chicago and the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Vanderbilt itself was well represented in the participation of the conference organizers Professors Idit Dobbs-Weinstein and Lenn Goodman, as well as Richard McGregor, Martina Urban, and David Wasserstein, the last two professors in Jewish Studies.

Maimonides and his Milieu attracted generous support by grants from the Matchette Foundation, the Vanderbilt University Research Scholars Program, the Center for the Study of Religion and Culture, the Divinity School, the Law School, the Medical School, and the Department of Philosophy's Berry Fund and McVean Fund.

- *For the Fall 2006 and in conjunction with the first Nashville Jewish Music Festival and the thirtieth annual Vanderbilt Holocaust Lecture Series ("Against Cultural Genocide"), the PJS will be cosponsoring a three-day conference, "On the Lip of Miriam's Well: Jews/Women/Cultures." The first major university conference to explore Jewish women and the arts is co-chaired by Joy Calico (Blair School of Music), Jay Geller (Divinity School) and Bill Smith (Psychology). It will have a global perspective: North African as well as North American; Eastern as well as Central European, Israeli as well as Diasporic. It will also cover a broad range of cultural practices (Ashkenazi, Mizrahi, and Sephardi), languages (Hebrew, Yiddish, and Ladino), and convictions (from traditional to secular).*

LECTURES

The PJS continued to sponsor lectures, on its own or in conjunction with other departments. It advertised them widely, using channels within the campus and beyond it. The program has committed to contribute yearly to the Chancellor's Holocaust Series. During academic 2004-2005, the PJS has sponsored or co-sponsored the following lectures, all open to the public:

With the Divinity School Library and the University Lecture Committee

October 15, 2004 – Robert King, (University of Texas at Austin)
Isaac Bashevis Singer: Personal Reminiscences.

With the Schulman Center

October 21, 2004 – Rabbi Steven Greenberg, Senior teaching Fellow at National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership (CLAL)
Comments on the documentary *Trembling Before G_d*

With Philosophy

Feb 20, 2005 – Richard Cohen, University of North Carolina, Charlotte
Levinas: Ethics, Politics and Religion

With the Blair School of Music and the University Lecture Committee

February 21, 2005 – Halina Goldberg, Indiana School of Music
Performance Practice Issues in Chopin's Concert Works
The Dancing Jew: Assimilation, National Identity, and the Majufes.

With Spanish & Portuguese

March 25, 2005 – Lois Barr, Lake Forest College
Looking at Isa Kremer; Comments on a Documentary, Jewish Culture and Yiddish in Argentina, Ten Years after the AMIA Bombing.

With History

April 4, 2005 – Andrew P. N. Erdmann, Formerly, Planning Staff, State Department
From Washington to Baghdad and Back: Reflections on the Search for Victory in Iraq

- *Future lectures are in the planning. The PJS will always welcome cosponsoring with other departments and schools the visits of scholars. We expect sharper coordination with the Schulman Center now that it has installed a new Director (Ari Dubin) and a Rabbi (Alexis Berk).*

LOOKING AHEAD

As it begins its fourth year of operation, the PJS will be under a new Director, David Wasserstein, Professor of History and of Jewish Studies, and it will no doubt forge ahead on all fronts, securing it as a premiere program among peer institutions. It might therefore be opportune for me, its retiring Director, to sketch the areas where some of the opportunities might lie.

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

The PJS hopes to have a colleague in Jewish literature posted in an Arts and Science department by Fall 2006, thus filling the fourth and final position pledged by the Provost. But, because these appointments are set in established departments, they enrich the mission of Jewish Studies no less than that of the host departments. For this reason, there is the hope that other such connections will develop, either through successful fund-raising or internally to a specific department (such as German's appointment of Barbara Hahn, whose specialty includes the Jewish intellectual tradition in post Enlightenment Central Europe, or English's appointment of Nancy Reisman whose novel *The First Desire* just won the Samuel Goldberg & Sons Foundation Prize for Jewish Fiction). A desideratum is a specialist in Jewish law, rabbinic or otherwise, and such an appointment can occur at one of our professional schools.

A JEWISH STUDIES "MELLON"?

Another approach to help plug the lack of Judaica expertise could involve converting some of the funds currently set for senior visiting scholars toward creating a multi-year term contract for a junior colleague. In the past, the Dean of the College has joined with Jewish Studies to fund term invitation of senior scholars and there is hope that the partnership will continue. There is always the possibility that, over the years, attractive candidates can be appointed jointly with departments (for example, Political Science or Art) or schools (for example, Blair or Law) that are not yet in partnership with JS.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

UNDERGRADUATE "SERVICE LEARNING" AND "INTERNSHIP"

This past year, the PJS has crafted clearer goals and contents for training and research electives in "Service Learning" (3 hours) and "Internship" (up to 6 hours). Majors currently can dedicate 3 hours to "Service Learning in Jewish Studies" or up 6 elective hours to "Internship in Jewish Services." In the former, individual faculty members may include a non-traditional learning component (such as participation in community, religious, or state organizations) within their courses. For example, Mark Dalhouse's *Maymester*, "Selected Policy and Civic Engagement Challenges since 1980" has students potentially working at Jewish service organizations in Washington. Gregory Barz's "Music and Identity in Jewish Traditions," slated for this Fall, may include such a component.

The goals of Internships are to understand how Jewish groups function and to promote awareness of how Jewish organizations work. What is being proposed, and remains a subject of further development, is that internships be tethered to one or more foundational courses (**Jewish Studies 245 – Major Themes in Jewish Studies** or the like). Interested faculty would identify essential themes with consequences in contemporary life that students could profitably explore by interning in a local Jewish organization.

GRADUATE PROGRAMMING

From the outset of my tenure as Director, I have tried to forge strong ties between Jewish Studies and Peabody College. Many hours were spent in brainstorming potential programs of mutual interest largely because marrying Jewish Studies to the premiere school of Education in North America can result in programs that are scarcely paralleled elsewhere. I have sketched one such avenue in last year's *Annual Report*; but because little progress has been made in these regards, I may be permitted to replay the goals that were first enunciated there:

- ***Master of Education in Jewish Education.*** *This potentially vital program develops from three conditions: the incomparable prestige of Peabody as a premier institution in the study and implementation of education, the steadily maturing Program in Jewish Studies, and the acknowledged shortage of qualified teachers in Jewish education, at all levels. The field of Jewish education has long suffered from a shortage of professional Jewish educators, many of whom have no formal training and even fewer have strong backgrounds in Jewish studies. In fact, the Commission on Jewish Education in North America has declared the building of the profession of Jewish education a most essential condition for improving Jewish education in North America. In Boston and Los Angeles, a program was recently launched to attract, train, inspire, and retain top-quality educators in Jewish Day Schools. This initiative does not include the South where in our cities, and in our smaller towns, the need increases but cannot yet be met.*

Higher education institutions that serve the Jewish community (among them Spertus College in Chicago and Baltimore Hebrew College), do train Jewish educators; however, such institutions lack the capacity to meet the demand and, more importantly, they lack the research mission of premiere universities. Recently, some of our peer institutions have inaugurated Jewish Education programs, most notably at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and at New York University. These programs are attracting quality candidates wishing to earn a prestigious degree in Jewish Education. At Vanderbilt, we can offer as much or better, while at the same time serve the needs of Jewish education in the South.

OUTREACH PROGRAMMING

Vanderbilt famously does not easily favor the education of non-traditional students. Yet there is much hunger out there for the type of expertise and knowledge its faculty can convey. I propose the following modest contribution:

- ***Certificate in Jewish Life and Experience.*** *The PJS could design an attractive program that would be open to qualified (BA or better) applicants not currently matriculating at Vanderbilt, such as ministers, lawyers, primary and secondary school teachers, school principals, journalists, or the like. Such a program would, not incidentally, create deeper appreciation for Judaism and its cultural heritage at a time when pluralism seems to be tested. I imagine that applicants need not submit GREs and will need only to prove honorable graduation from their colleges. Acceptance will depend on applicant's letter of interest, perhaps testimony from colleagues or the like, and an interview with members of this committee. Grading may be Pass/Fail. Some sort of written project may be required.*

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

The PJS has taken advantage of resources available to the university to shape and promote its goals. A number of very favorable stories have been published about its effort in local media and there is no reason while our success (and the reasons for it) will not play nicely on boarder horizons. The office of Michael Schoenfeld, Vice Chancellor for Public Affairs, has been particularly helpful in spreading our gospel, via good stories filed by Jim Patterson of the News Services. Yet, more can be done to bring focus to the good developments that the PJS has fostered and perhaps also to stimulate financial investment from Vanderbilt alumni no less than from

philanthropists. It might help for the PJS to launch a *Newsletter*, filling its pages not just with news of local developments but also with statements by the PJS faculty members on issues that arise from their research and teaching as well as by profiles of students currently taking advantage of the many programs the PJS has launched in its as yet very early life.

LOOKING BACK

As the PJS closes its third year of full participation in Vanderbilt's life, it also brings to an end my commitment to it as Director. The PJS has made great strides, not only in developing a curriculum that is worthy of a great university, but also in securing for itself a niche in Vanderbilt's culture. This, it could not have done without the active and ready backing of the administration, in particular the Chancellor, the Provost, and the Deans of Arts and Science and Divinity. The PJS also profited from the contributions of its dedicated committee members, the support of colleagues from all across the campus, and the devotion of Lynne Perler, the Program's administrator and a trusted partner in streamlining its future.

For me, these were heady months, full of exciting moments, with a future to chart. And even as I leave it to others to steer the Program into safe and prosperous voyages, I cannot be less than fully committed to its future success.

Comments and reactions welcome.



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