From the Directors

In this year’s YediAUt you will find information on the extraordinary achievements of American University’s Jewish Studies Program and the Center for Israeli Studies. The Jewish Studies Program has been selected to host the 2004 Biennial Scholars’ Conference in American Jewish History, which will commemorate the 350th anniversary of Jewish life in the United States and is cosponsored with, among others, the Library of Congress and the National Archives.

The Center for Israeli Studies marks its fifth anniversary. This milestone presented an opportunity to review our achievements so far and initiate a set of new projects for the next five years, which are explained in this year’s YediAUt (see below).

We are grateful to our readers of YediAUt for their support for AU’s Jewish Studies Program and the Center for Israeli Studies. There is a donation form on the next-to-last page of this newsletter. To achieve our objectives over the next several years, we count on your continuing support and encouragement.

Howard Wachtel, Director, Center for Israeli Studies
Pamela Nadell, Director, Jewish Studies Program

Center for Israeli Studies Launches Curricula Initiative

Having completed its first five years, the Center for Israeli Studies has designed a strategic mission for its next five: the development of curricula on Israeli Studies.

Inaugurated in 1998 by former prime minister Shimon Peres to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the State of Israel, the center dedicated its first five years to presenting the creative and intellectual contributions of modern Israel to the American University campus, to the Washington, D.C., community, and by extension to a wider audience through its national and international programming. We hosted 10 in-residence Israeli scholars, artists, and scientists; held four conferences; sponsored 15 individual lectures; and initiated two student study abroad programs in Israel. (See our Web site for details: www.centerforisraelistudies.org.) Over 20 faculty members across some 15 disciplines are part of the center, which is also the administrative home for the Association for Israel Studies—an international professional organization that hosts an annual meeting and publishes a journal. We will continue to support this programming as we embark on a new direction.

Today we face new challenges. The security situation in Israel is vastly different in 2003 than it was in 1998. September 11, 2001, and the war in Iraq have heightened interest in the Middle East on campuses. This has led to new tensions about Israel on campuses across the country.

The study of Israel is subsumed within Middle East studies programs but almost exclusively in terms of the Arab-Israeli conflict. There are 125 Middle East studies programs in colleges and universities funded by government sources, foundations, and private donors. The Department of Education, for example, supports 14 Middle East centers and nearly 100 student fellowships (currently at $4 million per year) in a program that started in 1996. About $80 million has been invested in Middle East studies over the 45 years of this funding. Our research found that essentially none of this public funding has gone to curricula development on Israel.

The next generation of leaders in the foreign service, nongovernmental organizations, and international organizations is emerging from university without knowledge of the history of Israel in the Middle East, its unique political democracy, its multiracial character, its achievements and contributions in the arts, sciences, humanities, and social sciences. This gap and imbalance in university curricula has been made more apparent in the past three years of conflict and controversy.
Poet Ronny Someck is 10th In-Residence Israeli

The Center for Israeli Studies hosts Israeli in-residence artists, writers, and scholars who teach master classes and offer a public program. (See our Web site: www.centerforisraelistudies.org, for a complete list.) The latest, and 10th, is the poet Ronny Someck, who was born in Iraq in 1951, arrived in Israel as a small child, and spent his childhood in an Israeli transit camp for new immigrants until his family moved just outside Tel Aviv. He has worked as a leather goods vendor and an instructor to street gangs. Currently he teaches literature at a special high school for dropouts. Someck graduated with a degree in philosophy and literature from the University of Tel Aviv. He hosts his own popular radio show and travels, as did troubadours of old, all over Israel with a singer who has set many of his poems to music. The author of eight books of poetry, Someck has seen his work translated into 22 languages.

The Five Stays in Red is his first full-length book in English, translated by Moshe Dor, formerly an AU adjunct professor, and AU alum Barbara Goldberg. Someck writes: “I feel as if I live in a transit station. On the memory shelves are arranged candies from various cultures, but all of them are wrapped up in a local tissue paper. My mother dreams in Arabic, I dream in Hebrew and speak in Hebrew, but sometimes, within the Hebrew, I can hear the sound track of a singer like Fairuz conducting a duet with Frank Sinatra or Elvis.”

Sharon Hartman Institute. He is a graduate of Hebrew University in Bible and Jewish history and received a law degree from Tel Aviv University.

TAL BECKER > told us about the tribulations of Israel at the UN in a talk entitled “Israel at the UN: Plaintiff or Defendant?” Tal Becker holds a law degree and is legal adviser to the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations. He has represented Israel at the UN in numerous bilateral and multilateral negotiations, including those leading to the comprehensive convention against terrorism and the international criminal court. He was legal advisor to the Israeli delegation during the Middle East Peace Process. Among his many awards is the Rubin Prize.

AU student interns with M.K. Natan Sharansky, Minister for Diaspora Affairs

Jason Benkendorf, AU senior, Jewish studies minor, and former president of AU Students for Israel, studying at Hebrew University in fall 2003, helped organize M.K. Sharansky’s September speaking tour of the United States and interned out of Sharansky’s office in the prime minister’s building. “I consider myself incredibly lucky to have this opportunity,” he said. “But I also know that this is just the start of a lifetime’s work in strengthening Israeli-Diaspora relations.”

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• GIDON DORON > spoke on the results of the Israeli election and its implications for the Israel-Palestinian conflict.

Professor Doron is past president of the Israeli Political Science Association and a graduate of Hebrew University and the University of Rochester. He was twice elected to the executive board of the International Political Science Association. During the 1992 election he was Itzhak Rabin’s campaign strategist and has written 12 books and edited three volumes.

• AVRAHAM INFIELD > inspired his luncheon audience in an address entitled “Challenges Faced by Universities in Middle East Education.” Avraham infield is currently counsel for Jewish affairs, Belfer, and its interim director, the founder and president emeritus of Melita (Center for Jewish Zionist Education), chairman of the board, Israel Experience limited, president and immediate past chairman, Israel Forum; and chairman, Aretim. He was formerly director general, Shalom Hartman Institute. He is a graduate of Hebrew University in Bible and Jewish history and received a law degree from Tel Aviv University.

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Conversations through Photography wins award

The Washington City Paper named the photo exhibition "Conversations through Photography" curated by Neila Cassouto (the center’s curator in residence), as one of the top 10 photo exhibits of 2002. Sponsored by the Center for Israeli Studies and the Department of Art, the exhibition was held at AU’s Walters Gallery in November, 2002. The paper said: “The collection of documentary photographs by ten Israeli and Palestinian artists featured a series of striking images of daily life in the refugee camps, and a wistful documentation of a much celebrated experiment in cross-border harmony.” But the exhibition’s chair乱ord said: “Both a photo exhibit and a journal Fine Galloway. One of her series captured Palestinian children swimming in water coarsed with an intensely colored film of green algae. Another features ga-wrenching images of an all-too-common price of passage in the occupied territories: young boys posing with assault rifles in front of incongruously cheery cartoon backdrops, taken so that parents can have a martyr photograph if their child is killed in the streets.”

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Fifty-one percent of Jewish college students have taken a Jewish studies course, according to the 2000-2001 National Jewish Population Survey. But giving courses and teaching students is only one facet of the life of the Jewish studies professor. Outside our campus, AJS’s scholars faculty play major roles in the world of Jewish studies. As leaders in national and international professional associations, editors of journals and book series, and consultants on projects requiring scholarly expertise, our faculty contribute to the flourishing of Jewish studies across the United States and throughout the world.

While Jewish studies scholars join many professional associations reflecting their specific discipline, the umbrella organization is the Association for Jewish Studies. Professor Richard Breitman, AJS’s annual meeting brings together Judaism studies scholars in all fields, history and sociology, Hebrew language and literature. AJS Jewish studies director Pamela N. Nadell is completing her second term on the AJA board of directors, where she is in the midst of a three-year term as chair of its Nominations Committee. At the same time she is chairing the Academic Council of the American Jewish Historical Society, the oldest ethnic history association in the United States. Russell Stone, chair of AJS’s sociology department, is the administrative officer of the Association for Israeli Studies, an international academic association for the study of contemporary Israel housed at American University. History professor Alan Kraut has just completed a three-year term as president of the Immigration and Ethnic History Society. Our faculty are also experienced editors. History professor Richard Breitman, author of, among other works, *Official Secrets: What the Nazis Planned, What the British and Americans Knew*, is editor in chief of the journal *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, an international, interdisciplinary journal on the Holocaust, published in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Prof. Stone is advising editor of the Israeli Studies series published by the State University of New York Press. Each year the series publishes several books on contemporary Israeli society, politics, and history. Currently, it has 65 books in print. Prof. Nadell is book review editor for the journal *American Jewish History*.

**From the Jewish Studies Program**

5

Not surprisingly, our faculty’s scholarly reputations make them widely sought after as consultants to an array of projects. Last summer Alan Kraut was consultant to the Department of Homeland Security’s Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services for its “Sidebar Guide for Naturalization Applicants.” He has also just been appointed chair of the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island History Advisory Committee; Pamela Nadell is consultant to the permanent exhibition planned for the new National Museum of American Jewish History, to be built on Philadelphia’s Independence Mall. She is also deeply involved in the activities planned to mark the 350th anniversary of Jewish settlement in America in September 2004. Myers is a member of the American Jewish Historical Society’s numerous professional contributions. They deliver papers at scholarly conferences and symposia, cross the country giving invited lectures, and are often interviewed by the press. In sum, service to Jewish studies beyond the borders of American University constitutes an integral part of the lives of AJS’s Jewish studies faculty.

**Faculty Notes**

Richard Breitman, Department of History, is editor of *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* and continues to work on the Holocaust, including the editing of documents for the National Archives and Records Administration.

Emanuel Carmel, Kogod School of Business, continues his work on the Israeli high-tech sector with a forthcoming article, “Israel’s Silicon Wadi: The Forces Behind Cluster Formation.”

Rivka Dagman, Department of Language and Foreign Studies, teaches Hebrew.


Michael L. Goodman, Department of History, was appointed chair of the Statue of Liberty–Ellis Island History Advisory Committee; served as a consultant to the Bureau of Citizenship of the Department of Homeland Security on the revision of the history and government portions of the citizenship examination; was the historical advisor on the advisory panel that issued the report “America’s Challenge: Domestic Security, Civil Liberties, and National Unity and Diversity” and completed his three-year term as president of the Immigration and Ethnic History Society. He published the book *Goldberger’s War: The Life and Work of a Public Health Crusader*.

Alan Levine, School of Public Affairs, spent the year on sabatical at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University working on a book entitled *The Idea of America in European Political Thought: 1492-Today* and delivered several lectures on this topic throughout the western United States. Arnost Lustig, Department of Literature, serves as president of the Prague-based Institute of Czech-German-Jewish Culture. His most recent novel, *Lonely Green Eyes*, was named on one of 12 notable works of fiction for 2003 by the American Library Association.

Pamela Nadell, Department of History and Jewish Studies Program, published *American Jewish Women’s History: A Reader*. She is completing a three-year term as chair of the Academic Council of the American Jewish Historical Society and is historical consultant to the permanent exhibition of the National Museum of American Jewish History.

Naima McNally, Department of Language and Foreign Studies, teaches Hebrew.

Saul Newman, School of Public Affairs, is now chair of the Department of Government. He continues conducting research on the decline of settler nationalistic in South Africa, Northern Ireland, and Israel and its impact on resolving disputes between settler and native nationalist movements.

Na’ima Prevoits, Department of Performing Arts, completed an evaluation for the Ministry of Education in Israel (March 2003) on a proposed change in the new Israeli high school history month. Prevoits, who worked with the Ministry of Education in 1995 to help develop the high school dance major and the related Bagrut exams for dance, she initially worked on the planning team for the *Music Festival Derti Bruni* and in the 2001 Festival was named one of 12 notable works of fiction for 2003 by the American Library Association.

David Rosebrock, School of Public Affairs, had new editions of two of the principal textbooks in public administration published:


Rita Simon, School of Public Affairs, published three books in 2003: *Approaches to Pernormativity: A Comparative Assessment of Criminal Justice in Global Perspectives on Social Issues: Marriage and Divorce* (with Howard Altman), *Genocide: Culture, History, and Globalization* (with Linda Banks) and *Visualizing the World Over* (with Lisa Banks). She also served on the U.S. secretary of education’s Commission on Opportunity in Athletics: Title IX, on the editorial board of two academic journals (Gender Issues and Women and Criminal Justice), and as a member of the board of the Horowitz Foundation for Social Policy. My� Myers, School of Public Affairs, published *Over the Roofops of Time: Jewish Stories, Essays, Poems* and several poems and essays, including: “A Three-Course Meal for the New Year,” “Writing the Holocaust,” “1 1/2 Street, S.W.: Grandfather Lost and Found,” and “Teaching the Children,” and gave poetry readings at the Politics and Prose bookstore in Washington, D.C., the D.C. Jewish Community Center, and other venues.

Russell Stone, Department of Sociology, continues as administrator for the Association for Israel Studies; is an advising editor for the Israel Studies series published by the State University of New York Press; serves on the editorial boards of the journals *Israel Studies* and *Israel Studies Forum*; was a member of the program committee for the 2002 Middle Eastern Studies Association conference. Stone is also chair of AJS’s Department of Sociology. He was on two panels at the 19th anniversary meeting of the Association for Israel Studies and spoke in two panel discussions at the Project South of the Washington Book Forum and at the Palestine Research Center.

Howard M. Wachtel, Department of Economics, published *Street Dreams—Boulevard of Broken Hearts*; *Wall Street’s First Controversial Nineteenth-Century Intellectuals*; and *The Idea of America in European Political Thought: 1492-Today* and delivered several lectures on this topic throughout the western United States. Arnost Lustig, Department of Literature, serves as president of the Prague-based Institute of Czech-German-Jewish Culture. His most recent novel, *Lonely Green Eyes*, was named on one of 12 notable works of fiction for 2003 by the American Library Association.

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**AU to Host 2004 Biennial Scholars’ Conference on American Jewish History**

September 2004 will mark 350 years since a boatload of 23 impoverished Jewish refugees, fleeing the long arm of the Inquisition in Spain, arrived in the New World. This event, along with the 20th anniversary of the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island, will be marked by the American Jewish Historical Society in a conference for researchers and scholars from all fields of Jewish history. The conference is entitled *American Jewish History Month* and will be held in New York, New York. For more information, please contact Pamela Nadell, AJS’s director of Jewish studies. In memory of our former colleague Prof. Richard Breitman, the Jewish Studies Program is working on a forthcoming biographical volume honoring him. The book will include reminiscences from his colleagues, students, and friends. Comments are welcome.

Our faculty are also experienced editors. History professor Richard Breitman, author of, among other works, *Official Secrets: What the Nazis Planned, What the British and Americans Knew*, is editor in chief of the journal *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, an international, interdisciplinary journal on the Holocaust, published in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Prof. Stone is advising editor of the Israeli Studies series published by the State University of New York Press. Each year the series publishes several books on contemporary Israeli society, politics, and history. Currently, it has 65 books in print. Prof. Nadell is book review editor for the journal *American Jewish History*.

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Spotlight on Our Donors

Alan Goldner’s sparkling eyes glow brighter when he describes his first encounter with Israel in 1981. It was a “life-changing experience,” he says. He was “hooked” and has been there at least 50 times since 1983 to pursue his two primary interests in Israel: the Israel Tennis Centers and the Alexander Muss High School, as well as family and Jewish Federation commitments. He was introduced to Israel and Jewish affairs primarily through his wife, Ellen, whose mother and father, one of the founders of B’nai Brith, had been active in the Jewish Federation. Alan and Ellen met as students at American University during the tumultuous Vietnam war years. Alan’s final exams in his senior year were canceled at AU, as they were at many schools, because of the Kent State protests. He guesses that this explains how he was able to graduate. He remembers vividly the first meeting when he was a senior, after winter break, at the Tavern and their first date at Blackie’s House of Beef on February 19, 1975—even the bottle of wine they shared (Chablis) which he still possesses, carefully inscribed with the date and the dinner’s significance.

Alan Goldner says he “likes to find niches that can change lives” in his philanthropy endeavors, which he pursues with the same passion that endows all his projects, from a 1964 Corvette restoration to his collection of sports memorabilia. When asked why he has become engaged with AU’s Center for Israeli Studies, he says, first, that it is the university attended and he was delighted to see a project that “united his interests in Israel and Jewishness.” He identifies with projects that “will produce and have some impact” and wants to be associated with a program that “continues to grow and meets students’ needs,” to present the truth in the relationship between the United States and Israel, showing both sides of this complex story. He is “happy to be part and an important donor.”

The center values Alan’s generosity and counsel about its programs and directions. It is a relationship that, like the center itself, continues to grow and mature.}

Faculty Comings and Goings

Two members of AU’s faculty who have made substantial contributions to the Center for Israeli Studies are on new phases of their lives and careers: Daniel Schydlowsky, Department of Economics, and Naomi Prevots, Department of Performing Arts.

Daniel (Dany) Schydlowsky started AU’s study abroad program at Hebrew University for the Center for Israeli Studies, which he coordinated the AU students to Jerusalem as director of the program in its first two years. Born in Peru, where he received his first degrees, he then came to the United States, where he received an MA and a PhD in economics from Harvard University. A specialist in the problems of economic development in Latin America, he was a professor at Harvard and at Boston University before joining AU’s Department of Economics in 1999. The author of four books in English and four in Spanish, as well as dozens of articles, he is known throughout the world for his work on economic development in Third World countries, as testified to by his consultancies in 16 countries.

“Creating the center,” he says, “was the most fitting 50th birthday present for Israel from a university with a heart. Establishing a lasting channel for students and faculty to directly experience and contribute to Israel leaves the intellectual atmosphere of AU in the best tradition of liberal education. I have felt proud to be associated with this enterprise.”

Schydlowsky has served on the B’nai Brith International board of governors as well as in its World Center in Jerusalem and Latin American Network as co-chair and Jerusalem convener. He has been a fellow of the Truman Institute at Hebrew University. When in Israel, he enjoys seeing his relatives and old friends from Peru who made aliyah.

To close the circle of his life, Schydlowsky was invited back to Peru in 2001 by President Dr. Alejandro Toledo to be his presidential advisor on economic policy. After more than a year of service in that capacity, he took over as president of Peru’s development bank while simultaneously being invited by the Peruvian Congress into the seventh-person board of governors of Peru’s Central Bank. He also serves as a board member of the Israel Tennis Centers.

Comings and Goings, from previous page

Andean Development Corporation and of the Association of Development Banks of Latin America. From these positions he has decisively contributed to President Toledo’s proposals for innovative financial mechanisms to support democratic governance in developing countries. His enthusiasm, wisdom, and wit will be missed in AU’s Center for Israeli Studies.

Naomi Prevots, who recently retired from the AU’s performing arts department, is a real pioneer in dance education and a true star in the world of dance. She began teaching dance at AU in 1967 as a member of the physical education department and immediately began to lobby for a performing arts department. Six years later she succeeded in her efforts and since 1975 has built one of the largest graduate dance programs in the country. She created the Wolftrap-American University Academy for the Performing Arts, which she directed from 1985 to 2002 and brought world-famous choreographers like Twyla Tharp, Paul Taylor, and Eric Hawkins to the campus. In 1995 the D.C. Jewish Community Center named her one of five pioneers of Washington dance. And in 2005 she received the Pola Nirenska Award for Lifetime Achievement, honored for her “many years of devoted service in dance.”

Prevots is especially proud of her work as a “cultural ambassador.” Her scholarship focuses on dance in a cultural and scholarly context. She has explored this theme around the world. She had a Fulbright in Austria in 1987. In Israel she has worked since 1995 with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Tourism for the high school dance major and the related Bagan (final) exams. In 2002 she facilitated a visit by four officials from China’s elite Beijing Academy to see dance in the United States, and last year she was invited as an informal ambassador to teach choreography at the Beijing Academy. She is currently a senior Fulbright specialist working on a three-year project involving Germany, Holland, Belgium, and Portugal, sponsored by the European Union. The goal is to create an international “dancing in the sun” program, which would enable dancers to share ideas about themselves and their cultures. She has written four books: Dancing in the Sun: Hollywood Choreographers, 1915-1937 (1987), American Pageantry: A Movement for Art and Democracy (1998), Dance in Israel Pathways to Learning, Communication, Integration (1995), and Dance for Export: Cultural Diplomacy and the Cold War (1998), a book that summarizes her lifetime study of cultural diplomacy. Prevots is a graduate of Brooklyn College (Phi Beta Kappa); did postgraduate work at Juilliard; then earned a master’s in dance at the University of Wisconsin and a PhD from the University of Southern California. Her family has strong ties to Israel. Her father, Reuben Wallerstedt, lived in Israel in his youth and was a renowned Hebrew scholar and writer. Although raised primarily in New York City, he had been up bimonthly and went to high school in Israel during the War of Independence. Parents and her husband are both very active in New Shaloh.

Her interest in the Center for Israeli Studies is “natural;” she says and she has played an important role in its development from the outset. She was instrumental in arranging the Bat Sheva dance company as the center’s inaugural event at the Kennedy Center and in an residence master class visit of two performers-choreographers from the Bat Sheva company. As part of the center’s reservoir program she also hosted Jerusalem choreographer Alon Koifer on campus, where he taught master classes at AU dance students. She believes the center can promote “more open discussion” and have “a major impact on helping people understand Israel in a broader context.” Though no longer on campus regularly, she intends to participate in as many of the center’s programs as possible.

To AU students she offers this advice: “Be open to new things; take advantage of as many opportunities as possible; take advantage of being in Washington, D.C.—and take risks!”

Comings and Goings, next page

Help foster Jewish studies and Israeli studies teaching, research, and scholarship at American University. Your gifts guarantee that AU’s Jewish Studies Program and Center for Israeli Studies will move from strength to strength in the coming years. We welcome and very much appreciate gifts of any amount.

Here is my contribution to the Jewish Studies Program, JSP

Here is my contribution to the Center for Israeli Studies, CIS

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